

A Study On The Impact Of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan On Quality Of Elementary Education In Mizoram

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Abstract

The study was conducted to find out the impact of SSA programmes on various issues related to equity and quality of the elementary education in Mizoram. The sample for the study consisted of 100 elementary schools from Government and SSA schools only, selected from the sample districts viz. Aizawl, Kolasib, Lawngtlai and Serchhip. Data was collected through questionnaires, information schedule, observation schedule and checklist prepared by adapting Quality Monitoring Tools developed by the NCERT. The results of the study indicated that SSA had provided different interventions and innovations which brought about equity and quality education at the elementary level of education in Mizoram. At the same time, it was found that there were some issues in some areas that needed to be considered for effective implementation of the programme.

Keywords: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Impact, Quality education, Elementary education.

Introduction:

In India the first landmark on universalisation of elementary education was laid down by the constitution which provided for free and compulsory education for all children between 6 to 14 years in its Article 45(Lalthanzira, 2014). In spite of the efforts taken, the goal of universal elementary education was still a distant dream. Due to this consideration the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act was passed in August, 2009. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has been the most recent and effective interventions taken up to universalise elementary education in the country.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan(SSA) was a Government of India's flagship programme for Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner, as mandated by 86th amendment to the constitution of India, which made free and compulsory education to the children of 6-14 years of age group, a Fundamental Right. As an intervention programme, SSA had been operational since 2000-2001. However its root went back to

1993-1994 when the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) was launched with the aim of achieving the objective of Universal Primary Education.

SSA aimed to provide useful and relevant elementary education for all children. It aimed to bridge social, regional and gender gaps, with the active participation of the community in the management of schools at various levels (MHRD, Department of School Education and Literacy, 2010). It also aimed to allow children to develop their potential both spiritually and materially and to inculcate value based learning. It was a response to the demand for quality basic education all over the country with a clear time frame for universal elementary education. It provided opportunity for promoting justice education, an expression of political will for UEE with a partnership between the central, state and local government.

The objectives of SSA were:

- 1) All children in school, Education Guarantee Centres, Alternate Schools, Back-to-School Camp by 2013.
- 2) All children complete five years of primary schooling by 2017
- 3) All children complete eight years of elementary schooling by 2010.
- 4) Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life.
- 5) Bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary education level by 2010.
- 6) Universal retention by 2010.

Under the programme of SSA, several interventions were introduced which included Institutional Reforms, Sustainable Financing, Community Ownership, Institutional Capacity Building, Improving mainstream Educational Administration, Community Based Monitoring with Full Transparency, Habitation as a Unit of Planning and Thrust on Quality.

Rationale of the study:

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was launched in the State of Mizoram initially in Saiha District as a pre-project and subsequently in the other districts in 2001-2002. During the pre-project activities the Mizoram SSA Rajya Mission Rules, 2001 was passed by the State Legislative Assembly, which was published in the Mizoram Gazette on 1st August 2001. Henceforth, the project has been taken up with much enthusiasm and zeal by all personnel involved in the task.

Several interventions were taken up by SSA Mission. SSA Mission along with the various objectives of providing Universal Elementary Education also aimed to provide access (availability of schools to fulfil demand) and quality (provision of suitable infrastructure, trained teacher and effective pedagogy in schools).

Any scheme, project or programme, however ideal it may be, depends largely on the manner in which it is executed and

implemented. The real success or failure of the programme can in no way be determined only from the information received by the implementing agencies. The SSA Mission similarly, needs to be carefully and objectively studied so that a true picture of its success or failure in achieving its objectives may be empirically determined. With the implementation of SSA and all the interventions provided by the scheme in Mizoram for the past many years, it is felt that a study to find out its impact on quality education at elementary level in Mizoram is greatly needed now.

Objectives of the study:

- i) To find out the impact of SSA in improving suitable infrastructure to elementary schools.
- ii) To study the teacher profile and teacher position in elementary schools.
- iii) To find out the detail of classroom organisation.
- iv) To find out the role of SSA in improving teachers' qualification.

Methodology:

Research Approach: Descriptive Survey method was followed for the conduct of the study.

