



A SWOT Analysis of Serva Shiksha Abhiyan in Uttar Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

Uttar Pradesh has made significant progress towards the objective of 'Education for All' during the past few years. The Serva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is the principal Programme for Universalisation of Elementary Education. The main aim of the SSA are - bridging all gender and social category gaps at elementary stage of education; all children in schools; universal retention; and elementary education of satisfactory quality. Government has provided huge infrastructure, sufficient budgetary allocation, well qualified staff & administrative network access. It has good impact on enrollment and transition rates, but it does not ensure quality education. SSA in Uttar Pradesh needs more to do in respect to quality of education.

'A SWOT analysis of Serva Shiksha Abhiyan in Uttar Pradesh' is important as it may provide certain clues to the policy makers to do need full in respect to quality as well as coverage of Elementary Education in Uttar Pradesh.

KEYWORDS : Serva Shiksha Abhiyan, Enrollment, Transition rate, Quality education

INTRODUCTION:

Economic growth & development of Uttar Pradesh is impossible without overcoming general educational backwardness and illiteracy as education opens up a vast world of opportunities and ideas to the educated person. Overcome this general educational backwardness & illiteracy is a complex task in Uttar Pradesh because of its huge population size (199,812,341 persons as per Census 2011) & diversities.

The Serva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), a Universal Elementary Education Scheme has been the main catalyst in recent years in spreading this transformation in education in the Uttar Pradesh. Although there is inspiration, children are not attending schools. Persistent & multi-pronged efforts are required by the Government to enroll and retain children, especially of weaker sections, in schools.

SWOT analysis of SSA in Uttar Pradesh is important as it may provide certain clues to the policy makers that may be important to overcome the weakness and threats of current education system. It may also provide an opportunity to learn lesson from strength of current elementary education system in Uttar Pradesh & replicate it to other states as well as nations.

(A) STRENGTH OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN UTTAR PRADESH:

As per 1951 census, the literacy rate in Uttar Pradesh was 12%. However, in the last few decades, the state has significantly expanded the number of schools and the literacy rate has gone up from 12% to 69.72% (Census 2011); this depicts an obvious improvement when compared to literacy rate of 12%, as recorded in 1951.

(a) Huge Infrastructure

State of Uttar Pradesh has total 240,332 Schools and total 974,120 teachers to take care of the needs of the 36,726,500 students in year 2013-14. State Report Card 2014-15 (Elementary Education in India: Where do we stand? NUEPA, New Delhi) reveals that 69.72% of literacy rate and 36,838,720 school going students at elementary level, the state of Uttar Pradesh has turned its hurdled into benchmarks, ensuring that 93% of children are enrolled in schools. However as per ASER (Annual Status of Education Report) -2014, 52.8% children (class 1st to class 8th) are enrolled in private schools.

(b) National /International Support

The SSA-Universal Elementary Education Scheme has been the leading catalyst in current years in spearheading this alteration in education in the Uttar Pradesh. UNICEF (United Nation Children Emergency Fund) supported SSA to ensure all children have access to quality education and complete a full course of elementary schooling.

(c) Legislative Framework

Government of Uttar Pradesh passed the *Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Act, 1972 (U.P. Act No. 34 of 1972)*. By this Act, an Autonomous

Body named "*Uttar Pradesh Board of Basic Education*" was constituted under chairmanship of the Director, Basic Education. All schools which were controlled and managed by local bodies have since then been transferred to the Board. The Board of Basic Education controls appointment, posting and transfer of basic school teachers, determines school timings and gives recognition to private schools imparting basic education in the state.

The *Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act, 2009)* came into force in India with effect from 1st April, 2010. In exercise of the powers conferred by section-38 of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 (Act No. 35 of 2009) the Uttar Pradesh State Government made '**The Uttar Pradesh Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Rules, 2011**' came into power in Uttar Pradesh on 27th July, 2011. The Uttar Pradesh Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Rules, 2011 provides that in respect of children in classes I-V a school shall be established in habitation which has no school within a distance of 1 kilometer and has population of at least 300. In respect of children in classes VI-VIII a school shall be established in habitation which has no school within a distance of 3 kilometer and has population of at least 800.

(d) Involvement of Local Communities

Uttar Pradesh Board of Basic Education Act 1972 has been amended in year 2000; incorporating principle of decentralization of powers to the village community and management of education has been decentralized for empowering grass root participatory agencies. Other acts involving to basic education were also amended. Village Education Committee (VEC), School Management Committee (SMC), Mid-Day Meal Committee (MDMC), Parent Teachers Association (PTA) is popular and active bodies are made by village community for every school. The School Management Committees have been established in 95.8% schools in 2014-15 which is higher than the national average of 93.4% of the schools.

