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AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON SARVA SIKSHA ABHIYAN IMPLEMENTATION

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ABSTRACT

All the governments across the globe are striving for the development of their citizens. The development of the human beings is measured by the United Nations in the form of Human Development Index. For the year 2023-24 India's HDI rank is 134 out of 193, which is far from perfect. This index is calculated with three parameters called purchasing power parity, life expectancy and mean years of schooling. India is better in first two parameters, but mean years of schooling 6.57 is very shorter while comparing with expected years of schooling 12.6. To overcome this barrier Indian government has started many educational development programs; out of which one of the major programs is Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (now it is Samagra Siksha Abhiyan). Though this program being implemented from 24 years, it has limited positive outcomes and there is a long way to go to get desired results in the form of human development. Therefore, there is a need to examine the various aspects of SSA implementation so as to suggest some modifications if at all required. In this context, the current article examines the various implementation dimensions of Sarva Siksha Abhiyan program.

KEYWORDS: *Human Development Index, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, purchasing power parity, mean years of schooling, expected years of schooling.*

INTRODUCTION

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is an Indian government program aimed at the universalization of elementary education in a time-bound manner, making it one of the largest education initiatives in the world. Launched in 2001, SSA seeks to provide quality elementary education to all children aged 6 to 14 years.

Adhikari, Tejaswini (2001) identified that the gaps in the existing services and needs of students and teachers in the context of quality education and also published that the infrastructure of schools, number of classrooms, teachers, tables and chairs were inadequate in the state. **Jayachandran, Usha (2001)** observed that most of the child labour at Thane and Nashik disricts work in the brick kiln industry. **Beteille (2002)** concluded that although progress in recent years has been seen in context of access to elementary education but still a lot remains to be done on the front of access of elementary education in India. According to **Tilak (2003)**, the human capital was one of the most important types of capital for the growth of an econom. **Acharya, Prasanta Kumar and Behera, Manoranjan (2004)** find out that that, the progress on civil works had been very slow especially due to late release of funds, inadequate monitoring and lack of district level convergence of SSA with other allied development schemes. According to **Azim Premji Foundation (2004),** the economic factors play an important role as the study suggests that poverty hinders enrolment and continuation of education in rural India. **Dubey, R.R (2004)** suggested that the excellence of education has better relevance in the existing environment only when academics in the school are related to the age group of the children as well as need of the society. **Kumar, Sunil (2004)** examined that the root cause of poor performance in government schools which are becoming bad to worse day by day. **Patel, P.K (2004)** discussed that a woman's lack of education has a negative impact on the health and well-being of their children. **Raman, Manjula (2004)** investigated the need for greater involvement of teachers in decision making and accountability for results and greater flexibility for teachers to organize teaching and learning in school. **Sharma (2004)** analysed the effectiveness of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan on academic achievement of students at district Hamirpur in Himachal Pradesh. **Narayanan, K.; Ghadially, R (2005)** concluded that the Governmental commitment to achieve gender equality in the policy documents is far from being satisfactory by the program of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

Objectives of SSA

The primary objectives of SSA are:
1.Universal Access: Ensure that all children have access to schooling.
2.Universal Enrollment: Ensure that all children are enrolled in school.
3.Universal Retention: Ensure that all children complete their elementary education.
4.Quality Education: Improve the quality of education provided in schools to enhance learning outcomes.

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Key Features of SSA

1.Infrastructure Development: Construction of new schools and classrooms, provision of drinking water and toilet facilities, especially for girls.
2.Teacher Recruitment and Training: Hiring of additional teachers to maintain an appropriate teacher-student ratio and provide ongoing professional development for educators.
3.Curriculum and Textbook Revision: Ensuring that curriculum and textbooks are child-centric and designed to make learning a joyful experience.
4.Inclusive Education: Focus on the education of children with special needs, minority communities, and girls to ensure that no child is left out.
5.Community Participation: Involving local communities in school management through Village Education Committees and School Management Committees.

Implementation Strategies

1.District-Level Planning: Decentralized planning with district as the unit of implementation.
2.Public-Private Partnerships: Collaboration with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector to support various initiatives.
3.Monitoring and Evaluation: Regular monitoring of progress through data collection and analysis, and evaluation of outcomes to inform policy adjustments.
4.Financial Support: Funded jointly by the central and state governments, with contributions from international agencies like the World Bank.

