

STRUCTURAL ASPECTS OF SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN

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Abstract: life is meant for progress and development for humanity. It is ever understood that progress can only be made in society with providing of opportunities to all for progressive growth and development. One can realise his dream of development in society with getting an opportunity to learn and educate. It is realised with help of various educational programmes being run from time to time in India. Several educational programmes have been launched to provide education at school level. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has been viewed as a pioneer programme to provide equal opportunity to all for schooling. It implemented the idea of free and compulsory education for all in true sense, as previously conceived under Article 45 after independence. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has been instrumental in bringing all children to school with effective implementation, management and structural aspects. The structural aspects have been useful in disseminating powers and responsibilities from the top level of management to the ground level of school as a unit. It provided the much required impetus to the universalisation of elementary education. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan as an educational programme is viewed as a milestone in realizing the idea of education for all.

1.0 Introduction

Education is a developmental process for the betterment of humanity. It is education through which man can learn life skills. It is expected to draw more excellence for humanity. Education is meant for the benefit of all people and it must be ensured that they become aware of the advantages which education can bring to their lives. The education is needed to make life work effectively. It is not just any kind of education, but it is an education which may discipline the mind, enrich the spirit and improve the living conditions of an individual. The ultimate aim of education is to progress the humanity. It is meant for the development of the body, mind and soul. It is a direct beneficial process for humanity as a whole.

Knowledge progressed with passage of time from generation to generation. The accumulated knowledge always seeped through ages and was termed as education. Education has been developing with the passage of time. Throughout history man learnt from nature and his immediate environment. The environment of man included the environment of his home, surrounding and nature. With the dawn of Middle Ages education was provided in Ashrams by the 'Gurus'. It was the first and foremost effort by the humanity to provide education. It helped to streamline human efforts to educate humanity. After Middle Ages the concept of education developed more. Nalanda and Takshashila were hailed as the centre of learning is the highest proof of advancement of Indian Education System. People visited Indian continent from all over the world to gain education. India was considered as the cradle of the ancient system of education. The development of Indian education system was at the peak at that specific time.

The world level education system has developed with various interacting elements of culture, religion, philosophy of life and other related aspects. The Indian system of education walked a long distance to reach the present times. The education system of India passed from the religious and spiritual period of age to present system of education. The modern Indian education system has developed through various steps in India. Education commissions through decades helped to develop a proper system of education. Lord Macaulay introduced English in 1835 in India. Later different commissions were introduced such as Woods Despatch (1854), Hunter Commission (1882). Under 'Lord Curzon' educational reforms took place and later Indian Universities Act 1904 was introduced. The last considerable educational report under British reign was termed as Sargent Commission Report (1944). All these helped to lead education system in the per-independence era. Various articles and policies were introduced after independence by the Governments of different times to give impetus to education. The introduction of Article 45, Kothari Commission (1964), Policy of Education (1968) and later the National Policy of

Education introduced in 1986, helped to give momentum to education process. It was followed by the Programme of Action (1992) so as to follow up the policy of education.

The central government introduced the Mid-Day Meal in 1995 to bring the never enrolled children to the school environment. It was helpful in bringing the never admitted child to the educational environment of the school. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was introduced in 2001 to further elaborate the system of education with slogan of 'School Chale Hum' and 'Sab Paden, Sab Bade'. It infused the idea of schooling for all in a real manner. The National Curriculum Framework 2005 and Right to Education Act 2009, helped to boost the school and entire education system. India tried to improve the system of education with various policies and efforts made to uplift the national literacy from time to time.

2.0 Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (2001-02)

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was introduced to uplift the out of school child by way of bringing to school with providing free and compulsory education for all. It helped to attain universalisation of elementary education target. Primary education and upper primary education was made as a target to enroll all the children in nation. Quality improvement was given stress for attaining the target of universalisation of elementary education. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was a holistic programme to attain target of education for all. The idea of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was taken from District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) 1994, (SSA, 2014). For the universalisation of elementary education SSA was launched in the year 2001, under the leadership of then Prime Minister of India Shri Atal Bihari Vajpai.

"Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is Government of India's flagship programme for the achievement of universalization of elementary education in a time bound manner (SSA, 2014)" as mandated by the 86th constitutional amendment of India making free and compulsory education of age group 6-14 years.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) helped to remove and improve upon drawbacks in school education system at primary and upper primary level. The central Government started SSA as a holistic programme to achieve the universal access and retention of the child. It helped to provide free and compulsory education to children of age group 6-14 years. SSA was launched in the year 2001 for the universalisation of elementary education throughout nation. SSA got impetus with implementation of Right to Education Act (2009). Under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan nationwide facilities were provided for schooling such as teaching learning material in schools. Infrastructural facilities for schools, opening and maintenance of schools, Mid Day Meal provision was provided for better outcomes. It further included appointing quality teachers in schools, training for in-service teachers and fixing social responsibility for parent teacher participation. It was realized as 'school management committee' formation for looking into the school affairs.

"Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat", was a sub-programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan introduced in 2014, to cover more children under school education (Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat, 2014). It helped to uplift that child who fails to read and gain in early stages of school education. When the child is unable to read, he may lag behind in other school subjects. 'Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat' helped to improve early reading, writing and early mathematics. It catered to the need of class I and II children. It was introduced as an appraisal system under SSA. It further helped to realise timely distribution of school books and other school learning material for children (Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat, 2014).

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan strived to achieve the target of quality education for all with active community participation. The target of quality education in universalisation of elementary education was to be achieved in a mission mode (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, April, 2004). The major characteristics (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, April, 2004) of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan are as discussed under –

- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is a programme with time frame to achieve universalization of elementary education for all.
- To achieve the target of quality based basic education all over the nation.
- To bring social justice with the mean of the basic education.
- To involve all the grass root elements in the betterment of the process of education. It includes Panchayati Raj Institutions, school/village/urban slum management committee, parent's teacher association, mother teacher associations, tribal autonomous councils.
- To bring social responsibility for the realization of the universalization of the elementary education.

- To bring a partnership between the Centre, State and the Local Government for the realization of the universalization of the elementary education. (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, April, 2004).

"Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is being implemented in partnership with State Governments to cover the entire country and address needs of 192 million children in 1.1 million habitations (SSA, 2014). The programme seeks to open new schools in those habitations which do not have schooling facilities and strengthen existing school infrastructure through provision of additional class rooms, toilets, drinking water, maintenance grant and school improvement grants. Existing schools with inadequate teacher strength are provided with additional teachers, while the capacity of existing teachers is being strengthened by extensive training, grants for developing teaching-learning materials and strengthening of the academic support structure at the cluster, block and district level. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan seeks to provide quality elementary education including life skills. It has a special focus on girl's education and children with special needs. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan also seeks to provide computer education to bridge the digital divide" (SSA, 2014).

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan implementation is brought about with setting up of National Council, State Council and has divided responsibilities as per the bodies. All the associated bodies are working in coordination with each other and with the government machinery. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan lays emphasis upon the role of community, parents and teachers for its implementation.

The implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan includes several steps taken by the Government. The idea of free and compulsory education is implemented by Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan with the help of Right to Education Act 2009, (RTE Act, 2009) by providing grants, infrastructural facilities and creating teaching learning environment. The hierarchical structure of SSA helps to disperse funds and duties right from the top level of National Council upto the grass root level of a school. It includes the state level, district level and block level positions of all the functionaries in a well-defined manner. It helped to execute the process of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and its functioning.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is providing education to every child living in India. It caters to the needs of children living in the far flung areas, densely populated urban areas, tribal areas and inaccessible habitats. A school is managed with proper implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan by the school head. The school head keeps the school affairs running smoothly. Good quality education is provided properly to the children with free learning material and free food under Mid Day Meal. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan works to bridge the gender and social category gaps. The quality of learning is improved by the way of providing grant for all types of facilities required for school learning. Funds are provided under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan for opening new schools, providing alternate schooling facility for child, constructing additional classrooms, providing separate toilets for boys and girls, appointing new and regular teacher, providing in service teacher training, providing academic resource support, free textbooks and uniform. All these facilities helped to improve the learning achievement level of a child. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is implemented in its true spirit with proper check upon it at the grass root level.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan implements the idea of free and compulsory education upto age group 6-14 years with legal mandate of Right to Education Act 2009, (RTE Act, 2009). The Right to Education Act 2009 helped to attain the universalization of elementary education with universal access and retention. Right to Education Act was enforced as a Fundamental Right on 01 April 2010. It advocates education as a birth right of every child under the Right to Education Act 2009.

