



ROLE PLAYED BY TEACHERS AND NGOS IN EDUCATING CWSN IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

Dr. Kanika Handa Jamwal

**Associate Professor, Namdhari College of Education, Bhojpur, Sunder Nagar,
Mandi, Himachal Pradesh.**

ABSTRACT :

In the direction of attaining various goals of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) at elementary level SSA ensured that every child with special needs, irrespective of the kind, category and degree of disability must be provided education in an appropriate environment. For the same "Zero Rejection" policy was adopted so that no child should left out of the education system. Here out of various programmes started for achieving the target of UEE, the teachers and Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) played the central role to promote community involvement, to mobilize and sensitize parents, to identify children with special need (CWSN) and to facilitate their learning. The paper suggestions highlight the role of teachers and NGOs in educating the CWSN in Himachal Pradesh.



KEYWORDS : *Children with Special Needs, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Universalisation, Elementary Education, Rehabilitation, Zero Rejection.*

INTRODUCTION

The provisions made in the Indian constitution clearly show the importance of universal elementary education for the proper development and success of democracy. The elementary education is the base upon which the whole system of education rests. A country can build a sound system of education only if its elementary education is free from defects and weaknesses. The quality & type of primary education decides the future structure of education. A number of rights have been envisaged for children in the constitution of India.

Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in our country is the constitutional obligation for government and hence is the first and foremost educational priority before the nation. Universalization of provisions, enrollment and retention are the three stages or steps to achieve the goal of UEE. Universalization Implies: Universal access (a primary/non-formal education center within 1km of the residence of a learner), participation Universal (enrolment, regular attendance and retention of children in school/NFE centre), Universal retention (all enrolled children achieving minimum levels of leaving prescribed for the primary stage of education). Hardly a century back, was education a privilege which few people used to enjoy. By now it is generally accepted that everyone has right for education. Education has been made free & compulsory at least in elementary and fundamental stages.

In the direction of attaining various goals of UEE at elementary level Government has been launched SSA in January 2002 through a time bond integrated approach, in partnership with states. Main objective of SSA was to provide useful and relevant elementary education for all children in 6 to 14 age group by 2010.

Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life was the other goal. The main thrust of SSA was to on bridging of gender and social gaps and a total retention of all children in the schools. Within this frame work, it was expected that the education system would be made relevant so that children and parents find the schooling system useful and absorbing according to their natural and social environment. The SSA has a special focus on the educational needs of girls, SC's, ST's & other children in difficult circumstances and needs. The state governments and central government spent a huge amount of money on various intervention schemes implemented under this noble scheme. So out of various programmes started for achieving the target of UEE, SSA was the major one. However the teaching in inclusive set up is a big challenge for the teachers. In this task, teachers and NGOs played the central role in promoting participation of community and reducing underachievement, particularly with children who might be perceived as having difficulties in learning. The paper suggestions highlight the role of teachers and NGOs in educating the children with special need (CWSN) in H.P. during SSA scenario.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

To study the role played by following in educating CWSN in Himachal Pradesh:

- Teachers of Elementary Schools.
- Private and Non-Govt. Organizations (NGOs).

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

- The study has been confined to only four districts of Himachal Pradesh i.e. Mandi, Bilaspur, Kullu and Kangra.
- The study has been confined to the government primary and government upper primary schools. Govt. aided schools and EGC/AIE centers were not taken in the present study.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Survey method was used in the present study. Target population covered all the government primary, upper primary schools, elementary school teachers, BRCs, BRCCs/CRCCs, SMC members, NGOs working for SSA, DIETs IN this study. A combination of different sampling methods had been used. The sampling in the present study was carried out at different stages.

TOOLS USED

- Interview schedule for DPOs/BRCCs/CRCCs and SMC members.
- Questionnaire for Elementary School Teachers and NGOs.
- Observation Schedule.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

In the present study, the collected data were analyzed qualitatively by keeping into consideration the nature of data in hand. 'Documentary analysis' was carried out to study the status of SSA in the state of Himachal Pradesh. In addition to this, information gathered through conducting the interviews with various functionaries involved in SSA and elementary school teachers, frequency count and percentage was the sole criterion. The technique of 'content analysis' was employed to study the responses of different functionaries to open-ended questions in the interview schedules.

