



ROLE OF SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH

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Abstract

Since the inception of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), there has been faster acceleration of education in every nook and cranny across the Indian states and its territories. SSA is a comprehensive educational drive for the Universalization of Elementary Education, which was a pious dream of the country even after the attainment of more than 60 years of independence. SSA by reaching the unreached children under its canopy has brought far reaching reformation in the educational scenario especially in remote areas such as Arunachal Pradesh whose literacy rate is far below the national scenario. Inclusive education being the integral part of SSA aimed at equalizing the Children with Special Needs (CWSN) with other regular children in a normal educational setup along with other basic facilities for them. Although the move for inclusive education initiation started lately the country, a ray of hope is seen with the implementation of numbers of programmes and policies for these children fall under CWSN category across country. Complying with the central government policy, the state of Arunachal Pradesh through SSA programme has taken a concrete step in reaching the normal children as well as a CWSN in the field of education which have been highlighted in this article.

Keywords: CWSN, Interventions, Inclusive Education, SSA.

Introduction

Arunachal Pradesh being late starter in the modern educational development always stays behind the literacy rate in comparison to the national scenario. Regarding the development of elementary education which is known to be the backbone of educational system it was only after independence some serious steps were taken by the Indian Government for starting of education in the state. Since the territory was hidden to the people of India during the ancient and medieval period, the system of formal education in particular had been absent in territory. The history of education in Arunachal reveals that the north – west portion of Kameng district, the mythological education used to be imparted through Buddhist monastery; otherwise the formal system of education was initiated in Adi area during British period. The first ventured school was opened by the local people of East Siang District at Pasighat during 1918. The Adi of Dibang valley also opened a similar school at Dambuk in 1992. The medium of teaching in both the schools were Assamese. After passing out Class- III standard the students of both the schools had to go to Sadiya middle school manage by American Baptist Mission for further studies.

For improving the quality and conditions of elementary education in the country SSA was launched in whole country as an integrated and comprehensive programme in the year 2001-02. In Arunachal Pradesh it was first introduced in three districts i.e. Tirap, Tawang and East Kameng districts during 2001-02 and remaining twelve district in the year 2002-03.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is a historic stride towards achieving the long cherished goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) through a time- bound integrated approach in partnership with states. SSA, which promises to change the faces of elementary education sector of the country, aims to provide useful and quality elementary education to all children in the 6-14 age groups by 2010.

The SSA is an effort to recognize the needs for improving the performance of the school system and to provide community owned quality elementary education in the mission mode. It also envisages bringing of gender and social gaps.

The major characteristics of SSA are:

- A programme with a clear time frame for universal elementary education.
- A response to the demand for quality basic education all over the country.
- An opportunity for promoting social justice through basic education.
- An effort at effectively involving the Panchayati Raj Institutions, School Management Committees, Parents' Teachers' Associations, Tribal Autonomous Councils and the other grass roots level structures in the management of elementary school.
- An expression of political will for universal elementary education across the country.
- A Partnership between Central, State and Local Government.



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

Objectives of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan aims to provide useful and relevant elementary education for all children in the 6 to 14 years age group by 2010. There is also another goal to bridge social, regional and gender gaps, with the active participation of the community in the management of schools. Following Guarantee Centre, Alternate School, and 'Back to School' camp by 2003.

- All school children should complete five years of primary schooling by 2007.
- All school children should complete eight years of schooling by the year 2010.
- Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life.
- Bridge all gender gap and social category gap at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary education level by the year 2010.
- Universal retention by 2010.

Major Areas of Intervention in SSA

- Education of out- of-school children (Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative Innovative Education).
- Quality Improvement.
- Special Focus Group.
- Research and Evaluation.
- Management Structure and Instructional Capacity Building.
- Community Mobilization.
- Civil Works.
- Monitoring and MIS.
- Financial Management and Procurement.

The SSA-RTE is committed to see desired changes in the state to ensure education through improved teacher availability and time on task; a warm, encouraging, interactive and child friendly atmosphere in the school; learning through activity, discovery and exploration; more inclusive classroom participation; focus on higher order learning with objective and building of child knowledge, potential and talents; and a greater degree of awareness or deliberation on quality aspect in SMCs. As such the overall goals of SSA have been aligned with the legally mandated norms and standards and free entitlement mandated by RTE Act, 2009.