A child is provided access in the neighbourhood schools under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. It advocates the idea of all children in school. The social access is provided to the child with the help of Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS Centres) and Alternative and Innovative Education (AIE centres). It helps to upgrade the schooling facilities. SSA defines the responsibility of opening new schools within the limits/areas as the responsibility of the government. The up gradation and expansion of the existing schools is emphasized. Special training for age appropriate admission in schools is given under SSA with the implementation of RTE 2009. A community level school mapping exercise is carried out to identify never enrolled children under SSA. It is carried out by the state government, local authority and school management committee. The school mapping exercise is followed by immediate enrollment in the school. It helps the child to get admission in an age appropriate class.

SSA provides guidelines to provide residential facilities to the students in some special cases. It includes providing residential facility to children living in densely populated forest area or urban area. Only those children are entitled who are living without adult supervision such as deprived children and street children. Children such as rag pickers, begging, sex work, exposure to hard drug abuse, physical abuse and sexual exploitation are included in it. SSA provides schooling facility to such children with lodging facility provided in old unused buildings and creating new residential facilities.

2.1 Structure and Management of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

The management in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is done in a proper manner to get proper output. 'To manage is to forecast and plan, to organise, to command, to co-ordinate and to control. It is the art of getting things done through others' (Fayol, 1949). The management of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is done with the setting up of the management structure in a proper hierarchical manner. There is a long hierarchical structure starting from the top level represented by the centre government to the grass root level of a school. The hierarchy includes setting up of the national level, state level, district level and block level organizational structure. All these help to bring the coordination in the management of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan hierarchical structure is framed with harmonization of departmental and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan structure to run it smoothly. At centre level includes "a General Body chaired by Prime Minister of India, an Executive Committee and a Project Approval Board. In the states the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is implemented with the help of separately registered societies with staff deputed from the state government or appointed on contract basis" (MHRD, 2011). The formation of Advisory Council at the centre and state level is also advocated by the Right to Education Act 2009 for better implementation of SSA. 'The responsibility of providing school infrastructure, trained teachers and mid-day meal lies with all the State Education Departments and also with SCERT and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan' (MHRD, 2011).

a) National Level : Structure and Management

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan works through a well organised hierarchical structure of its own (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, April, 2004). At the center there is National Council including three bodies –