(e) Road Connectivity of Schools

According to the U-DISE Elementary Education Report Card 2014-15, Uttar Pradesh has a well spread network of roads across the state. 96.3% of schools are approachable by all weather roads in 2014-15 as against the national average of 89.2%.

(B) WEAKNESS OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN UTTAR PRADESH:

(a) Insufficient Infrastructure

Elementary Education in Uttar Pradesh is mostly managed by the Public sector but still infrastructure is insufficient both in terms of quantity as well as quality.

1- Number of Schools

Table-1: Number of Schools by Management in 2004-05 & 2014-15

(Elementary Education Level)

Management (All Area)	2004-05		2014-15	
	U.P. State	All States	U.P. State	All States
Total Government Schools	116347	880545	160942	1080747
Total Private Schools	26509	157268	78094	328845
All Management Schools	142856	1037813	243014	1445807

The total number of schools imparting elementary education in Uttar Pradesh (As per DISE 2014-15) is 243,014 with a large percentage 66.23% of it being government schools and percentage of private share to total schools is 32.14%. Percentage of upper primary schools has increased by 8.01%; however, the percentage of primary only schools has decreased by 13.64% over the period of ten years.

2- Poor Facility Indicators

Except library, Mid-Day Meal (MDM), computer and electricity, proportion of schools having these facilities is better than the national average. Still there is a long way to go for electricity and computer.

Table-2: Facility Indicators (Elementary Education Level)

Indicators (% of Schools with)	2005-06		2014-15	
	U.P. State Figures (in %)	National Figures (in %)	U.P. State Figures (in %)	National Figures (in %)
Drinking Water	94.9	83.1	98.6	96.1
Girls Toilets	69.4	37.4	98.0	87.1
Boys Toilets	-	-	99.3	95.4
Boundary Wall	43.6	50.7	70.6	64.5
Electricity	-	-	40.6	54.8
Computer	3.6	10.7	12.5	25.2
Ramp	12.4	17.1	84.7	77.4
Library	-	-	74.6	82.1
Kitchen Shed	-	-	98.1	77.4
Providing Mid Day Meal (MDM)	-	-	93.6	96.9
Text Books	-	-	99.0	98.7

As in 2014-15, there are 71.0% schools having playground facility and 9.0% schools have electricity and computers. 16.6% upper Primary Schools have computer Aided Learning Lab, 74.6% schools have library and 98.1% schools providing MDM have kitchen-shed, yet 5.2% schools providing MDM but not prepare in school premises. Though, on paper the percentage of schools having girl's toilet seems to be significant, the actual number of functional toilet is much lesser than this.

3- Higher Student Classroom Ratio (SCR)

In Uttar Pradesh, 41.9% schools at Primary only schools have SCR greater than 30 against 27.5% schools at all states level and 29.3% schools at Upper Primary level have SCR greater than 35 against 29% schools at national level in 2014-15.

(b) Enrolment Related Indicators

1- Enrolment

Percentage share of Scheduled Caste (SC) students shown to be reduced at upper primary level but there is no change in percentage of SC students enrolled at primary level over the period of 10 years. From the year 2004-05 to 2014-15, Percentage share of ST students shown to be reduced at both levels.

2- Higher Average Annual Dropout Rate

Drop-out Rate is calculated by subtracting sum of promotion and repetition rate from 100 in a given school year. The highest dropout rate is observed at upper primary level. At primary level, the state

figure is higher than all India figure. On outcome related variables, Uttar Pradesh stands on 26th and 35th rank at the primary and upper primary level respectively on The Composite Education Development Index: 2013-14. A total primary enrolment in school is 74.3% with pupil teacher ratio (PTR) more than 30 and upper primary enrolments in school are 49.8% with PTR more than 35.

3- Lower Retention Rate

Enrolment in Grade V (*minus repeaters*) in a year as a proportion to enrolment in Grade I four years back is termed as retention rate at the Primary level. The retention rate of all caste students in the school at elementary level in Uttar Pradesh at primary level is 3.83% lesser than the average retention rate of all caste students at national level in 2014-15. According to U-DISE 2014-15, In Uttar Pradesh, The retention rate of girls belonging to general caste is more than that of girls belonging to scheduled caste at elementary level. However, the retention rate of all castes students at national level is greater than that of all castes students at state level of Uttar Pradesh.