OBJECTIVES

- To study the scope and objectives of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan program
- To study the respondent's perceptions on dimensions of SSA implementation in the study area.
- To propose suggestions based on the findings.

SAMPLE AND DATA COLLECTION

The participants selected for this study consisted of students, parents, teachers, and other stakeholders. Convenience sampling technique is deployed in sample selection. 50 samples of each section are considered for the study. Total 195 usable questionnaires are received.

DATA ANALYSIS

Dimensions of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Program Implementation

Table-1: Descriptive Statistics of All the Stakeholder's Perception's on Access and Enrolment in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Program

	Students	Parents	Teachers	Other Stakeholders
The SSA program has improved access to primary education for all children	3.6	3.5	4.3	3.8
The enrolment rates of children in primary schools have increased due to the SSA program	3.4	3.5	4.1	3.9
The SSA program has effectively reached out to children from disadvantaged backgrounds	3.2	3.1	4.3	3.8
Mean	3.40	3.37	4.23	3.83

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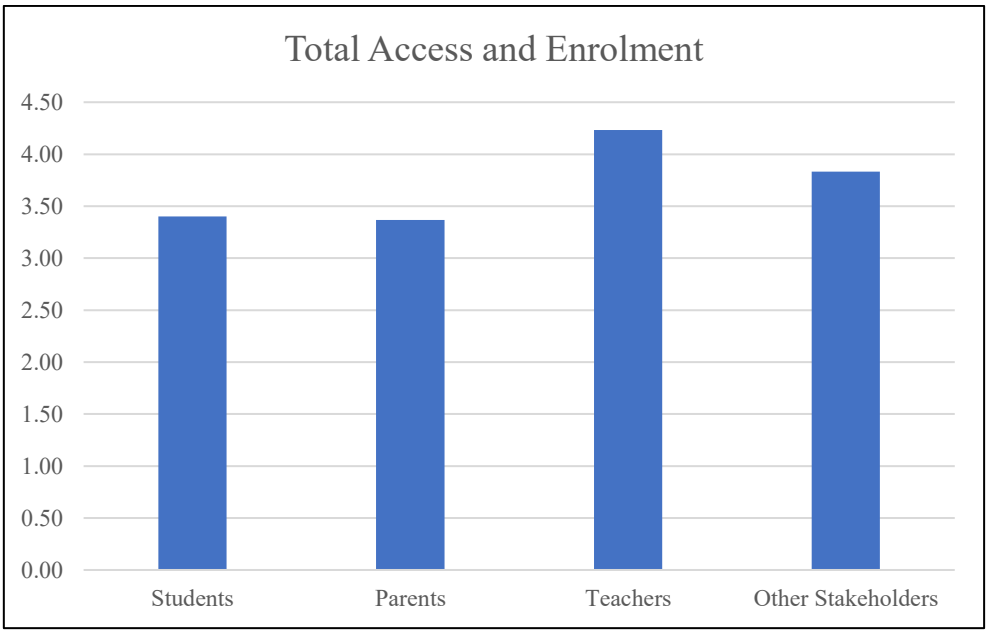


Figure- 1: Access and Enrolment in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Program

From the analysis it is observed that for "Total Access and Enrolment" students perception mean value is 3.40, according to parents it is 3.37, from teacher's perspective it is 4.23 and other stakeholders felt it is 3.83.

Table-2: Descriptive Statistics of All the Stakeholder's Perception's on Quality of Education in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Program

	Students	Parents	Teachers	Other Stakeholders
The SSA program has improved the quality of education in primary schools	3.6	3.4	4.4	3.8
Teachers under the SSA program are well-trained and effective	4.1	4	3.8	3.6
The curriculum and teaching methods used in the SSA program are appropriate and effective	3.4	3.2	4.1	3.5
Mean	3.70	3.53	4.10	3.63