Role of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan for Inclusive Education

Regarding Inclusive education it has gained immense attention from various international, national or regional forums in past few years which has resulted in greater awareness and increased sensitivity towards disable children. District Primary Education Programme (DPEP, 1994) provided further impetus to existing efforts. The Equal Opportunities and Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 1995 was comprehensive breakthrough legislation that provided for education and economic rehabilitation of people with disabilities. It states that free education for children with disabilities up to the age of 18 years must be provided in an appropriate environment. Further SSA focus on providing quality elementary education to all children in the age group 6-14 years. Inclusive education is an integral component of SSA. Although the initiation started late, a hope of ray could be seen with the implementation of various plans and policies for these children across country. In case of Arunachal Pradesh the government is implementing various efforts to make inclusive education a grand success one. In an effort to bring all categories of children in the schools various interventions and efforts were adopted by the state government, the numbers of CWSN were identified from different districts of the state and many of them were enrolled in the schools under inclusive education.

Table-1: Table Showing District-Wise CWSN for the Years 2015-16 in Arunachal Pradesh

S. No	District Name	No. of CWSN Identified	No. of CWSN for Budgeting, Excluding Special Schools and Non- Certified LD
1.	Anjaw	260	257
2.	Changlang	487	410
3.	Dibang Valley	105	99
4.	East Kameng	616	526
5.	East Siang	608	435



6.	Kra Daadi	237	210
7.	Kurung Kumey	248	221
8.	Lohit	194	190
9.	Longding	333	333
10.	L Dibang Valley	301	301
11.	L Subansiri	841	751
12.	Namsai	330	270
13.	Papumpare	1056	699
14.	Siang	285	230
15.	Tawang	325	203
16.	Tirap	282	282
17.	Upper Siang	109	99
18.	Upper Subansiri	402	324
19.	West Kameng	326	235
20.	West Siang	395	388
TOTAL		7740	6463

Source: SSA Rajya Mission, Itanagar

Table-1 depicts that there were total 7740 numbers of children who fall under children with special needs (CWSN) category in the various districts of Arunachal Pradesh. It is also understood from the table that the Papumpare district has a highest numbers of children with a total of 1056 numbers of children fall under CWSN category which was followed by Lower Subansiri district with a total 841 numbers of children fall under CWSN category respectively. On the other hand in the Upper Siang district lowest numbers of children identified under CWSN category were found. The table also shows that out of total 7740 numbers of children identified as CWSN category by the authority only 6463 numbers of children were included for the budgeting which excluded the special schools and non- certified learning disability.

Table-2: Table Showing Category-Wise CWSN for the Year 2015-16 in Arunachal Pradesh

S. No	Category	No. Identified	No. of CWSN Enrolled in Schools	No. of CWSN Covered through HBE
1	Low Vision	2243	2189	54
2	Blindness	55	30	25
3	Hearing Impairment	2122	2122	0
4	Speech Impairment	698	698	0
5	Orthopedically Impaired	609	609	0
6	Cerebral Palsy	98	88	10
7	Mental Retardation	262	254	8
8	Learning Disability	1277	1277	0
9	Multiple Disability	366	299	67
10	Autism Spectrum Disorder	10	10	0
TOTAL		7740	7576	164

Source: SSA Rajya Mission, Itanagar

Regarding category wise division of the CWSN in the state which is depicted in the table-2 shows that the maximum numbers of identified children were having low vision problems with a total of 2243 children out of which 2189 were enrolled in various schools of Arunachal Pradesh. The table also indicates that 2122 numbers of children in the state were having hearing impairment problem which is a grave concern for the authority. The table also indicates that out of total 7740 numbers of children identified as CWSN category in the state 7576 were enrolled in the schools and the remaining children were not enrolled in the schools till date.

Provision for Children with Special Needs under Inclusive Education in Arunachal Pradesh

The state of Arunachal Pradesh is providing many provisions for the benefits and education of Children with Special Needs (CWSN) under inclusive education. Some of the major provisions are:

- Screening & Identification of the children in the schools and outside to find out children with special needs.



- Disability Assessment/ Medical assessment Camps are also organized from time to time on regular basis to assess the degree of disability.
- Aids & Appliances in the form of materials support are provided to the children with special needs which included Braille Books & Low Vision Kits etc.
- Therapeutic services are also conducted to assist the child to overcome their limitations in the most possible way.
- Corrective Surgeries are also conducted to the children with special needs learners whose defect can be corrected.
- Home based Education is also provided by the authority for easy accessibility of education by the children with special needs.
- Escort/ Transport allowances are also provided for easy transportation of CWSN learners to the schools.
- Inclusive Education Resource Room Services are also provided in each district to assist teachers.
- Parents Training are also conducted to sensitize them of the importance and the needs of CWSN learners and inclusive education.
- Teachers Training on inclusive education are also conducted from time to time in the state on the regular basis to train the teachers how to handle CWSN learners.
- Resource Persons are also appointed for academic support under Block Resource Centre to support the teachers to handle CWSN learners.