Population and Sample: The population for the study consisted of all elementary schools (Primary and Upper-Primary schools under Government and SSA management), all SMCs, District and State officials of SSA and all the Government Elementary School Teachers in Mizoram. The sample for the study comprised of 100 elementary schools out of which, 60 were Primary schools and 40 were Upper-Primary schools, District and State officials, all teachers of the sample schools and two SMC members each from the sample schools. Stratified multi-stage random sampling technique was followed for selection of the sample. For generalizing the findings, a simple statistical process (percentage) was used.

Tools used: The following tools were developed by the investigator for the conduct of the study.

1. Questionnaire for collecting data related to quality by adapting the Quality Monitoring Tools prepared by NCERT.
2. Information Schedule to collect information from the state, districts, schools and SMCs.
3. Observation Schedule and Checklist for investigator's field visit.

Delimitation of the study:

The present study was delimited to four (4) districts of Mizoram viz, Aizawl, Kolasib, Lawngtlai and Serchhip Districts.

Data Analysis and Interpretations:

The information collected for the study had been analysed using different indicators as suggested from the objectives. The results of the analysis of data and its interpretation were as given below.

A. On Basic Infrastructure:

One important key indicator, which may be said to have direct or indirect effect on improving the quality of the teaching learning process, is basic infrastructure facilities. These facilities include the quality of School Building and other facilities like Toilet, Electricity, Boundary wall, Playground, Water connection and Child-Friendly Element.

Table-1 Distribution of Schools by Type of School Building

District	Type of School	School Building				Total
		Pucca	Semi-Pucca	Assam Type	Kachcha	
Aizawl	Primary	20 (80%)	5 (20%)	-	-	25
	Upper Primary	16 (84.21 %)	3 (15.29%)	-	-	19
Kolasib	Primary	6 (75%)	2 (25%)	-	--	8
	Upper Primary	5(71.43 %)	2 (28.58%)	-	-	7
Lawngtlai	Primary	17 (85%)	3 (15%)	-	-	20
	Upper Primary	5 (62%)	3 (37.5%)	-	-	8
Serchhip	Primary	6 (85.71 %)	1 (14.29%)	-	-	7
	Upper Primary	5(83.33 %)	1 (16.67%)	-	-	6
Total		80	20	-	-	100

Table -1 shows the distribution of schools by the type of school building. Out of the sample 100 schools, 80% had pucca building with RCC walls and floor. The rest of the schools, 20% were found to have semi- pucca type building

with RCC floors and brick walls up to skirting level. The quality of construction in majority of the schools visited was good while few of the schools had buildings of very good quality.

Table-2 Number of Schools Having Different Facilities

District	No. of Sample	Common Toilet	Girls Toilet	Availability of facility					
				Teachers Toilet	Electricity Connection	Boundary Wall	Playground	Water Connection	Child Friendly Element
Aizawl	44	21	41	41	44	37	41	44	27
Kolasib	15	6	11	15	14	9	15	13	7
Lawngtlai	28	12	21	28	26	20	28	25	12
Serchhip	13	2	10	13	12	9	13	13	6
Total	100	41	83	97	96	75	97	95	52

A perusal of Table-2 reveals that out of the 100 schools visited, 41% had Common Toilet while Separate Toilet for Girls was found in 83% of the sample schools. It was also found that Teacher's Toilet was available in 97% of the sample schools. Electricity connection was available with 96% of the school. Boundary Wall was received and utilized by 75% of the sample schools, Playground was available in 97% schools, Water Connection was available in 95% of the schools visited and Child Friendly Element was received and utilized by only 52% of the sample schools.

B. School and Classroom Environment

An important aspect of quality education is not only the availability of proper facilities in the classroom but also the school and classroom environment like Teacher-Pupil Relationship, Classroom Communication and Student's Participation were also considered when determining quality of education at elementary level.

Table-3 Distribution of Schools on The Basis of Classroom Environment and Practices

District	Teacher-Pupil Relationship			Classroom Communication			Students Participation		
	Good	Average	Bad	Good	Average	Bad	Good	Average	Bad
Aizawl	32	12	-	24	20	-	14	30	-
Kolasib	9	6	-	8	7	-	8	7	-
Lawngtlai	15	13	-	19	9	-	11	17	-

Serchhip	7	6	-	8	5	-	6	7	-
Total	63	37	-	59	41	-	39	61	-
Percentage	63%	37%	-	59%	41%	-	39%	61%	-

The investigators on visit to the schools found that in majority of the schools, rapport between teachers and students were found to be good (63%). Classroom Communication in majority of the schools (59%) was found to be good while the participation of students in the teaching learning process was found to be Good in only 39% of the sample schools.