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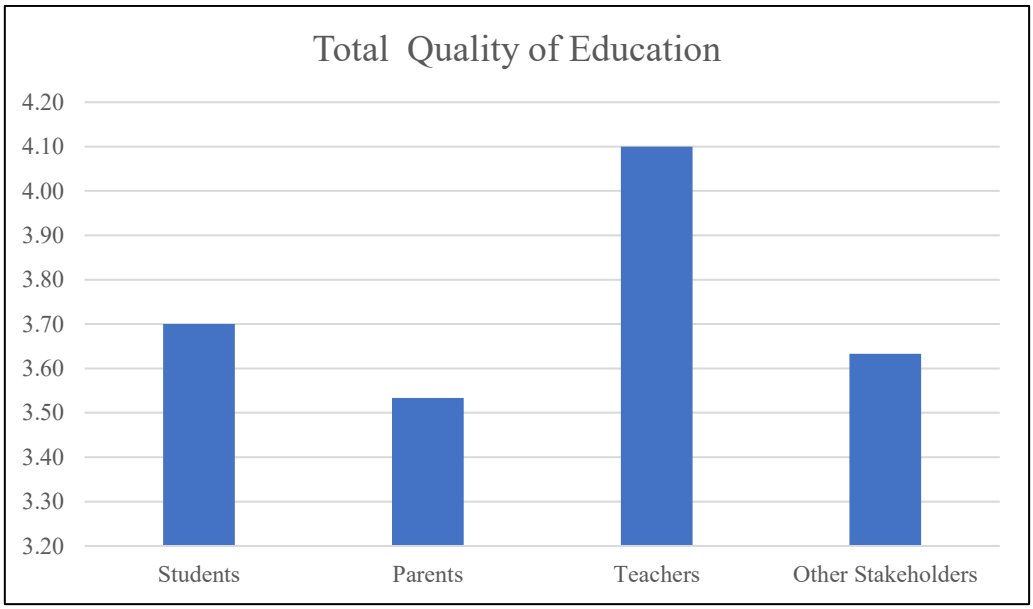


Figure- 2: Total Quality of Education in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Program

From the analysis it is observed that for "Total Quality of Education" students perception mean value is 3.70, according to parents it is 3.53, from teacher's perspective it is 4.10 and other stakeholders felt it is 3.63.

Table-3: Descriptive Statistics of All the Stakeholder's Perception's on Infrastructure and Resources in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Program

	Students	Parents	Teachers	Other Stakeholders
The SSA program has led to improvements in school infrastructure (e.g., classrooms, toilets, drinking water facilities)	3.8	3.9	4.4	4
Schools under the SSA program are adequately equipped with learning materials and resources.	4.2	4	3.9	4.1
The SSA program has ensured the availability of necessary facilities for children with disabilities.	3.3	3.2	4	3.9
Mean	3.77	3.70	4.10	4.00

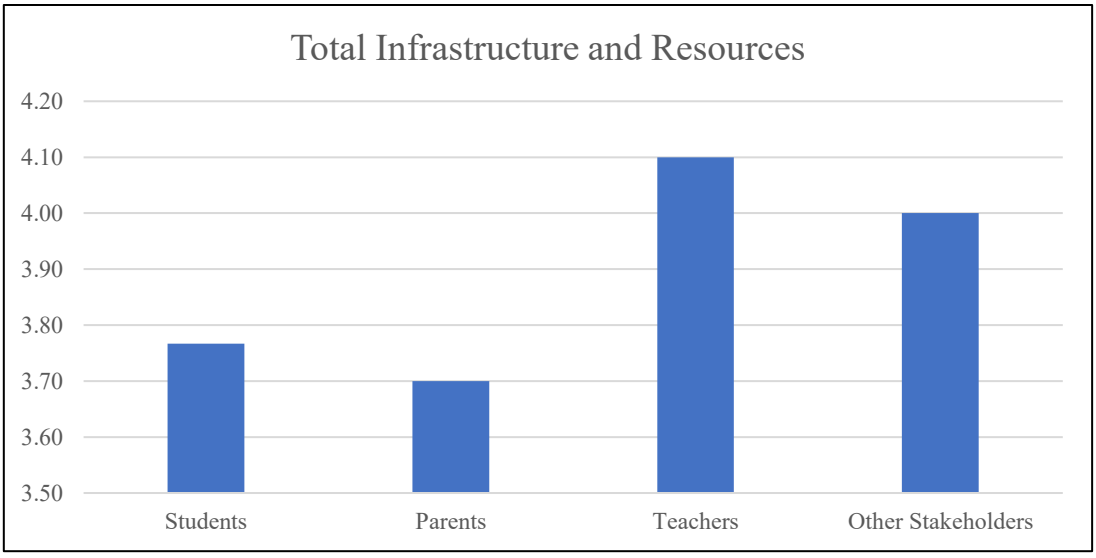


Figure- 3: Total Infrastructure and Resources in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Program

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From the analysis it is observed that for "Total Infrastructure and Resources" students perception mean value is 3.77, according to parents it is 3.70, from teacher's perspective it is 4.10 and other stakeholders felt it is 4.00.

