



IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN AND GROWTH OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION – A STUDY OF KEONJHAR DISTRICT IN ODISHA

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ABSTRACT The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was launched 2001 as flagship programme to give a boost to universal primary education. The main focus of the scheme was to increase enrolment, attendance and to reduce drop-outs among the primary level school going children. To attend the above targeted objectives, a number of educational initiatives were started under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The present study is an attempt to analyse the impact of the scheme on the primary education in terms of enrolment, attendance and drop-outs in primary schools in the Keonjhar district of Odisha.

KEYWORDS : SSA, Universalization of Elementary Education, Education for all, Right to Education, Mid-Day-Meal.

Of all the creation of God, human life is the most sacred. It has two aspects-the biological and the sociological. While the biological aspect of human life is maintained and transmitted by nutrition and reproduction, the sociological aspect of human life is maintained and transmitted by education. In primitive society, the needs of man comprised of food, clothes, and shelter. With the progress of society and civilization, however, these primary needs have been multiplied in to six- food, clothing, shelter, education, recreation and health. Man is primarily different from other lower animals because of his education (Taneja;2013:5).

Without education human life has no meaning. It removes darkness and brings human soul closer to reality. Education is the foundation of a happy and prosperous life and a key to the progress of the nation. A civilization thrives on the pillar of education (Dwivedi;2016:9). It expands the intellectual horizon and empowers people to have a better life (Tilak;2005:10). It brings such changes in the behavior of the child which are for his good (Mathur;2010:12).

Education is also regarded as the foundation-stone of economic growth and social progress and prosperity. It contributes to economic development through increased national income and individual earnings. Education is not only of direct importance to living (for broadening a person's horizon of perception and thought), it can also influence the conversion of other entitlements of human ability (Dreze and Sen; 1995). Education helps an individual in his growth from birth to death, it develops his innate abilities, develop his personalities, modifies behavior, teaches him the lesson of adjustment with his fellow being in society and prepares him a good citizen (Mangal;1991).

As education plays a significant role in the progress and prosperity of society, almost all the democratic countries of the world have given emphasis on education to bring the highest development in the life of the people in society. India the largest democratic country in the world is no exception to it. Realizing the importance of education, the statesmen and the leaders of India have been made continuous effort after independence for the development of education (Dreze and Sen; 1995). As the rate of education was quite deplorable(18%),after independent the makers of Indian Constitution made elaborate provisions for providing free and compulsory education for all children up to 14 years of age (Kurmi;1983). The Constitution of India in the part iv of Directive Principles of State Policy under Article-45 states that, the state shall strive to provide within a period of 10 years from the commencement of Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete 14 years of age (Ghai;2016). Further the 86th Constitution Amendment Act, 2002 had gone one step ahead by making education a Fundamental Rights for the children of 6-14 years age group (Pylee;2007).In spite of the Constitutional commitment, the goals to achieve universal elementary education still remain a day dream. According to 2011 census report, 26.06% of children of our country do not know how to read and write, nor do they attend schools. Further, those who join schools, only 2/3 continue beyond primary school level. This situation is very bad in rural areas because there is extreme poverty, malnutrition, Socio-

economic-cultural problems, geographical barriers, problems of stagnation and wastage in rural area which are considered as the major obstacles in the way of universalization of elementary education (Aggrawal, 2003). To overcome these problems many educational promotional schemes have been introduced by both the Central and State governments. These were Integrated Child Development Scheme, Ashram school, NGO supported schools, Operation Block Board etc. As these programmes failed to deliver the desired result, the government of India started a new scheme known as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) for the development of education of the people.

ABOUT THE SCHEME-

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) otherwise known as 'Education For All' movements is an integrated flagship programme of the government of India to attain universal elementary education. It was introduced in 2001 in partnership with state government and local governments. This scheme was framed to provide elementary education for all the children in the age group of 6-14 years of age by 2010. The basic purpose of the Programme is to bridge social, regional and gender gaps with active participation of the community in the management of school. This scheme covers all the districts of the country and flexible enough to incorporate new interventions for girls and other children belonging to scheduled caste and scheduled tribe area.