The above mentioned are some of the provisions made by the government of Arunachal Pradesh for the children with special needs under inclusive education.

Major Initiatives and Achievement under SSA to Achieve Quality Education in the State

The implementation of SSA programme has brought a tremendous change in the field of elementary education the entire states of our nation. This programme brought both quality and quantity education in the states. The major initiatives and achievement under SSA to achieve quality education in the state as issued by State Project Director, SSA Rajya Mission:

- 1434 PS, 583 UPS, 154 Residential Schools, 12 hundred bedded hostels in existing UPS, and 48 KGBVs have been made functional so far.
- 446 Primary Teachers and 2115 Upper Primary Teachers including 34 HTs have been recruited so far under SSA.
- 99 Block Resource Centres (BRCs) and 1 Urban Resource Centre (URC) with permanent buildings and other facilities are made functional for academic support to the schools and teachers.
- 4514 additional classroom, 42 toilets and drinking water facilities for upgraded upper primary schools, 2030 boys and 3280 girls toilets (including 1504 for boys and 545 for girls under “Swachh Bharat: Swachh Vidhyalaya” Programme), 315 CWSN toilets, 1849 Drinking Water, boundary wall in 1042 schools, electricity in 626 schools, 59608 furnitures, 806 ramps with handrails and 313 handrails in existing ramps have been made available till date under SSA.
- Out of School Children (OoSC) have dropped down to 1844 (1750 fresh + 94 continue) from 74213.
- 7214 untrained elementary teacher have been enrolled in two years d.el.ed. (ODL) programme of IGNOU for acquiring professional trainer as per NCTE norms complying the RTE Act of which 3823 have already appeared final year examination in June 2015.
- The minimum qualification as per NCTE norms has been made mandatory for the recruitment of teachers.
- Implementation of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) has been made compulsory in all primary and upper primary schools of the state.
- PINDICS has been rolled out for tracking the performance of the teachers in addition to revised quality monitoring tools to ensure quality education.
- The graded reader for EVS for classes I and II developed under SSA by SCERT as per state specific socio-cultural, economic and linguistic context has been introduced from this session.
- Training packages on languages, mathematics, EVS and Science have been developed, and are being used to impart need based training to in-service teachers.
- Supplementary materials on folktales of major tribes have been developed to be used in the form of reading corner for the children of classes I and II for the development of their language skills.
- Tablets have been introduced in 19 selected schools of the district head quarters across the state for development of language and mathematics skills among the children of class 1 and 2 on pilot basis.
- A set of library books in 2489 primary schools and in 319 upper primary schools has been provided.
- Kits have been provided to all schools to promote science and mathematics at upper primary level.



- State Level Learning Achievement Survey (SLAS) to assess the learning achievement levels of students of classes 2, 4 and 7 in different subjects areas in order undertake require interventions for enhance learning outcome visible in next round survey have been conduct, and report writing is in progress.
- Enrolment drive and campaign, publicity on RTE through print media, community awareness flex hoardings, posters, pamphlets, CDs, etc, has been initiate across the state.

If we look into the major initiatives and achievement under SSA to achieve quality education in the State, there is no iota of doubt that the SSA is playing a tremendous role in developing quality education. Along with quality education SSA programme is also playing a major role for the universalization of elementary education in the state which is highly appreciable.

Conclusion

If we look at the educational scenario of the other state it is realized that our state still needs a giant leap to match up with other states of the country. But there is no iota of doubt that after the introduction of SSA programme in the state of Arunachal Pradesh there was a tremendous development of education in the state especially at elementary level of education which is highly appreciable. Regarding the education of the children fall under CWSN category many efforts are being made by the state government through various interventions in compliance with SSA programme under inclusive education. It is also equally true that to reach out the population of the children fall under CWSN category more practical and concrete action from the central and state government is required. If we really want all categories of our children to have access to quality education the ideas and plans must not be confined to the official papers and documents only. Rather, practical side of the policies needs to be implemented with greater efforts from the government and supports from all the community members for greater interest of all children in general and CWSN in particular.

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