Table-4: Descriptive Statistics of All the Stakeholder's Perception's on Community Involvement and Awareness in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Program

	Students	Parents	Teachers	Other Stakeholders
The SSA program has increased community awareness about the importance of primary education.	4.2	4.2	4.4	4.5
There is active involvement of parents and the community in the implementation of the SSA program.	3.9	3.6	4.3	4
The SSA program has effectively engaged local bodies and authorities in the management of primary education.	3.8	3.7	4.4	3.7
Mean	3.97	3.83	4.37	4.07

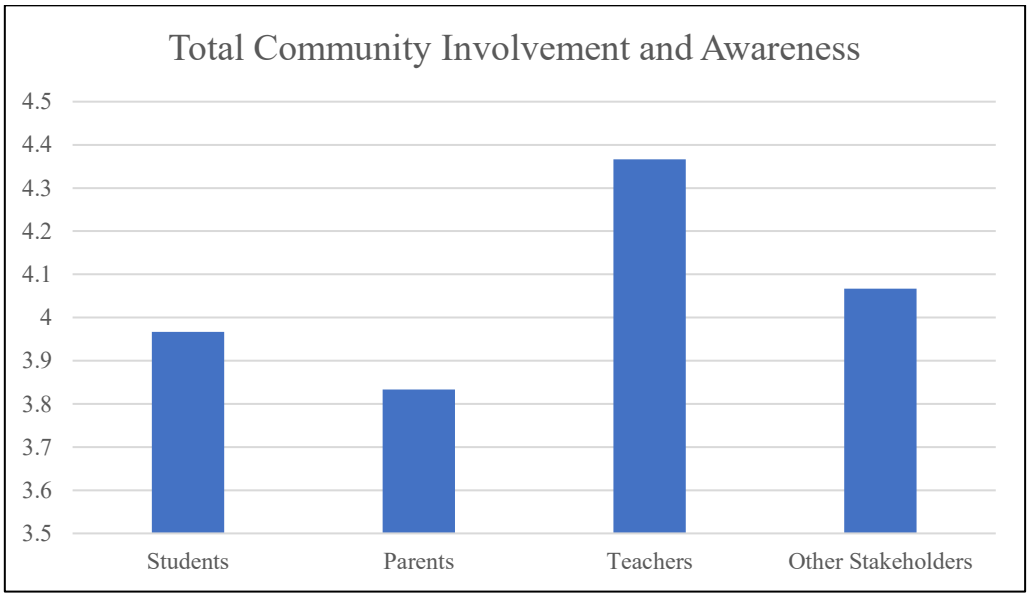


Figure- 4: Total Infrastructure and Resources in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Program

From the analysis it is observed that for "Total Community Involvement and Awareness" students perception mean value is 3.97, according to parents it is 3.83, from teacher's perspective it is 4.37 and other stakeholders felt it is 4.07.

Table-5: Descriptive Statistics of All the Stakeholder's Perception's on Overall Impact and Satisfaction in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Program

	Students	Parents	Teachers	Other Stakeholders
The SSA program has successfully reduced dropout rates in primary schools	4	4.1	4.4	4.3
The SSA program has contributed to achieving universal primary education	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1
Overall, I am satisfied with the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) program	4.2	4.2	4.4	4.2