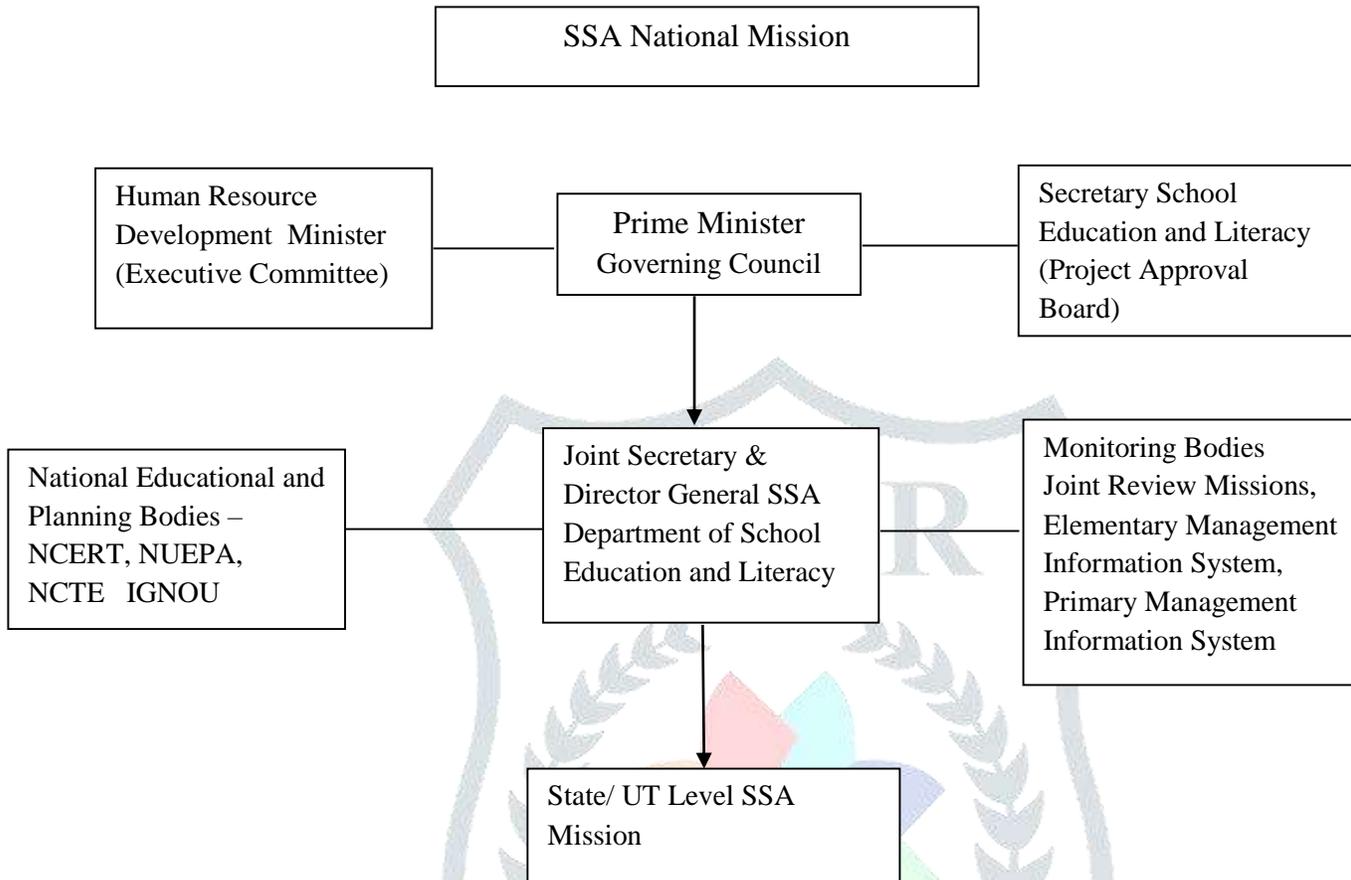
- i) Governing Council under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister of India.
- ii) The Executive Committee under the Human Resource Development Minister.
- iii) The Project Approval Board under the Secretary School Education and Literacy

The National Level Council of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan works for the upliftment of the level of elementary education in the whole nation. The Centre coordinates with all the States and UT for realization of the idea of universalization of the elementary education through the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. All the schemes and programmes of the Centre, State and UT however work for the better outcomes in the field of education. The Centre disperses funds for the State and UT in accordance to the policy decisions taken under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The Centre makes the policy amendments and issue directions to the States and UT from time to time under the Governing Council of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The Centre works for the education of child living in remote and inaccessible habitats through Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in collaboration with concerned States and UTs.

The aim of national level governing committee is to regulate the process of implementation of the programme in a holistic manner. The powers are distributed from the national level to the state level and further to the district level authorities. The power dissemination helps in proper control and coordination of the whole process in a logical manner. The fund flow mechanism and responsibilities are distributed in a proper way so as to allow smooth functioning of the whole programme. The involvement of the Prime Minister Governing Council helps to streamline the entire system of power dissemination in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. SSA is implemented as India's main programme for universalization of elementary education. Its overall goal includes universal access and retention, bridging of gender and social category gaps in education and enhancement of learning level of children throughout the nation.

Figure 1.1

National Level Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Management Structure



NCERT – National Council of Educational Research and Training

NUEPA – National University of Educational Planning and Administration

NCTE – National Council for Teacher Education

IGNOU – Indira Gandhi National Open University

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (2004, April). Manual for Planning and Appraisal. Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, MHRD. New Delhi.

