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# An Evaluation Of The Achievements Of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan: A Case Study Of Jharkhand

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## Abstract

Elementary education is one of the most important factors in socio-economic development. Universalisation is a key element to achieving accessibility as well as quality of education. This paper is an attempt to evaluate the achievements of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in Jharkhand. This study mainly focusses on the universalisation of elementary education with the help of some selected indicators, and these are literacy rate, Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER), dropout rate, and school infrastructure facilities. The study reveals that all the indicators are showing positive trends except the dropout rate, which is showing both a negative and a positive trend. Overall, there is an improvement in the quality of elementary education after implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

**Keywords:** Elementary education, Universalisation, Literacy rate, GER

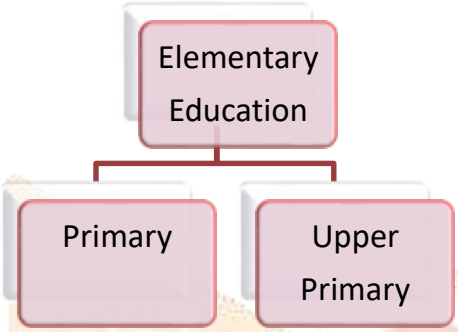
## Introduction

According to Indian professor Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, “Education according to Indian tradition is not merely a means of earning a living; nor is it only a nursery of thought or a school for citizenship. It is initiation into the life of spirit and training of human souls in the pursuit of truth and the practice of virtue.”

The act of learning something new or transferring knowledge is known as education. It involves getting children ready for adulthood. The constitution's concurrent list, which indicates that the federal and state governments share responsibility for education, was added to the list in 1976. India's National Education Policy was created in 1986 and revised again in 1992. Primary education became universal in India as a result of the National Education Policy. Over the past 40 years, a number of initiatives have been introduced to achieve universal elementary education. Parts of these initiatives have focused on basic education, while others have also addressed the upper primary sector. Due to these interventions, initiated by the Government of India and the respective state governments, there has been considerable progress in providing access, improving retention, and improving quality in the primary education sector.

Elementary education in India refers to eight years of schooling [Grade 1 to Grade 8] for the children in the age group 6-14. It comprises primary education of five years [Grade 1 to Grade 5] for the children of age group 6-11 and upper primary education of three years [Grade 6 to 8 for the children of the age group 11-14]. The Constitutional Directive refers to the universalisation of elementary education. Primary education is also compulsory in many states in India, and efforts are being made to make elementary education a fundamental right in the constitution.[1]

Levels of Elementary Education in India

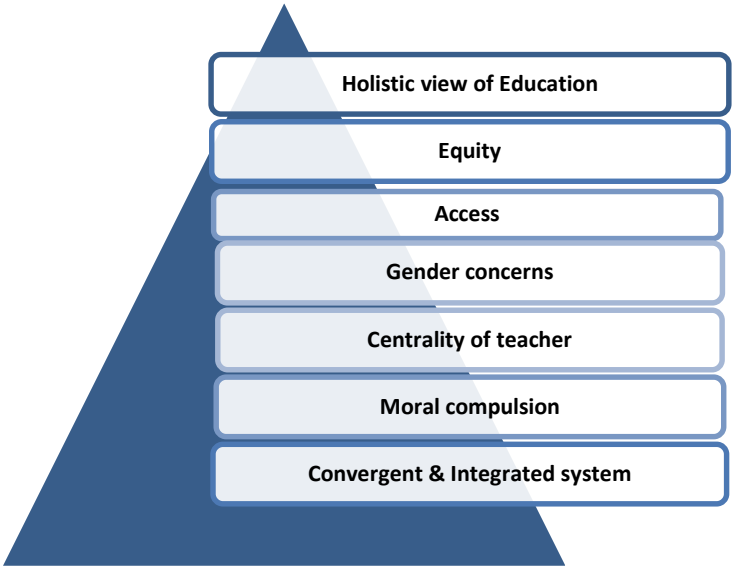



**SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN (SSA)**

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is a comprehensive and integrated flagship program launched in 2001-2002 by the Government of India in partnership with the state governments and local self-governments[#] to attain Universal Elementary Education (UEE). By 2010, the initiative aims to provide all children between 6 and 14 years with a basic education that is both relevant and helpful. It is an endeavour to use context-specific and decentralised planning to universalise and enhance the quality of education and a time-bound, process-based implementation plan. The program highlights eliminating all disparities in gender and social categories at the elementary school level in an appropriate time frame. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan adopts "the bottom-up" process of planning. [2]

