

**AN ATTEMPT TO UNIVERSALIZE ELEMENTARY
EDUCATION IN MANIPUR-NORTH EAST INDIA (WITH
SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO A DISTRICT, IMPHAL EAST)**

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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 Imphal East district in the state of Manipur, and its constraint to achieve by 2010. The paper aims to evaluate the progress of the scheme implemented in the said district and will point out the various hurdles faced by the beneficiaries as well as by the implementing authority. The research also suggests various ways to sensitize the programme for all concern. 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), Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative and Innovative Education (AIE), National Policy on Education (NPE).

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INTRODUCTION

The welfare and progress of a nation depends on the quality of education prevailing in that country. In a democratic set up, the role of education becomes particularly important since democracy can function effectively only if there is an intelligent and active participation by the people in the solution of the problems of the country and this participation comes only through education.

Education has a tremendous role to play in the life of every child of a nation. On the other hand, primary education is the backbone of educational pattern of a country. Any system of education can never be successful so long if it does not have a sound primary education system. Primary education lays the deep foundation of the educational system of a country. It starts with a special scheme for the development of the child commensurate with his growing age. It is during primary education that the child learns to adjust him with the school life and the education in the school life prepares him for higher education. It is a potent factor for the development of a child's personality.

The Constitution of India (Indian Constitution, 1950) under Article 45 lays down as follows:

“The state shall endeavour to provide within a period of 10 years from the commencement of this constitution for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years”

It is clear from the article that the makers of the Indian Constitution desired that by 1960, there should be free and compulsory education up to the age of 14 throughout India. But this target has not been achieved uniformly in all the states of India. The Government of India has resolved through the New Educational Policy to achieve this goal as soon as possible. Thus, there is more thrust in universalization of primary education. This could have been achieved by 1960 but in view of the immense

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difficulties involved such as lack of resources, tremendous increase in population, resistance of the education for girls, large number of children in the backward classes, general poverty of the people and illiteracy of the parents.

Also, as remarked by S P Chaube and A Chaube in their publication “Comparative Education, 2008” the national objective of primary education could not be solved due to some basic difficulties. In the absence of means of communication in forests and hilly tracts, spread of education became difficult. Public indifference towards education, conservative outlook, defects in government machinery, lack of coordination in the public and government organization, favoritism and partiality of educational officers and their irresponsible attitude etc were some other difficulties.

Among the social difficulties was favoritism in public, sectarianism, conservatism etc. Financial difficulties also arose due to small national income. The prevailing pattern of education is defective and not suitable to local conditions. On account of these, obstacles it was not possible to make adequate progress in primary education.

Therefore the constitutional directives have remained unfulfilled. Likewise many policies and provisions have been made towards this goal from time to time, unfortunately, none succeeded in realizing this objective of national priority.

The 86th Constitutional Amendment Act 2002 led to the insertion of a new article 21-A in Part III of the Constitution that made free and compulsory education to all children of 6 to 14 years of age a fundamental right.

Drawing on Nehru’s vision and articulating most of his key themes, the Kothari Commission (1964) was set up to formulate a good education policy for India. After two decades of National policy on Education of 1968, in 1985, Rajiv Gandhi announced a new education policy, the National Policy on Education (NPE), which was intended to prepare India for the 21st century.

The National Policy on education, as revised in 1992, had emphasized the need for a substantial improvement in quality of education to achieve essential levels of learning. The Programme of Action, 1992 stressed the need to lay down Minimum Levels of Learning at Primary and Upper Primary stage. This need emerged from the basic concern that irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex, all children must be given access to education of comparable standards. The MLL strategy for improving the quality of elementary education was seen as an attempt to combine quality with equity.

Quality issues in elementary education will therefore revolve around the quality of infrastructure and support services, opportunity time, and teacher characteristics and teacher motivation, pre-service and in-service education of teachers, curriculum and teaching-learning

materials, classroom processes, pupil evaluation, monitoring and supervision etc. Indeed improvement of quality in these parameters and its sustenance is a matter of great concern for the all-whole system of education.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess the extent to which Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has been able to achieve its related targets.
2. To identify problems in implementation of the scheme.
3. To study the impact of the programme on the targeted children.
4. To suggest the way forward

Methodology:

The study has used information from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected from the school authorities as well as household located near the school area using structured questionnaires. The schools and the household are drawn on non probability sampling design based on sampling method. The collected data has been tabulated and analysed using simple percentage test.