Power and Responsibilities at National Level: Power and Responsibilities of the Governing Council includes policy making, planning and implementation of the policy for the elementary education. It reviews the budget provisions, resources and utilization of the resources. It helps to strengthen the partnership of the centre and the state for better implementation of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. It helps to carry out the involvement of political leaders, NGO's, private organisations and the whole private sector for the attainment of the universalization of the elementary education. Modification in financial norms and modus operandi is allowed under it. It directs the states/UT and the concerned grass root level elements to carry

out successful implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The involvement of the Panchayati Raj Institutions is secured along with voluntary organizations for the planning and implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. It reviews and issue guidelines in relation to the work of states, district and other concerned elements with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, April, 2004).

b) State Level : Structure and Management

At the state level there is State Level Governing Body divided into three parts (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, April, 2004) –

- i) Governing Council under the Chairmanship of the State Chief Minister.
- ii) The Executive Committee under the Chief Education Secretary.
- iii) State Project Director.

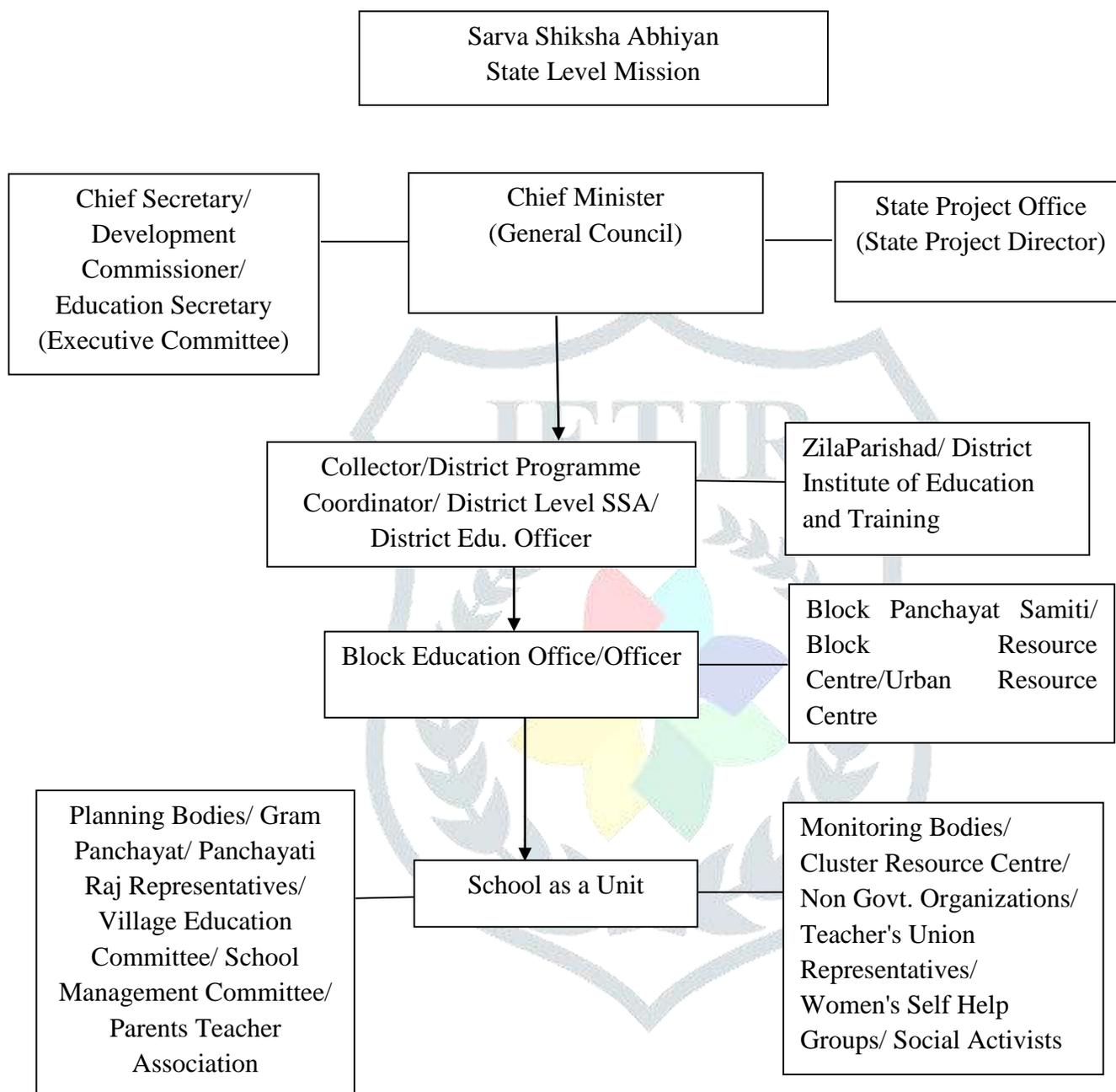
State Level Governing Body monitors Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan functioning, fund flow management and other aspects in the state. The policy implementation and management of SSA affairs is looked after by the State in its jurisdiction. The State works for education of child living in inaccessible habitats through the SSA. All educational facilities required for quality teaching learning are provided to the child in neighborhood school defined under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