MAIN FINDINGS

In the field of analysis and interpretation of data, main findings of study are:

- In the state, the financial grant was released as per annual plan and almost completely incurred on SSA schemes. With regard to role played by various NGOs working for CWSN, state functionaries are found satisfied with the work and dedication of the NGOs. These NGOs are providing facilities of day care

centers and home based programme for CWSN. Only a financial help of rupees 1200 per child per year is given to these NGOs.

- Under SSA, all type of assistance for civil (construction) work and academic help in form of training, seminars and orientation programmes etc. is provided to lower level functionaries. But these training programmes seemed successful only to some extent. Specially dealing with the need of CWSN.
- With regard to education of CWSN, availability of TLE in schools, majority of the principals were found satisfied. All the DPOs admitted that there were various NGOs working under SSA in the state for children with special need under IED and NGO namely Pratham was working in monitoring, evaluation and TLM construction etc. These NGOs were providing home based education to CWSN and children were prepared for routine tasks. It was further admitted by all DPOs that only a financial help of rupees 1200 per child per year was provided to these NGOs and monitoring tools prepared by teachers and other experts were provided to 'Pratham'. All the DPOs were found satisfied with the performance of these NGOs.
- Further, all of the principals of DIET stated that due to SSA schemes and policies retention rate, access to schools and strength of benefitted CWSN has been increased, out of school children and dropout rate has been decreased and educational environment in government schools has been improved. In addition, three fourth of them indicated that rate of girls' education has improved and awareness among parents also enhanced after launch of SSA in the state.
- Good majority (67.50%) of sampled elementary school teachers had shown their agreement with respect to the fact that CCE is a right step taken for improving the quality of education at elementary stage. Majority (57%) of the teachers indicated that enrolment of students at elementary stage has decreased in government schools after initiation of SSA in the state and reasons for decrease in enrolment had no connection with SSA interventions. For CWSN, CCE is not suitable.
- With regard to the major problems faced by elementary school teachers for smooth organization of school activities after inclusion, three fourth (74.50%) of the teachers indicated that there was extra work load on teachers due to different programmes like mid day meals, census/election duties, CCE, non-academic tasks and increased postal work after SSA. Further majority (53%) of them stated that there was shortage of staff in primary schools and lack of awareness was observed among parents and teachers towards special need of CWSN. Almost one third (25.25%) of them reported that in-service teacher training programmes were not effective. The majority (59.25%) of the teachers opined that objectives of SSA could be achieved up to 70 to 80 percent. Further they remarked that the objective of imparting quality education was not achieved to a satisfactory level.
- All the NGOs working for disabled children in H.P. were handling projects of both state as well as central government. A large Majority (83.33%) of NGOs were further working in the field of health education, against social evils, sports etc. and running rehabilitation centers. Further, all the NGOs worked for SSA, were arranging various activities for CWSN and home based education to CWSN was provided by these NGOs. Almost one third of them were providing training to prepare special educators.
- All the members of NGOs reported that to impart daily life (living) skills and to provide suitable medical aid, therapy and appliances to the children with special needs were the major objectives of activities undertaken by NGOs for SSA. A good majority of the NGO members (66.67%) held that they prepare the CWSN for their admission in normal schools. Half of the NGO members reported that the objective of the activities undertaken by them is to manage behavioral problems of the CWSN. Almost one third of them (33.33%) revealed that their main objective was to develop and provide different kinds of teaching-learning materials for special educators and CWSN.
- With regard to the procedure adopted for identification of CWSN, all of the NGO members reported that CWSN were identified by making the parents aware about disabilities through awareness campaigns and making personal contacts with the parents of CWSN. Two third of the NGO members pointed out that

CWSN were recognized through door to door survey, suggested and identified by DIETs or identified with the help of BRC/SMC members.