SSA as an intervention programme has been working since 2001 in Odisha. More than 16 academic years have been passed since the plan was introduced in the state. Hence to analyze and assess the impact of scheme on the growth of elementary education the present study was conducted in Keonjhar district of Odisha. The primary objectives of the study were :-

- i. To examine how far the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan scheme introduced in Keonjhar district has been succeeded in promoting elementary education in terms of enrolment, attendance and in reducing drop-outs.
- ii. To enquire about the major obstacles in the implementation of the scheme and suggest suitable measures for the successful operation of the scheme.

To know the impact of the scheme, the present study was conducted in Keonjhar district of Odisha. Empirical data for the study were collected by the researcher from 144 sample schools situated in 2 blocks of Keonjhar district. Further, information were collected from teachers, parents, students, Village Education Committees by using random interview method. Besides, primary data on enrolment, attendance and drop-out rates of the school going children were collected from school registers and documents.

IMPACT OF SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN-

SSA is a very broad and flagship programme in the field of elementary education. It covers both quantitative and qualitative initiatives. So far as the quantitative initiatives (Physical Infrastructure) is concerned it includes; opening of new schools, strengthening old infrastructure,

construction of boundary walls, providing furniture, book, dress materials etc. But the qualitative initiative measures include enrolment related indicators, such as retention, attendance and reducing drop-outs. To evaluate the impact of SSA on the growth of elementary education three major variables such as enrolment, attendance and drop-out rate are taken in to account out of the above mentioned indicators. To study the impact of the scheme, a time series data covering 5 years (2012-2017) were discussed below.

1. ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS-

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was introduced with a major purpose to increase the enrolment of the school going children. This section analyses, the annual growth rate of enrolment of the students during the last five years from 2012-17.

AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH RATE OF ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS OF KEONJHAR DISTRICT OF ODISHA (%).

Table -1 Caste & gender wise enrolment of students in Keonjhar District

Academic Year	Name of District	Name of Block	General Caste		Scheduled Caste		Scheduled Tribe		Total		All total
			B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	
2012-17	Keonjhar	Anandapur	0	-5.79	4	3.15	0	5.6	1.07	0.55	0.82
		Keonjhar	-18.75	-8.33	-23.07	-30	-11.58	-25	-16.36	-21.73	-18.81

Source-(Figures based on field data collected from sample elementary schools)

The above table shows that the average annual enrolment of the students of Keonjhar district of Odisha during the last five years of elementary schools. It shows that the enrolment of students have increased after implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in Keonjhar district. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has both a positive and negative impact on the growth of elementary education. This shows that in Keonjhar district, particularly the Keonjhar block has negative impact on annual enrolment than Anandapur block. The enrolments of the students have increased because this scheme has given many facilities like free books and dress materials to the school going children. These facilities are greatly helpful to poor, economically backward and tribal people

2. ATTENDANCE OF STUDENTS -

Mere enrolment is not sufficient for learning. For better quality of learning, regular attendance is very essential to increase the rate of attendance of the students. A number of educational promotional schemes including mid-day meal (MDM) were in operation by the government of India. The table below shows the annual average attendance rate of the students during the period.

Annual Attendance Rate of the students of Keonjhar in (%)

Academic Year 2012-17	Name of District	Name of Block	General Caste		Scheduled Caste		Scheduled Tribe		Total
			Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
	Keonjhar	Anandapur	72.12	69.33	64.22	65.38	62.45	61.32	68.16%
		Keonjhar	70.11	66.44	61.22	60.44	60.18	58.23	

Note-(Figures based data collected from sample schools)

The analysis of the above data shows that the attendance of students of Keonjhar district. In Keonjhar as people are economically and educationally backward, they are not more interested in sending their

children to school. The scheme Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in field of elementary education has increased the attendance of the students as it has provided many facilities like-free dress, books, mid-day-meals to the students in schools. The economically weak and poor people are influenced by this scheme. The scheme has also increased the consciousness of the parents regarding the education their children.