The State works for the upliftment of elementary education through SSA State Level Governing Body and educational programmes run by Centre and State. The motive is to achieve the universalization of the elementary education. The same function is performed by the Union Territory Level SSA Authority in the concerned Union Territory. The State and UT works in coordination with the Centre for better implementation of the SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, April, 2004).

Providing educational facilities, staff, study material for students and timely disbursement of funds is done under the aegis of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The staff shortage is covered with providing teachers in the inaccessible rural area schools. More number of teachers working under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan found in urban area schools which are approachable, is balanced with providing the required number of teachers in rural areas. However some staff crunch is felt in rural areas, which is balanced with appointment of teachers as per rules and emerging requirements. Problem of rural area schools, are solved with proper dissemination of staff using state authority under SSA which does not let any teaching post lie vacant. It always tries to solve the situation of single teacher school by providing proper staff, from neighboring schools. This helps to create congenial conditions for regular and quality study of the children in far flung areas. Providing of facilities for school education is carried out with the help of center and district level authorities and the state SSA authority acts as a mediator and transform channel to the SSA school as a unit.

Figure 1.2

State Level Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Management Structure



Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (April, 2004). Planning and Appraisal.

Power and Responsibilities at State Level: The elements of the State Level Governing Body work together in coordination with each other to bring proper results. These three bodies act as a mediator between centre and concerned grass root level elements to implement Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in the state. Fund flow mechanism is viewed and required assistance is provided under the state governing body. Implementation of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan with reviewing of reports, issuing concerned notices and taking required steps wherever required is done under the state governing body. The working and

coordination of district, block and school is conducted smoothly under State Level Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Governing Body. School Management committee working is assisted with proper instructions to help proper utilization of funds and working of the school (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, April, 2004).

2.2 Financial Pattern

The fund for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is provided by the centre and the state collectively. It started, in the year 2001-02, with 85:15 ratios (Press Information Bureau, MHRD, 2015, December), partnership from the centre and the state respectively. With the passage of time, in the year 2015-16, it reached at present 60:40 ratios between the centre and the state respectively. Whereas, it is 90:10 for 11 states – 8 North Eastern States of Arunachal Pardesh, Assam, Manipur, Maghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura and 3 Himalayan States of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pardesh and Utrkhand. The funding pattern for all the Union Territories is 100 percent from the Centre Government. The funding pattern implementation in a Union Territory also depends upon the consultation with the Government administration of the concerned Union Territory. The present funding pattern was implemented by the Government on the recommendations of the 14th finance commission (Press Information Bureau, MHRD, 2015, December). Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan provides the fund mobilization upto grass root level that is school as a unit (Press Information Bureau, MHRD, 2015, December), facilities for infrastructure, teacher appointment, teacher training and all other facilities for maintaining standards of education. It helped to create milestone in the way of attaining the desired target of education for all.