Sample: 50 primary schools were selected from the Imphal District to evaluate the achievements, implementation and impact of the programme on the targeted group.

SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN

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

As highlighted by B.K.Pattanaik and Madan Mohan Singh (Kurukshetra,May 2011) , the SSA programme aims at:

- ❖ Strengthening school infrastructure by constructing school buildings and upgrading the existing buildings.
- ❖ Providing teachers and also building their capacities through training.
- ❖ Seeks to provide quality basic education.

- ❖ Promoting community participation in primary education by formulating Village Education Committee. And involving them in the planning and raising community contribution for primary education.
- ❖ It aims at bridging social, regional and gender gaps in literacy and primary education
- ❖ It focuses on girl education and children with special needs.
- ❖ It seeks to provide computer education to bridge the digital divide.

Primary education and its problems in Manipur

Landlocked Manipur in the north-eastern corner of India is bounded by Myanmar in the East, Nagaland in the North, Assam in the West and Mizoram in the South. Manipur is 22,327 sq km in area of 9/11 consists of parallel rows of hills rising from 701 to 2592 meters above the sea level. In the middle of these hills, rich in forest and wild life, lies an oval shaped 1834 sq km valley, the capital of the state, Imphal which comprises of two districts namely Imphal East and Imphal West, which is only 8% of the total area. It has got 9 districts. As per 2011 census, the population of Manipur is 27, 21,756 of which male and female are 13, 69,764 and 13, 51992 respectively. The ranking of the districts of the state by population size of the census is topped by the two districts of the state capital, Imphal West (18.91%) and Imphal East District(16.63%).

Socio demographic profile of the district under study

Imphal East District came into existence on 18-06-1997 with its headquarters at Porompat occupying the eastern part of Imphal district. The district is situated in two separate valleys of the state namely, Central valley and Jiribam valley. The total area of the district is 469.44 sq km. approximately. The district is situated at an altitude 790 meters above the M.S.Level. It has no rail network and hence communication is entirely dependent on roads except Jiribam Sub-Division bordering Cachar District of Assam where there is a railhead. The District is connected with N.H. 39, N.H. 53 and N.H. 150. The population of the district is 4,52,661 according to 2011 census. The rural population is 2,70,307 (59.72%) whereas the urban population of the district is 1,82,354(40.28%). Literacy in the district is 82.81% (Rural literacy rate is 79.31% and that of the urban is 87.79%) as per 2011 census. As per 2011 census, male population is 2,25,130 whereas female population of the district is 2,27,531.

Literacy and Education rate in Manipur

Literacy rate in Manipur has seen upward trend and is 79.21 percent as per 2011 population census. The state's literacy rate is higher than the national average of 74.04%, with the male literacy stands at 86.06 percent while female literacy stands at 72.37 per cent.

In 2001, literacy rate in Manipur stood at 70.53 percent of which male and female were 80.33 percent and 61.46 percent literate respectively. In actual numbers, total literates in Manipur stands at 1,891,196 of which males were 1,026,733 and females were 864,463. Total area of Manipur is 22,327 sq .km. Density of Manipur is 122 per sq km which is lower than national average 382 per sq km.

In 2001, density of Manipur was 103 sq km, while nation average in 2001 was 324 per sq km. Sex ratio of Manipur is 987 ie for each 1000 male, which is below the national average of 940 as per census 2011. In 2001, the sex ratio of female was 978 per 1000 males in Manipur.

Table .1 Literacy rates by Sex and Districts in Manipur, 2001 and 2011 Census.