4- Lower Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)

Total enrolment in primary education (Grades I-V), regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the eligible official primary school-age population (6 to 10+ years) in a given school-year. At state level, Gross Enrolment Ratio at primary level is about 95% compared to 74.54% at upper primary level. Whereas, at national level, the gross enrolment ratio at primary level is about 100.08% compare to 91.24% at upper primary level.

(c) Teacher Indicators

1- Insufficient Trained Teachers

As per the U-DISE 2014-15 data, there are total 1,009,333 teachers in the Uttar Pradesh at elementary level, out of which 39.1% are female teachers. Out of total number of teachers, 8.6% of teachers are appointed in private aided schools and 53.4% of teachers in government schools at elementary level. Of the total number of teachers, 77.2% regular teachers and 44.3% contractual teachers are professionally trained. Of the total number, 14.7% teachers belong to scheduled caste (SC) and 1.0% to scheduled tribe (ST) category respectively. 16.5% teachers of the total numbers of teachers are on contract.

2- Poor Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR)

55.7% schools at primary level have pupil teacher ratio (PTR) greater than 30 and 32.8% schools at upper primary level have PTR more than 35. The PTR in Government schools is 32, in Private Aided school is 28 and in Private Unaided schools are 45. The PTR is 36 in 2014-15 at elementary level, which was 57 in year 2005-06. 10.3% teachers are aged above 55 years. The state figure of PTR (PTR in U.P. is 36) is greater than that of India (PTR is 25 in India).

(C) OPPORTUNITY:

Today, the need for educating children is admitted by all, even by the poorest of the poor. It self provides biggest opportunity to all stakeholders to fulfill the dream of Serva Shiksha Abhiyan. Although there is inspiration, children are not attending schools. The main cause for low enrolment and irregular attendance in the parent's opinion is unworthiness of the public school system. Slow progress of the child is one of the core causes of parental lack of interest in schooling, especially in village primary schools. A good school cannot run in isolation. It has to develop a close link with the community. The school and the community are related to each other in a recurring relationship of mutual benefit. Involvement of SMC, Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI), and MDM programme provides opportunity of interaction of school teachers with community, this opportunity should be utilized by both staff & administrators of schools for encouragement of parents for sending their wards regularly schools. The role of the teacher is of major importance here. If he starts by engaging himself honestly in providing good education to children, confidence of the village community would automatically rise.

(D) THREAT:

Uttar Pradesh has done tremendous progress over the last ten years on the Composite Educational Development Index of 2013-14 made up of four indicators i.e. access, infrastructure, teacher and outcomes, Uttar Pradesh holds 35th rank on. Unfortunately none of the indicators considered under Educational Development Index student's performance is taken into account. The overall picture of educational sce-

nario of any region is incomplete if performance of students is not considered. It is the vital statistics required to picturise the roadmap of development. ASER has reported declining performance of students over a period of years especially after implementation of RTE. According to ASER 2014 data, 70.8 % students from class 8th cannot read at class 2nd level text. In class 3rd, 18.4% student can't even read letters, 30.8% can read letters but not extra, 15.9% can read words but not class 1st level text or higher, 13.3% can read class 1st level text but not class 2nd level text, and 21.7% can read class 2nd level text. In class 3rd, 13.2% students cannot even identify numbers 1-9, 15.6% can do subtraction but they cannot do division while 7.6% students can do division. The gap in reading levels between students enrolled in private schools and government schools seems to be growing over time.

With huge infrastructure, sufficient budgetary allocation, well qualified teachers & administrative network access and good infrastructure may have good impact on enrollment and transition rates, but it does not ensure quality education which is principal objective. This is the biggest threat of primary education in Uttar Pradesh. Elementary Education in Uttar Pradesh needs more to do in respect to quality of education. This will not be possible till the teachers of elementary education will not be given sufficient respect by students, community, society & administrators. They must not be soft targets by everyone including members of PRIs & their own administrators to fulfill their own dreams. Another threat to elementary education in Uttar Pradesh is that the staff of primary education is more utilized in non teaching activities like Elections, MDM Programme, Census & many more. Ultimately teaching activity suffers with these activities. This threat must be realized by Government as well as administrators as it is time to think practically about the Quality Universalisation of Quality Elementary Education, otherwise there will be no education in spite of having sufficient infrastructure, qualified & trained teachers and so on.

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