C. Teaching Learning Material

The following table (Table 4 &5) shows the kind of classroom facilities that were available as per the report from the school. The spot visit was made to have factual verification of the different facilities related to the classroom which were meant for the students.

Table-4 Percentage of Schools Having Different Classroom Facilities

District	No. of Sample	Percentage of Sample Having Facilities		
		Blackboard	Bench and Desks	Display of TLM
Aizawl	44	44 (100%)	44 (100%)	19 (43.18%)
Kolasib	15	15 (100%)	15 (100%)	7 (46.67%)
Lawngtlai	28	28 (100%)	28 (100%)	13 (46.43%)
Serchhip	13	13 (100%)	13 (100%)	4 (30.77%)
Total	100	100 (100%)	100 (100%)	43 (43%)

A perusal of the table shows that all the sample schools (100%) were found to have Blackboards in the classrooms. Adequate furniture in the form of benches and desks was also found in all the sample schools (100%). On the status of display of TLM in the classroom,

43.18% of the sample schools in Aizawl District were found to display it while the percentage of sample schools displaying TLM were 46.67, 46.43 and 30.77 respectively for Kolasib, Lawngtlai and Serchhip Districts.

Table-5 Types of Available TLM

Types of TLM	Number of School			
	Aizawl	Kolasib	Lawngtlai	Serchhip
Globes	21 (47.73%)	8 (53.33%)	19 (67.86%)	7 (53.85%)
Charts	44 (100%)	14 (93.33%)	26 (92.86%)	10 (76.92%)
Maps	44 (100%)	11 (73.33%)	27 (96.43%)	11 (84.62%)
Model	16 (36.36%)	6 (40%)	9 (32.14%)	5 (38.46%)

Dictionary	28 (63.64%)	8 (53.33%)	16 (57.14%)	4 (30.77%)
Mathematical Instrument	21 (47.73%)	5 (33.33%)	8 (28.57%)	4 (30.77%)
Atlas	3 (6.88%)	-	-	-
Science Kit	5 (11.36%)	2 (13.33%)	1 (3.57%)	-

The types of teaching learning materials available in the sample schools visited by the investigator can be seen in the above table (Table-5). The TLM found in the schools were Globes, Charts, Maps, Models, Dictionary, Mathematical instruments, Atlas And Science Kits. A large majority of the sample schools were found to have Charts And Maps while few schools had Atlas as a teaching aids. Dictionary, Mathematical Instruments and Science Kits were also used by some of the schools as teaching aids.

D. Teacher and Teacher Preparation

Education, at any level could be assessed by the quality of the teacher it has and the kind of preparation of teachers that is being provided. This means that when one talks about assessing the quality of education, one important issue that needs to be considered is the teachers profile. This includes the qualification of the teachers, training experience of the teachers and their ability to develop their own TLM.

Table-6 Profile of Primary School Teachers by Qualification

District	Below HSLC	HSLC	HSSLC	Graduate	P.G.	Not Specified	TOTAL
Aizawl	-	12	23	94	9	-	138
Kolasib	1	2	8	25	5	-	41
Lawngtlai	-	6	41	99	7	-	153
Serchhip	-	2	6	28	3	1	40
TOTAL	1	22	78	246	24	1	372
Percentage	0.27%	5.91%	20.97%	66.13%	6.45%	.27%	

Table-6 gives us the profile of 372 Primary School Teachers who were selected as samples for the present study. Out of the sample teachers, .27% had educational qualification below HSLC, 5.91% passed HSLC, 20.97% of

the teachers had an education upto HSSLC and 66.13% were Graduates. Only 6.45% of the teachers were found to have a Post- Graduate degree while 0.27% did not specify his educational qualification.

Table-7 Profile of Upper Primary School Teachers by Qualification

District	Below HSLC	HSLC	HSSLC	Graduate	P.G.	Not Specified	TOTAL
Aizawl	3	11	15	121	29	-	179

Kolasib	-	1	3	27	7	-	38
Lawngtlai	-	2	5	29	9	1	46
Serchhip	-	2	4	33	11	-	50
TOTAL	3	16	27	210	56	1	313
Percentage	0.96%	5.11%	8.63%	67.09%	17.89%	0.32%	

Table-7 gives us the profile of 313 Upper Primary School Teachers who were selected as samples for the present study. A perusal of the table shows that out of the total sample teachers, 0.96% had educational qualification below HSLC, 5.11% had passed HSLC, 8.63%

of the teachers had education up to HSSLC and 67.09% are Graduates. Only 17.89% of the teachers were found to have a Post- Graduate degree while 0.32% did not respond to the item in the schedule on educational qualification.