District / State	Literacy Rates					
	Person		Male		Female	
	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011
Senapati	59.80	74.13	67.90	79.98	51.20	68.07
Tamenglong	59.30	70.05	68.70	76.09	49.00	63.69
Churachandpur	70.60	82.78	77.70	86.97	63.10	78.50
Chandel	56.20	71.11	64.30	77.78	48.00	63.96
Ukhrul	73.10	81.35	80.10	85.25	65.40	76.95
Imphal East	75.50	81.95	85.5	88.77	65.40	75.32
Imphal West	80.20	86.08	89.20	92.24	71.30	80.17
Bishnupur	67.60	75.85	79.60	85.11	55.70	66.68
Thoubal	66.40	74.47	80.40	85.00	52.50	64.09
Manipur State	70.50	79.21	80.30	86.06	60.50	72.37

Source : Statistical handbook of Manipur 2012-13.

In Manipur, the seed of primary education was so sown between 1832-1886. Pioneers like Maj. General W.F. Nuthal, Sir James Johnstone, Rev. William Pettigrew and His Highness Maharaja Chandrakirti singh, contributed towards the growth much and development of Primary Education in Manipur.

But in spite of all their efforts according to Dr.Ch.Jamini (2004) remarked in the book, “Education in Manipur” the progress of Primary Education in Manipur was very slow for a long time because of the aversion of the local people toward western (English education). It was only in 1931-32 that 83 primary Lower Primary education, 10 Madrasahs, 3 Sanskrit tols and a Girls LP school were established in Manipur. The total no of teachers by that time was 1981 only. Since primary education was not made free at that time, fees were collected from the students. The attendance of students was poor and not very encouraging.

The Second World War also put a check to the progress of Primary Education in Manipur. The War claimed several thousand lives, upset educational institutions and disturbed normal life in Manipur took along time for the people to normalize and set up educational institutions after the war.

The introduction of free and compulsory education in the field of Primary Education after the Indian independence, gave a strong impetus towards the progress of Primary Education in Manipur.

EXPANSION OF PRIMARY EDUCATON IN MANIPUR AFTER 1947-1948

In 1947, there were 278 Primary schools in Manipur with 25400 students in the roll and with 507 teachers. In the subsequent years, further expansion took place. This may be seen from the following table.

Table – 2. The trend of expansion of Primary schools during the past 5 decades from 1960-61 to 2009-10.

Year	Institution	Students	Teachers
1960-61	1660	131938	4305
1970-71	2472	201535	7087
1980-81	2860	212092	9195
1990-91	3190	264438	11006
1999-2000	2572	352541	10053
2000-01	2572	352541	9807
2001-02	2574	364644	9638
2002-03	2577	322523	8227

2003-04	2329	400217	8095
2004-05	2324	409313	8142
2005-06	2338	395818	8045
2006-07	2338	403136	8037
2007-08	2327	403136	8027
2008-09	2351	389992	7811
2009-10	2408	291123	7951

Source: 1. Ch. Jamini Devi, Education in Manipur, 2004 p.57-59

2. Statistical Handbook of Manipur, 2009-10
3. Directorate of Education.

The number of Primary schools in Manipur at the time of India independence (1947-48) was only 278 and in 2001-2002, it increased to 2574, which is almost 10 fold. From 1999-2000 to 2009-10, the number of teachers is reduced; it may be due to non-replacement of retired teachers. In case of enrolment of girls, the increase from 1947 to 1970-71 was 40 times, which was indeed a very encouraging trend. In 1970-71 total girls enrolment was 79,356, 170170 in 2001-02 which shows a rise of almost two times. And in 2009-10, girls enrolment totals to 148704 which shows a downward trend.

As regards to total student enrolment, there have been a gradual increase in the number of enrolment since 1960-61 to 2004-05. Then from 2007-08, there reflects a falling trend. This could be due to the mushrooming growth of private schools in Manipur and more students seeking admission to these schools for the want of quality education.

As concerning the number of schools, the increase has been more regular since 1960-61 to 2009-10.