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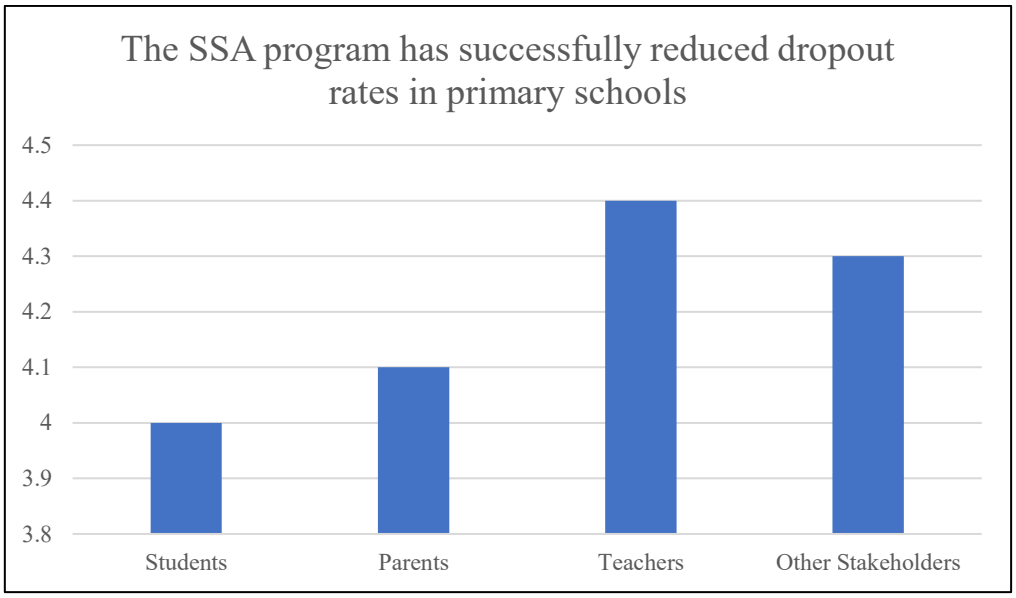


Figure- 5: The SSA program has successfully reduced dropout rates in primary schools

From the analysis it is observed that for "The SSA program has successfully reduced dropout rates in primary schools" students perception mean value is 4.0, according to parents it is 4.1, from teacher's perspective it is 4.4 and other stakeholders felt it is 4.3.

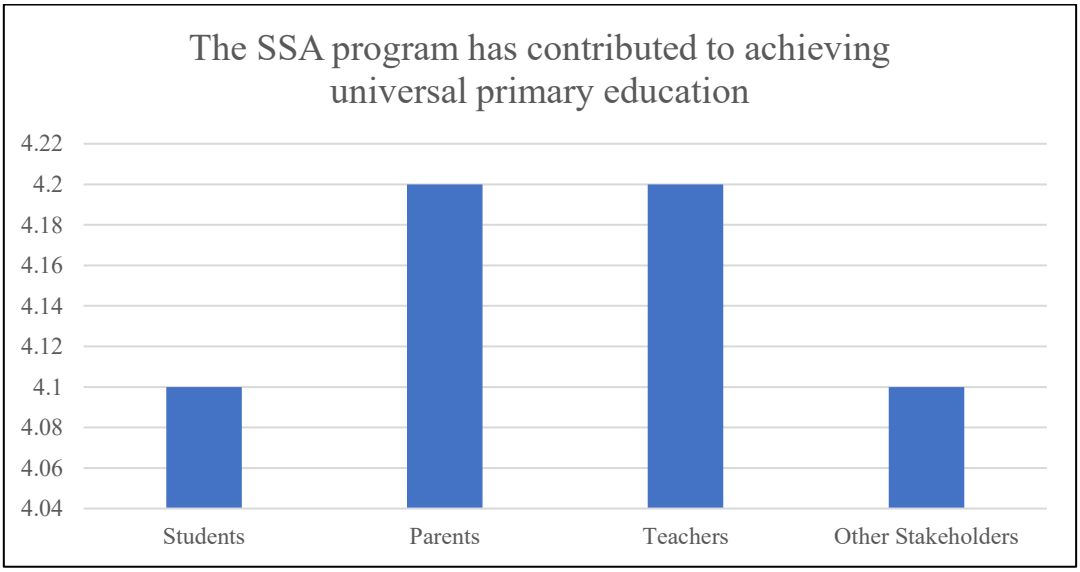


Figure- 6: The SSA program has contributed to achieving universal primary education

From the analysis it is observed that for "The SSA program has contributed to achieving universal primary education" students perception mean value is 4.1, according to parents it is 4.2, from teacher's perspective it is 4.2 and other stakeholders felt it is 4.1.