3.0 Benefits of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

- i) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan motivates all children to learn and rise in life. It focuses upon the quality education in schools. It caters to the need of minorities, special need children, SC/ST and girl child education. The retention of the child in school was brought upon by Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. It helped to improve the school attendance and to reduce the school dropout rate. Funds for school education, school construction, school maintenance and for all other expenditure are provided under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Resources and facilities are provided to educate the nation. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan provides teaching learning material, school uniform, books, shoes, pencils etc. to the child. Child is given free and nutritious Mid Day Meal. The teacher appointment, in service training and other facilities are provided to the teachers under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.
- ii) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan provided free and compulsory elementary education upto age of 6-14 year, with the 86th Constitutional Amendment 2002. It was the legal binding upon the State to provide free education (Article 21A). Early childhood care and education upto the age of six year for all children by the State was sought in the substitution of New Article 45 for Article 45 (New Article 45 for Article 45). Amendment of article 51A (k) made a legal binding upon parent/guardian to provide opportunity for education to his/her child between the ages of 6-14 year (86th Constitutional Amendment, Dec. 2002).
- iii) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan provides directions for the holistic view of education. It asks for a systematic review of the entire process and content of education. The review of curriculum, teacher education, teacher training, educational planning, and educational management is directed. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan provides directions for universal access and equity. The universal access defines the access to free elementary education to all. The term equity means to provide equal opportunity to all without any discrimination. Favorable conditions needs to be created for disadvantaged sections of the society. The discrimination shall not be made on the basis of caste, creed, colour, financial status. The opportunity is provided equally to all categories – SC/ST, girl child, children with special needs, religious and linguistic minorities. It directs to remove the gender and social category gaps at the primary stage of education. Girl child should be given equal opportunity for education. Gender concern is of higher importance to uplift the status of women in the society.
- iv) Centrality of the teacher is directed under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The teacher is directed to follow innovative practices in the classroom. It motivated the teacher to create a better and inclusive environment in the classroom. It emphasized upon recognition of important role of the teacher and focused upon development of teacher as human resource.

- v) Moral compulsion is imposed with the Right to Education Act 2009 (RTE Act, 2009) on the parents, teacher and educational administrators for free and compulsory elementary education with age 6-14 years. All the children should be covered under universal retention and attendance in schools.
- vi) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan directs for convergent and integrated system in the educational management process. It directs the states and UT Government to implement the universalization of elementary education with universal retention. (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan – A Programme for Universal Elementary Education April, 2004)
- vii) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan sought to bring the institutional reforms throughout the nation for the realization of the target of universalization of the elementary education. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan brought the idea of sustainable financing for partnership with the states. It sought for 85:15 in IX five year plan, 75:25 in X five year plan, 50:50 after the X five year plan for centre and state. However at present it is 60:40 for the centre and state share respectively. The present ratio was revised from 50:50 to 60:40 for being the centrally sponsored scheme, in the year 2015-16. (Press Information Bureau, MHRD, Dec. 2015).
- viii) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan emphasized upon research and evaluation in the field of elementary education as a major area of intervention. It asked for the management structure development and institutional capacity building, carrying out civil works, financial management and procurement (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan – A Programme for Universal Elementary Education, April 2004).

Conclusion

The structure of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is well organised and maintained in a proper manner. It disseminates the power in a proper manner from national level body to state level body and then to the district level setup. The district level structure further leads to the grass root level of school structure with school head, teacher and school management committee leading the work in school. SSA keeps the child at the centre of school education system. All the efforts are carried out in a manner to facilitate the child education. The entire educational machinery works to carry out the all-round development of child in a well-defined manner.

It is a well-conceived idea that the child education is necessary for the development of the nation. 'Child is the father of man', was said by some intellectual person as the dictum now refers to the idea of 'Child as the father of nation' in the present era. In modern times, the advancement of science and technology has motivated the nations to use its citizens as an asset to let develop the nation. It is a nice idea to have a well organised structure for hierarchal distribution of powers and responsibilities in school education system. The same is done under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme, for providing a better future for the coming generations. It is hoped to gain prominence in the coming times in the field of providing child education.

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