In the middle schools level too, there was appreciable expansion. In 1947, the number of schools providing Middle school Education was 13, which was increased to 385 in 1970-71 and 391 in 1979-80. The number of students also increased to 31090 in 1970-71 and 51297 in 1979-80. The total number of teachers were only 76 in 1947 but increased to 1777 in 1970-71 and 2232 in 1979-80. All these figures indicate the rapid growth of Primary Education in the last five decades. It is worth mentioning at this point that opening of more and more schools also does not guarantee education to all. Still a lot needed to be done.

Likewise in other states of India, even Manipur faces a lot of problems in education sector. Some causes of the slow progress of primary education are listed below:

- ❖ The first cause, according to M.Shanti Devi in the book “Development of Education in Manipur (2001)” is the grinding poverty of the majority of the people which prevented them from sending their children to schools or to keep them there for more than a couple of years since child labour and valuable economically productive opportunities both in domestic chores and outside work were profitable.
- ❖ Uneducated and illiterate parents who do not see any advantage in being literate or attending school. So they are not interested in the local primary school and have little contact with them. They do not care whether or not the teacher attends school and much less whether or not he teaches. Therefore education of the parent can generate the strongest social demand for primary education and can become the best insurance for the education of the children.
- ❖ The distance of the schools from most of the villages is one of the causes of hindrance to the expansion of primary education. On the other hand, the parents remove their children from the schools from where they derived no benefit.
- ❖ Non-availability of timely sufficient funds from the government is also aggravating the situation. This fact affected the progress of primary education. Over and above, in some areas, the government could not provide financial assistance for the establishment and development of primary education.
- ❖ Added to these, are the inefficiency of some teachers and their lack of commitment.
- ❖ Another reason to be attributed here is that by the time when Manipur attained Statehood, literacy rate of the state rose even at par with the national average. But employment facilities were so meager that there were many unemployed youths who could not get the benefit of their education. Thus some of the parents having undergone such lamentable experience stopped sending their wards to the schools. This may even be true in case of rural areas.

Programme Implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in Manipur

To fulfill the provision of Article 45 of the Constitution of India for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years, Sarva shiksha Abhiyan was also launched in Manipur in the year 2001. It has been widely implemented throughout the state.

Like the other centrally sponsored development schemes, which have not been successful in the state, SSA too, going far from achieving its objectives. There are so many problems/ hurdles faced in its implementation. To name a few would do unfair to the situation.

There are several provisions / interventions under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The present paper emphasizes on some selected provisions/interventions and also limited to a district only. The respondents have been selected on a random basis. Findings of a survey comprising of 50 primary and upper primary schools in the Imphal east district can be viewed as under:

Table-3

SSA provisions / interventions under study	No of positive respondents	Percentage wise
1. Teacher	45	90%
2. Classrooms	40	80%
3. Free textbooks	49	98%
4. Maintenance and repair of school buildings	9	18%
5. Teachers Grant	40	80%
6. Teachers Training	27	54%
7. Incentives like uniforms and scholarships	11	22%
8. Mid day meal programme	43	86%
9. Surrounding environment	20	40%
10. Infrastructure (which includes proper drinking and sanitary facilities, library facilities, teaching aids, playground, enough desks and benches	8	16%
11. Inspection by the inspectors	20	40%
12. Cooperation from community people.	18	36%
13. Atleast 50% of the teachers to be appointed has to be women.	30	60%
14. Adequacy of teaching aids	23	46%

Source: Field survey

Teacher

Norms of teachers under SSA

- ❖ One teacher should be there for every 40 children in primary and upper primary
- ❖ At least two teachers in a Primary school
- ❖ One teacher for each class in the upper primary.

From the survey it is found out that out of 50 schools, 90% of the schools have followed these norms. In fact, it came to light that in many of these schools, the number of teachers are much more than required. These 10% variation can be attributed to the reason that Metei Mayek is introduced as a compulsory subject and teachers were not available for the subject for that time being. Also transfers of some teachers can also be the reason. It will be ironical to mention here that in the area under study, there is no lack of teachers but students are lacking.

Classrooms

Norms for classroom under SSA

- ❖ A room for every teacher in Primary & upper primary with the provision that there would be two classrooms with verandah to every primary school.
- ❖ A room for Head master in upper Primary school / section

Of course, a provision for a room for every teacher are nowhere fulfilled in the schools but 80% of the schools have class for each classroom except for some small schools where students are few and they have divided one classroom into two using some kutchha walls.