- **Principles of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan:** Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan is a scheme to provide all children with high-quality educations by helping them interact with members of the community in a mission mode. The major principles of SSA are:

[#] Locally elected representatives i.e. gram panchayat and municipality




- **The major characteristics of SSA are**
  - 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, Village and Urban Slum Level Education Committees, Parents' Teachers' Associations, Mother Teacher Associations, Tribal Autonomous Councils, and other grass roots level structures in the management of elementary schools.
  - An expression of political will for universal elementary education across the country.
  - A partnership between the central, state, and local governments
  - An opportunity for states to develop their own vision of elementary education.

- **The main objectives of SSA**
  - All children in school, Education Guarantee Centre, Alternate School, 'Back-to-School' camp by 2003.
  - All children complete five years of primary schooling by 2007.
  - All children complete eight years of elementary schooling by 2010.
  - Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life.
  - Bridge all gender and social category gaps at the primary stage by 2007 and at the elementary education level by 2010.
  - Universal retention by 2010.

# Literature Review

Acharya et al. (2004) pointed out that by the end of November 2003, the progress on civil works had been very slow, especially due to the late release of funds, inadequate monitoring, and lack of district-level convergence of SSA with other allied development schemes.[3] Chand et al. (2006) mentioned that the Govt. of India has launched the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). The program has been introduced in 2001-2002 in partnership with the state and local governments to universalise and improve the quality of elementary education in the country. The innovation interventions were identified in 13 states of the nation. These innovations played an important role in reducing the number of out-of-school children. Dutta & Kumar (2017) emphasise the advancements observed in the domain of literacy and primary education in the state of Jharkhand over the period spanning from 2011-12 to 2015-16. The study reveals that there has been a notable enhancement in the state's basic education system. However, it also highlights the presence of several problems that hinder the achievement of universal education. While there has been an improvement in female literacy rates in the state, it is important to note that the female population belonging to Scheduled Tribes (ST) and Scheduled Castes (SC) in regions with a high concentration of ST and SC communities still faces persistently low literacy levels. During the academic year 2015-16, the enrolment of students belonging to the Other Backward Classes (OBC) exhibited the greatest figures among various socio-economic groups. Additionally, it was observed that the enrolment of students from the Scheduled Tribes (ST) had the most significant growth between the years 2011-12 and 2015-16[5]. In his paper, Esmatullah Karimi (2019) analyses the technical efficiency of elementary schools in all 33 districts of Rajasthan, India, from 2014 to 2016. The results of the paper show that average technical efficiency was high in 2016 compared to the other two years. In 2016, twenty districts were listed as efficient districts, whereas, in 2014 and 2015, the number of efficient districts was 13 and 12, respectively. After comparing the literacy rate and technical efficiency score of the districts, some evidence of a high literacy rate but a low technical efficiency score was found, which revealed that a high literacy rate does not necessarily imply that districts are technically efficient.[6] A study conducted by Education for All in India (2023) examined the quality of school education in India. The study finds the government of India is making concerted efforts to improve the quality of school education in the country through various initiatives and policies. However, India still has a long way to go, and sustained efforts are required to achieve the desired outcomes.[7]

**OBJECTIVE OF**

The objective of this paper is to evaluate the achievements of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in Jharkhand by comparing the data of some important indicators taken from the policy document of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

## METHODOLOGY

The study is based on secondary data analysis and secondary data prepared by a report on the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) 2021-22, Ministry of Education, Government of India, Department of Finance, Government of Jharkhand, etc. The area of the study is Jharkhand state, and tools that have been used are bar graphs, trend lines, and time series. The study analyses up to the elementary level of education with some selected indicators, which are taken from the policy document of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. These are:

- Literacy Rate
- Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER)
- Dropout Rate
- School Infrastructure

## LITERACY RATES

The literacy rate in Jharkhand is much less than the national rate. It was about 11% less than the literacy rate of the country in 2001. In 2011 also, it remained about 8% less than that of the country. According to census 2011, the literacy rate of Jharkhand increased at an annual rate of 1.95% from 2011 to 2014; from 66.41% in 2011 it increased to 70.3% in 2014. India, on the other hand, witnessed an annual growth of 0.61% in its literacy rate in the same period.[8]

**Table 1- Literacy Rate in Jharkhand and India**

| | 2001 | | | 2011 | | | 2014 | | | 2017-18 | | | 2018-19 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total |
| **Jharkhand** | 67.30 | 38.87 | 53.56 | 76.84 | 55.42 | 66.41 | 79.6 | 59.9 | 70.3 | 80.7 | 62.6 | 71.8 | 81.0 | 66.2 | 73.2 |
| **India** | 75.26 | 53.67 | 64.84 | 82.14 | 65.46 | 74.04 | 83.2 | 67.1 | 75.4 | 83.9 | 69.6 | 76.9 | 85 | 70.9 | 78.1 |
| **Gap with India** | 10.6 | 27.6 | 17.4 | 6.5 | 15.3 | 10.3 | 4.3 | 10.7 | 6.8 | 3.8 | 10.1 | 6.6 | 4.7 | 6.6 | 6.3 |

Source: Jharkhand Economic Survey 2020-21

Table 1 shows the literacy rate in Jharkhand and India has improved over the years. The literacy rates for males and females in Jharkhand were 67.30 and 38.87 in 2001, which were increased to 81.0 and 66.2 in 2018-19. There is an increase of 19.64% in the in the literacy rate in Jharkhand since 2001 to 2018-19.

## GROSS ENROLLMENT RATIO (GER)

Total enrolment in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population in the official age group corresponding to this level of education. The GER can exceed 100% because of early or late entry and/or grade repetition.[9]

**Table 2- Gross Enrollment Rate (GER)**

| Levels | 2009-10 | 2011-12 | 2015-16 | 2019-20 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Primary** | 149.2 | 117.2 | 99.21 | 104.5 |
| **Upper Primary** | 76.1 | 77.5 | 92.81 | 83.2 |

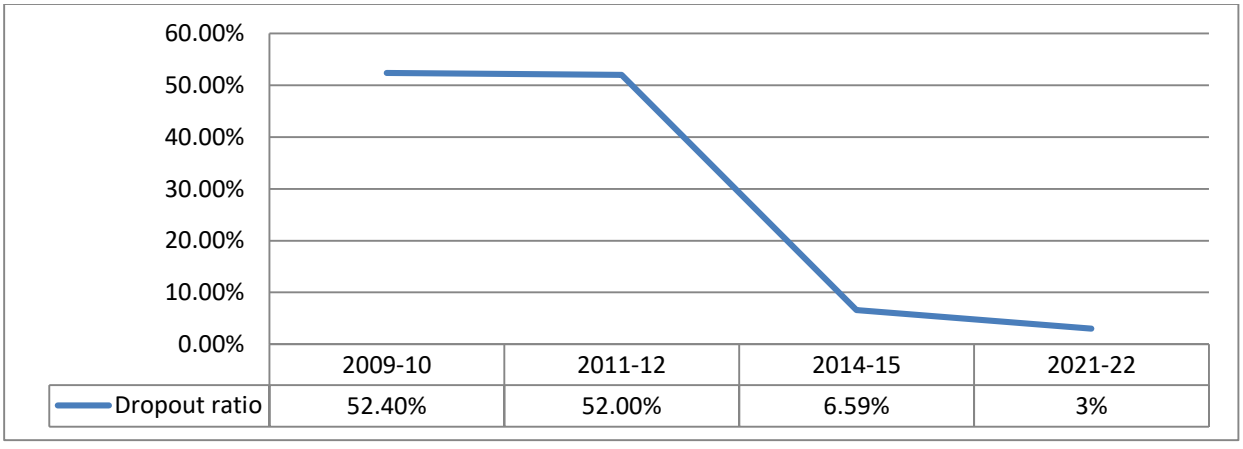
Source- Statistics of School Education & UDISE+

As per the above table, GER for primary education and upper primary education shows both are increasing as well as decreasing trends. In the year 2011-12, primary level is showing a decreasing trend, and upper primary level is showing an increasing trend as compared to the year 2009-10, and on the other hand, there is an increase in the GER for primary level in the year 2019-20 as compared to 2015-16.