Table-8 Primary School Teachers who attended Training during 2015-2019

District	No.of Sample	Number of Teachers Attending Training				
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Aizawl	138	75 (54.35%)	94 (68.12%)	102 (68.12%)	118 (85.51%)	121 (87.68%)
Kolasib	41	27 (65.85%)	29 (70.73%)	41 (100%)	27 (65.85%)	32 (78.05%)
Lawngtlai	153	51 (33.33%)	63 (41.18%)	84 (54.90%)	97 (63.40%)	124 (81.05%)
Serchhip	40	18 (45%)	21 (52.5%)	24 (60%)	26 (65%)	31 (77.5%)
TOTAL	372	171 (45.97%)	207 (55.65%)	251 (67.47%)	268 (72.04%)	308 (82.80%)

Table-8 shows the number of Primary School Teachers selected as samples, who had attended one or another kind of training during 2015-2019. A perusal of the table reveals that in 2015, only 45.97% teachers, attended training. The highest percentage was found in Kolasib District (65.85%). In 2016, 55.65% of

the sample teachers attended training, in 2017, 67.47% of the sample teachers attended training while the percentage was 72.04 in 2018 and 82.80% in 2019. Although the percentage of teachers attending training was not satisfactory, one encouraging picture was the increase in attendance from year to year.

Table-9 Upper Primary School Teachers who attended Training during 2015-2019

District	No.of Sample	Number of Teachers Attending Training
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		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Aizawl	179	86 (48.04%)	97 (54.19%)	107 (59.78%)	132 (73.74%)	144 (80.45%)
Kolasib	38	19 (50%)	21 (55.26%)	23 (60.53%)	20 (52.68%)	31 (81.58%)
Lawngtlai	46	22 (47.82%)	25 (54.35%)	29 (63.04%)	31 (67.40%)	35 (76.08%)
Serchhip	50	21 (42%)	29 (58%)	25 (50%)	32 (64%)	38 (76%)
TOTAL	313	148 (47.28%)	172 (54.95%)	184 (58.79%)	215 (68.69%)	248 (79.23%)

Table-9 gives information about the number of Upper Primary School teachers who had attended training during 2015-2019. A detailed study of the table shows that the number of teachers attending training increased

from year to year. In 2015, only 47.28% attended training of one or another kind while the percentage was 54.95, 58.79, 68.69 and 79.23 in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 respectively.

Table-10 Ability of Teachers to Develop TLM

District	Total No. of Sample	Able to Develop TLM		Training for Developing TLM	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
Aizawl	317	198 (62.46%)	119 (37.54%)	109 (34.38%)	208 (65.62%)
Kolasib	79	47 (59.49%)	32 (40.51)	23 (29.11%)	56 (70.89%)
Lawngtlai	199	118 (59.30%)	81 (40.70%)	39 (19.60%)	160 (80.40%)
Serchhip	90	52 (57.78%)	38 (42.22%)	17 (18.89%)	73 (81.11%)
TOTAL	685	415 (60.58%)	270 (39.42%)	188 (27.45%)	497 (72.55%)

Out of the sample teachers, 60.58% reported their ability to develop teaching aids, while as many as 39.42% admitted their inability to develop TLM. 27.45% of the sample teachers also reported that they had attended training for developing TLM while as many as 72.55% reported as not having attended any training in connection with development of TLM.