Free Textbooks

- ❖ To all children within an upper ceiling of Rs 150 per child at primary level and Rs 250 per child at the upper primary level

The provision of giving free textbooks is considered to be almost achieved in the Imphal East primary schools. 98% of the schools appertain to this provision. But while questioning personally to the school authorities, they have opined that the books given are not adequate and also not provided on time which is three / four months after starting of session. It becomes very difficult for the school to adjust to these kinds of irregularities.

Maintenance and repair of schools buildings

- ❖ Schools upto three classrooms will be eligible for maintenance grant upto a maximum of Rs 5000 per school per year while schools having more than three classrooms will get a

maximum of Rs 10000 per school per year, subject to the condition that overall eligibility for the district would be Rs 7500 per school.

This grant is made available only for those schools which have existing buildings of their own. For its effective implementation, must involve elements of community contribution. It has been found out from the survey that condition of majority schools are in a very bad shape and safety is the area of concern. Only 18 % of the schools have gone through some maintenance and repair works which is one of the least achieved target.

Teachers Grant

- ❖ Rs 500 per teacher per year in primary and upper primary
- ❖ Transparency in utilization.

Regarding teachers grant, 80% of the schoolteachers have been receiving this. But the worst part of the story is that they have not been receiving this grant since few years. So the main purpose of this grant i.e. to purchase teaching learning material is not served.

Teachers training

- ❖ Provision of 20days in-service course for all teachers each year, 60 days refresher course for untrained teachers already employed as teachers and 30 days orientation for freshly trained recruits.

Nearly 75 % of the school teachers have received all the related trainings though the teachers have expressed dissatisfaction on the nature of training given by the authority.

Incentives like uniforms and scholarships

SSA does not provide any scholarships but to be funded from the state plan, if any. From the survey, it is found out that only 22% of the schools give scholarships to the children. But the teachers themselves for the meritorious students have arranged this once in a year and not by the state. Even the local clubs of that area have sometimes come up with this system of giving scholarships to the students which is a very motivating and welcome move. As for uniform, around 80% of the schools under study reported to have been provided uniforms to the students. Yet the uniforms given are not adequate and not on time.

Mid day Meal Programme

Mid day meals are to be provided to the students with the objective to prevent classroom hunger, to improve attendance and retention of students since many students of the primary

schools are from poor families. According to the sample survey, 86% of the schools provide these meals but not as many times as required by the programme. When interacted with the some of the students and the parents, they opined that the quality of the food is not good and also not hygienically prepared. So, not all the students show enthusiasm in the provided meals. Earlier meals were not provided to the upper primary schools. Though, recently, a bill has been passed that meals should be given to upper primary schools too, it is not been implemented fully. It also came to the light that during the survey that schools were not providing meals regularly due to delayed released of funds and food grains from the authority.

Surrounding Environment

Every school should have a clean, satiable, and silent environment where the students can learn without any disturbances. Hardly 40% of the schools have this peaceful environment. Many of the schools were near the main road, no sufficient playground, without any fencing, which could lead to unhappening incidents. Some schools were even very close to residential houses that normal conversation of the house members can be easily heard in the classroom. All these are the hindrances in the fulfillment of quality learning.

Infrastructure

Providing of school infrastructure helps in providing access to children and also helps in their retention which are important objectives of SSA. Infrastructure includes availability of proper drinking water, sanitary facilities, library facilities, enough desks and benches, sufficient playground, proper communication facilities etc. Only 16% of the schools have seemed to have proper infrastructure. Each of the schools are lacking in some or the other. If there are proper drinking water facilities, there are no proper sanitary facilities. And if there are enough desks and benches, there is no playground and so on. So this turns to a story with no end.