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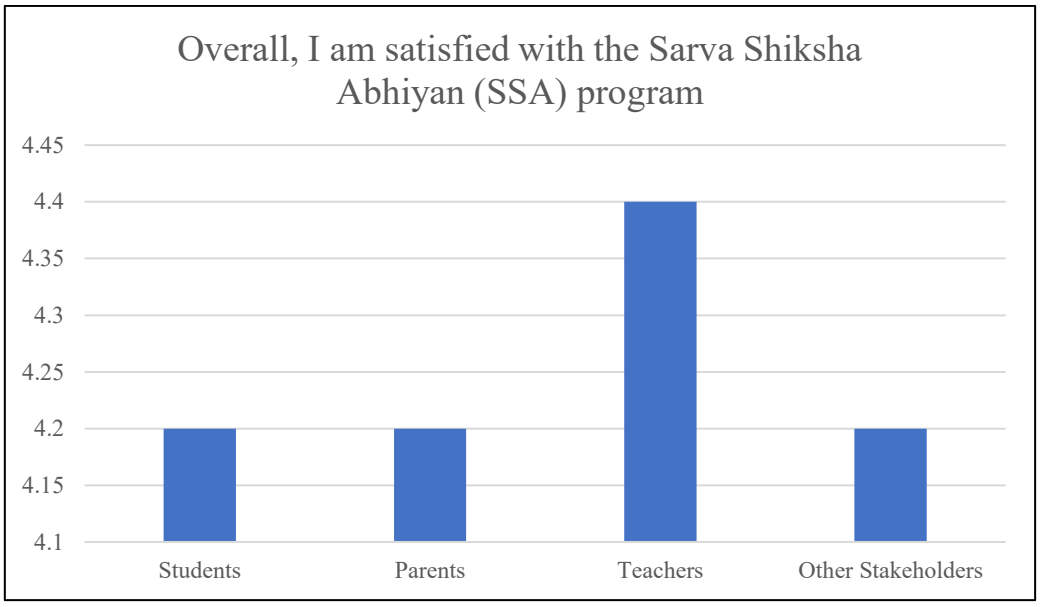


Figure- 7: Overall, I am satisfied with the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) program

From the analysis it is observed that for "Overall, I am satisfied with the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) program" students perception mean value is 4.2, according to parents it is 4.2, from teacher's perspective it is 4.4 and other stakeholders felt it is 4.2.

FINDINGS

- From the analysis it is understood that through sarva siksha abhiyan accessibility and enrollment been increased. But the enrollment of disadvantaged is not up tom the expectation.
- According to the other stakeholder's perception the curriculum and the methods of teaching is not appropriate.
- As per the data collected the fund allocated for few schools is not sufficient and due attention is not provided for necessities of disadvantaged children.
- According to the respondent's perception SSA implementors are not involving all the stakeholders in the implementation effectively.
- All the respondents felt overall they are satisfied with SSA program.

SUGGESTIONS

- ❖ According to the respondent's perception disadvantaged student's enrollment is not increased as expected through SSA program. The reason could be that necessary requirements like ramps for orthopedically handicapped children, special teachers for deaf and dumb children etc. Therefore, there is a need for special attention on necessities of differently abled children.
- ❖ Across the globe teaching methods are changing rapidly, people are moving towards practical teaching rather than theoretical teaching. But in India majority of the syllabus will be taught theoretically and the only advancement is digital teaching. In the last year 1473 smart TVs are provided for the digital teaching. But for better understanding more emphasis should be given on practical teaching.
- ❖ In Andhra Pradesh SSA maintenance grant is Rs.1000/- per month for the primary schools having more than 60 students. It is sufficient for the small Scholls but the amount is not sufficient for the bigger schools. Therefore, there is a need for maintenance fund allocation based on the number of students, but on same for all the schools.
- ❖ Some of the respondents felt that they are not actively included in the SSA activities. The reason could be that involving all the stakeholders is may not be possible practically. But administration should make sure that the stakeholders who has positive attitude towards SSA activities should be given a chance to play their respective role.

CONCLUSION

There are to total 865 primary schools are operating under the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan program. The research is conducted to examine various implementation dimensions of SSA. From the research it is understood that there is a need for section attention on the needs of the disadvantaged children. The research is also highlighted the significance of practical based teaching to meet universal educational needs. According to the perceptions of respondents there is a need for student enrollment-based fund allocation. The research also thrown the light on the implications of community involvement in the SSA implementation practices. Finally, it is

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concluded that the government should allow and encourage local administrators to develop sustainability plan for each school rather than relying on the government fund so as to achieve long term goals of SSA program.

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