Findings of the Study:

An analysis of the information collected showed the following findings -

- 1) Majority of the schools (80%) had pucca type of building while 20% had semi-pucca building. Regarding the quality of construction of the school building, majority of the schools visited were found to have good quality school

- buildings, while few of the schools had buildings of a very quality.
- 2) With regard to availability of essential facilities, it was found that 41% of the schools visited had common toilet, while the percentage of schools which had separate toilet for girls was 83%. Teacher's toilet was available in 97% schools. Electricity connection was available in 96% of the sample schools. 75% schools were found to have boundary wall, playground was available with 97% of the schools visited by the investigator, water connection was found in 95% schools and child friendly elements was available in 52% schools of the sample schools.
 - 3) Teacher-student relationship in majority of the schools (63%) was found to be good, the classroom communication in majority of the schools (59%) was found to be good while student's participation was found to be good only in 39% of the schools visited.
 - 4) The classrooms of all the schools visited were equipped with adequate benches and desks for students and blackboards were also found in all the classrooms. It was also found that all the schools had proper classrooms with sufficient light. Although all the schools were found to have one or another kind of TLM, only 43% were found displaying the same inside the classroom.
 - 5) Out of the 372 Primary School Teachers taken as samples for the study, 27% were found to have educational qualification below HSLC, 5.91% were HSLC qualified, 20.97% were HSSLC passed, 66.13% were Graduates, and only 6.45% were found to possess Post-Graduate degree and while 0.27% of the sample teachers did not respond to the item on qualification
 - 6) Among the Upper Primary School teachers, 0.96% were found to have qualification below HSLC, 5.11% were HSLC qualified, 8.63% were HSSLC passed and 67.09% were Graduates. Post- Graduate degree was possessed by only 17.89% of the sample UPS teachers while 0.32% did not specify their educational qualification.
 - 7) The percentage of Primary School teachers who attended training in 2015 was 45.97%. 55.65% in 2016 and 67.47% in 2017 of the sample teachers attended training of one or another kind while the percentage of attendance of training programme was 72.04% and 82.80% respectively for 2018 and 2019.
 - 8) Among the sample Upper Primary School Teachers selected for the study, only 47.28% attended training in 2015. In the year 2016, 54.95% attended training, it was 58.79% in 2017. In the year 2018, 68.69% teachers attended training while it was 79.23% in 2019.
 - 9) The information collected from the teachers revealed that quite a good number of the teachers (60.58%) were able to develop their own TLM. At the same time, the same information however showed that only 27.45% had attended training related to development of TLM.
 - 10) The different kinds of TLMs available in the schools were Globes, Charts, Maps, Models, Atlas, Dictionary, Mathematical instruments, and Science Kits. Charts and Maps were most commonly used (100%) as TLM by the sample schools visited. While Atlas was least used (6.88%) by the sample schools as TLM.

Suggestions:

After carefully studying the findings in detail, the following suggestions were made so that the programme of SSA Mission will have stronger

and deeper impact in ensuring improvement of the elementary education in Mizoram.

1. There should be an active Monitoring Mechanism whereby all the funds released to the SMCs should be accounted for, to see that proper utilization is ensured. Physical verification of the utilization may be done time and again for better results.
2. All the teachers must be acquainted with the facilities provided by the SSA to have internal monitoring of the various schemes under SSA.
3. Necessary steps must be taken to ensure that every teacher attends training at least once a year. This may be done in consultation with the State's Department of Education.
4. Training for development of low cost teaching aids must be organised to ensure judicious use of teachers grant.

Conclusions:

The following conclusions were drawn from the analysis of the findings:

- 1) Majority of the schools having pucca or semi-pucca buildings were constructed out of funds received from SSA. Moreover the provision of Common Toilet, Separate Toilet for Girls, Teachers Toilet, Boundary Wall, Electricity and Child-Friendly Element clearly indicated that SSA programme had brought about improvement in Infrastructural facilities at the elementary level of education which is one important indicator of quality.
- 2) Majority of the schools were found to have Drinking water facilities provided from SSA funds.
- 3) The classroom environment of teacher-pupil relationship and classroom communication was found to be satisfactory, while an improvement is needed with student's participation in the Teaching-Learning process in the classroom.
- 4) There were still unqualified teachers serving in both P/S and UPS.

- 5) Display of TLM was found in only 43% of the sample schools whereas there is an expectation of 100% display after teachers grant has been released every year.
- 6) The attendance in training of teachers (which should be attended by all the teachers), was found to be unsatisfactory as there were still a large percentage of teachers not undergoing any training every year.
- 7) Only Conventional types of Teaching Aids were found in the schools.

The above conclusions and the detailed analysis clearly indicated that SSA had provided different interventions and innovations which brought about quality education at the elementary education in Mizoram. However, it was also found that there were issues in some areas that needed to be considered for successful implementation of SSA programme.

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