Inspection by inspectors

Inspection by the inspectors of schools is a must at regular intervals. But to dismay, only 20% of the schools have said to be inspected. Inspection is needed to see if the schools are functioning well or not, whether the teachers are attending schools regularly or not, to find out the requirements of the schools and to fulfill them. All above this it is their duty to inspect, they are getting paid for that. The school authorities also expressed their desire to be inspected. The absence of supervision and controlling can lead to failure of schools and it's functioning. So the

aim of universalization of elementary education will remain as a dream if not checked immediately.

Cooperation from community people

The SSA programme calls for community ownership of school based interventions through effective decentralization. This will be augmented by involvement of women's groups, VEC members and members of Panchayati Raj Institutions. Involvement of the community should be in monitoring, supervision and evaluation processes. SSA provides training of the community people on issues related to monitoring of children's progress and other related school activities. Besides, every school will be encouraged to share all information with the community, including grants received. A notice board would have to be put up in every school for this purpose. In the survey it is found out that none of the schools have put up that kind of board. Instead they have used that board for teaching purposes since there were no enough blackboards. Only 36% of the schools have responded positively regarding cooperation from the people in the functioning of the school. The schools teachers also regret that most parents take no interest in their children's education. So without the parents' cooperation, achieving SSA objectives can never be a reality.

At least 50% of the teachers appointed to be women

Distinctly from other states of India, our state does not have any bias in employing women teachers. In almost all the schools under survey, the number of female teachers outdoes the number of male teachers. So the very purpose of appointing women teachers that had direct connection with women upliftment is achieved specially in the Imphal East district.

Adequacy of teaching aids

Teaching aids includes blackboards, chalks, duster, pointer, maps and charts etc. It is found out that only 23% of the schools have adequacy of these aids and all others are lacking of these facilities. As mentioned above, a sum of Rs 500/- per teacher per year in primary and upper primary schools which is to be provided as assistance to purchase teaching aids is not fulfilled. Also a grant of Rs 2000/- per year per primary/upper primary school for replacement of non functional school equipment is also provided. In spite of these grants and assistances, majority of the schools do not have adequate teaching aids. Teaching aids are the tools for teaching. It helps the students learn more easily and quickly. Without it, teaching is just half way done.

Suggestions and Conclusion

The above discussed are some of the problems associated with the implementation of SSA programme and its status in the Imphal east district. Attempts to improve the quality of primary education have probably been the least effective. There have had some success in raising the remuneration and professional competence of primary teachers, in improving curriculum, textbooks and supervision and in providing amenities such as free books, and school meals to a proportion of the children enrolled. But by and large, the primary school of today is a very humble institution, often ill equipped and ill housed, largely unrelated to its local environment and generally of such low standards that it fails to attract and retain large proportion of children. School funds are not released on time. This has affected in the proper functioning of the school. Various pressure groups demand for their share in each of the facilities provided by the government. After distributing everything, sometimes the schools get only a meager portion. The school authority blamed the government and the intermediates (some corrupt officials who are working between government and the schools) and the government blames the school authority. So the question who is responsible still remains as a Million Dollar Question!! It is apparent that everybody is getting benefited except for the poor deserving children in the primary schools. Above all these teachers need to change their attitude. They have to be more sympathetic, inspiring and work with more devotion and sacrifice.

Apparently, it shows how complex the problem of universal education is and what supreme efforts are needed to provide it. The essential components will be determination of the state to achieve this goal, creation of a strong social demand for education specially among the poor and weaker sections of the society, reduction of mass poverty, providing funds on time, considerable increase in financial outlays as well as their more effective utilization and improved system of monitoring and control by giving frequent visits to the schools. While each of these components has a place of its own, the most significant will be a more commitment from all sections of the society viz, government, school authorities, parents, teachers, pressure groups and specially the various other student organizations existing in the state who intend to provide quality education in the state. Let it not be forgotten that quality of primary education is closely related to its expansion. If the quality of education is not good, it will not sell and it will not be able to universalize it. Even one could do so, the spread of the education of poor quality will be

undesirable and counter productive. On the other hand, good primary quality primary education will be able to attract and hold students better and thereby assist materially in universalizing it.

To sum up, the needed qualitative improvement of primary education is probably the greatest challenge of all and the most difficult one to be solved to realize our national objective.

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