## DROPOUT RATE

The dropout rate is defined as the proportion of students who leave the specified level in the educational system without obtaining a first qualification.[10]

**Figure 1- Dropout rate at elementary education in Jharkhand**




Source- selected Education Statistics & UDISE+

The drop-out rate has been decreasing continuously over the years with better access to schooling facilities, improved school infrastructure, and the deployment of additional teachers under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The average dropout rate at the elementary level has come down from 52.40% in 2009-10 to 6.59% in 2014-15 as per UDISE 2015-16. There is a huge improvement in the dropout rate in the year 2021-22 as compared to 2009-10.

## INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES

As per the District Information System for Education (DISE) 2015-16, some states do reflect a gap in school infrastructure, as 93.5% of government elementary schools have drinking water, 96.8% of schools have girls' toilets, and 74.0% of schools have ramps. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) seeks to augment school infrastructure with the objective of meeting the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 requirements.

Table 3 shows the school infrastructure facilities in Jharkhand, in which all the indicators show positive trends from 2005-06 to 2015-16. The percentage of schools with boundary walls has increased from 28.5% in 2005-06 to 31.1 in 2015-16. The percentage of schools having electricity facilities and computers has also increased over the years. Also, the student classroom ratio has improved, which was 62 in 2005-06 and decreased to 26 in 2015-16.

**Table 3- Infrastructure facilities in Jharkhand**

| | Infrastructure Facility | 2005-06 | 2008-09 | 2011-12 | 2013-14 | 2015-16 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1.** | Student-Classroom Ratio | 62 | 54 | 33 | 28 | 26 |
| **2.** | % Schools with Drinking Water | 71.7 | 71.7 | 90.0 | 91.2 | 93.5 |
| **3.** | % Schools with Common Toilet | 21.4 | 40.9 | - | - | - |
| **4.** | % Schools with Boys' Toilet | - | - | 75.4 | 89.6 | 96.5 |
| **5.** | % Schools with Girls' Toilet | 11.6 | 28.2 | 68.2 | 84.8 | 96.8 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **6.** | % Schools with Boundary wall | 28.5 | 22.5 | 26.5 | 26.9 | 31.1 |
| **7.** | % Schools with Playground Facility | - | - | 30.0 | 32.0 | 40.5 |
| **8.** | % Schools with Ramp | 4.3 | 7.0 | 36.6 | 67.5 | 74.0 |
| **9.** | % Schools having Electricity | - | 6.8 | 10.4 | 12.0 | 18.4 |
| **10.** | % Schools with Computer | 4.7 | 5.8 | 8.1 | 8.7 | 9.8 |
| **11.** | % Schools providing MID-DAY Meal | - | - | 97.1 | 97.5 | 98.2 |

Source- Elementary Education in India: Progress towards UEE- Flash statistics NUEPA & GoI, New Delhi, 2005-06 to 2015-16

## CONCLUSIONS

Elementary education forms the foundational learning of school education. As Jharkhand was the newly formed state that was bifurcated from Bihar in 2000, it was very important to first look behind the social sectors of the state, and the implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in 2001-02 played a very pivotal role in the improvement of accessibility, universalisation, as well as quality of elementary education in Jharkhand. There were four indicators, which were taken from the policy document of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, in which literacy rates, gross enrolment ratio (GER), and school infrastructure facilities have increased over the years, and on the other hand, dropout rates have shown both increasing and decreasing trends, but overall dropout rates have also improved as compared to the Pre-SSA implementation.

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