- Only a financial help of rupees 1200 per child per year was provided to these NGOs by state. Majority of the NGOs considered the help provided by state was insufficient. All the NGOs were facing problem of less financial grant to NGOs and non availability of sufficient medical experts to effectively deal with children having different disabilities Further, a good majority of the members stated that no availability of special educators, untimely release of grants and unfavourable attitude of general public as well as parents of CWSN were the other problems faced by the NGOs.
- Half of the NGO members reported that objectives of SSA could be achieved only up to 70 to 80 percent whereas; half of the NGO members pointed that the objectives of SSA are realized only up to fifty percent.
- For realizing the objectives of SSA in real manner and spirit, very large majority (83.33%) of NGO members have recommended that; financial grant for NGOs should be enriched and must be released well in time, good majority of the members further reported that members of NGOs should be involved in formulation of policies and implementation strategies related to CWSN, almost one third of them opined that provision of mid day meals, medical aid etc. to CWSN along with monthly financial grant should be arranged by State government, few of them suggested that more community based rehabilitation (CBR) centers for children above 18 years of age should be opened and programmes for rehabilitation of CWSN must be formulated by keeping into consideration the ground level realities.
- Following are the suggestions for identified problematic areas apart from the suggestions by teachers and NGO members includes: To enhance the awareness and interest among parents, community and SMC members at lower level towards IE in education system, a more sincere effort is needed in policy and plan making. Teacher sensitization programmes are necessary for effective inclusion of children. Teacher should not be assigned with non-teaching assignments as far as possible because this effects their teaching adversely and on the part of teachers they should also try to be duty conscious and obey various regulations sincerely. Vacant teaching and non teaching posts in education department whether normal or special teacher must be filled by government at priority bases so that late processing of events could not destroy the aim of inclusive education. Government should strengthen the NGOs to take some responsibilities for example training of a special teacher. Meanwhile financial aid must be enhanced so that NGOs can provide sufficient special teachers for CWSN.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Present study will have both applied and theoretical implications.

- It is recommended that regular workshops/seminar, training programmes and co-curricular activities for teachers, parents, SMC and community members should be organized time to time in schools and habitations to make them aware regarding developments in IE and special needs of CWSN.
- CWSN were benefited by NGOs in SSA. To these NGOs a limited financial help is provided by state and mean while there is a lack of special educators to deal with CWSN in these NGOs. To deal with this problem a continuous and coherent programme of professional development should be introduced by the Himachal Pradesh state government on the pattern of courses offered by IGNOU in this area.
- The design and development of specific learning and teaching materials and teaching arrangements should take cognizance the needs, interest, aspirations and uniqueness of the learners. The teachers must discover where each of their students are academically, socially, and culturally to determine how best to facilitate learning. Indeed, child-centered teachers view their role more as being facilitators of learning rather than simply transmitters of knowledge. Therefore, skills in curriculum-based assessment, team teaching, mastery learning, assessing learning styles (and modifying instruction to adapt to students' learning styles), other individualized and adaptive learning

approaches, cooperative learning strategies, facilitating peer tutoring and "peer buddies," or social skills training are important for teachers to develop and use in inclusive classrooms.

- For CWSN, teacher education should prepare teachers in such a way that teachers can support their inclusion into regular education through generating respect for differences, respect for different learning styles, variations in methods, open and flexible curricula, techniques, specific materials and welcoming each and every learner..
- It is important that teachers must have positive attitudes towards learners with special needs. At present, training to teachers is fragmented, uncoordinated and inadequate taking place in a segregated manner. Therefore, it is important that an inclusive teacher education program must be designed which can foster proper skills among teachers. There is a need of developing unified system of schooling (whole School Approach). Teachers and NGOs by joining hands together can further educate CWSN effectively.

REFERENCES

1. Ambasht, N. K. (1993). Adult Continuing and Non formal Education: Trend Report. In Buch, M. B. (Ed.) (1997), fifth Survey of Educational Research 1988-92 (pp.541-562), New Delhi: NCERT.
2. Ambasht, N. K. and Rath, K. B. (1995). A Study of the Effect of Household, Community and School Factors on the Enrolment, Retention and Achievement of Scheduled Tribes Children at Primary Level. In Pathania, Anita (2009), Primary Education in India: Programmes & Schemes, (p. 160). Shimla: J. M. D. Publications.
3. Assessment of Needs for Inclusive Education.(2000).Asia Pacific Region, NCERT
4. Bajpai, Amita. And Gupta, Tanima.(2007).Inclusive Education: A System-wide Development. ANWESHIKA, 4(1), 70.
5. Booth, T. (1996). A Perspective on Inclusion from England. Cambridge Journal of Education. 26, 1, 87-99.
6. Ball, S. J. (2006) Education policy and social class: The selected works of Stephen J Ball. London: Routledge.
7. Gotage, S. B. (1983). Training of Primary School Teachers in the Context of Universal Primary Education. In Pathania, Anita (2009), Primary Education in India: Programmes & Schemes, (p.152). Shimla: J. M. D. Publications.
8. Government of India (1986). National Policy on Education 1986. New Delhi: MHRD.
9. <http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/aep/inclusion.html>