TABLE-03 Drop-out of Keonjhar District in (%)

Year	Name of District	Name of Block	General caste		Scheduled caste		Scheduled Tribe		Total		All Total
			Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
2012-13											
TO 2016-17	Keonjhar	Anandapur	-4.29	-10.86	-11.32	-1.05	-7.69	-1.60	-6.18	-5.02	-5.60
		Keonjhar	-27.5	-18.33	-35.38	-48.00	-20.76	-33.33	-26.60	-32.60	-29.10
	TOTAL		-31.79	-29.19	-46.00	-49.05	-28.45	-34.93	-32.78	-37.62	-23.55

The analysis of data in Keonjhar district shows that the drop-out rate is more (-23%) in Keonjhar district. Keonjhar has higher drop-out rate because it is a tribal dominated district of Odisha. Nearly 2/3 of its people are tribal. They are economically poor. They chiefly depend on cultivation, hunting, forest food for their livelihood. Still many people are illiterate. Due to poor economic condition they do not send their children to school. Those who take admission do not continue their schooling. They left the school after one or two years of schooling. As it is a tribal district, communication is also another hurdle in the way of education. In rainy season, both the teachers and students face the same problem to reach the schools by crossing the river and rivulets.

Operational Problems of the scheme-

Despite increase in the enrolment and attendance of the students the scheme is not free from operational constraints. The physical infrastructural facilities provided under the scheme are not up to the expectation level. Though many schools have increased their infrastructural facilities, nonetheless majority schools have no playgrounds, inadequate class rooms. The student class room ratio is found to be more than the prescribed limit. Many schools still deprived of safe drinking water facility, electricity connections and toilet facilities.

Though some improvements in the physical and infrastructural facilities are found, the quality education has remained a distance dream. It is found that teachers are pre-occupied with many non-academic activities such as distribution of books, dress materials, preparing of utilization certificate and maintaining records. Teachers of many schools have assigned overall supervision of construction work that is going on inside the school. All these burdens of non-academic activities largely affect the efficiency of teachers. As a result, they are getting less time for engaging classes and imparting quality education to the students. In some schools teaching and learning environment has been ruined due to shortage of staff. During the field visit it is found that in many schools a single teacher has been taking classes from one to five. Quality education has become a major causality under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan due to inadequate, non-availability of trained teachers and pre-occupation of the teachers in non-academic work.

The Abhiyan also suffers from supervision and administrative problems. There is no regular supervision of the scheme as officers in-charge of operation of the scheme are heavily engaged in other governmental activities. At the upper level there is poor co-operation and co-ordination among the officials with regard to operation of the scheme. From district level to school level the officials are overburden with their daily work and get little time to supervise properly the operation of the scheme.

Conclusion-

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is the most popular programme to attend universal elementary education, covering the whole country in a mission mode. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is held as a historic scheme in promoting equity and social justice in primary education. The main focus of the scheme was to achieve universal enrolment, retention, and reducing drop-outs in the elementary level of education. The present

study is an effort to assess and analyze the impact of the scheme in Keonjhar district of Odisha. The present study has found that Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has been able to increase the rate enrolment of students in the elementary level. But scheme has failed to root out drop-outs of children at primary level. The study has found that the rate of drop-out is -23.5% in Keonjhar district. The attendance rate is still low which a great challenge to universalization of elementary education. Furthermore, the scheme suffers from many operational problems. There are inadequate infrastructural facilities, irregular supervision. There are also inadequate and untrained teachers in schools. The teachers are mostly over burdened with non-academic activities for which the quality education has destroyed.

To overcome the above mentioned problems and to make the scheme effective and fruitful the following measures should be undertaken:

1. To reduce the drop-outs of the students, there is need for creation of mass awareness among the parents. There is also need for raising the level of consciousness among rural woman for educating the girl child. Special efforts should be made to bring back the school drop-out children in to the field of elementary education.
2. To increase the rate of attendance there is need of mobilization of the parents and community supports. Furthermore, the support of parents-teacher-Association, Mother-Teacher-Association, Village-Education-Community are very vital in enhancing the attendance rate.
3. To make elementary education more qualitative, there is need of adequate posting of skilled teachers in the elementary schools as per the norms of Right to Education (RTE).
4. For making the teacher available for teaching, they should not be assigned with no-academic activities. These activities should be done by private organization and NGOs.
5. To improve the supervision and administration of the scheme there is need for creation of separate administrative machinery. The supervisory officers should be engaged in full time for suggesting and improve teaching learning process.
6. Education develops in a good environment. Thus a suitable environment should be provided to improve the learning capacity of the students.
7. Emphasis should be given on proper infrastructural development and suitable sanitary condition to attract the student towards school.

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