

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan And Right To Education: A Critical Analysis

By [Youth Ki Awaaz](#) in [Education](#), [Politics](#)

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The importance of Education is something on which any man can talk about endlessly. However, only a few have actually understood and acted in the way one should have to handle the Global Issue of Illiteracy, especially for the needy ones. The Government has 2 flagship programs for education: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Right to Education (RTE). Here are some of the alarming statistics (Courtesy: Times of India).



Picture Courtesy: Teach for India

- Mean years of schooling in India is 4.4 years (China 7.5 years)
- %GDP spent on Public education is down to 3.8% in 2008-09 compared to 4.3% in 2000-01
- Only 21000cr INR have been received by RTE for 2011 out of sanctioned 48000cr.
- Of 7.5 lakh candidates who appeared for CBSE's all-India teacher recruitment test , only 93,000 passed

- NGO Parham's Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) shows that nearly 47% Class V students cannot read Class II texts, while over 63% of Class III students cannot subtract
- India has a shortage of 1.5 million teachers.

What will give a clearer picture about the need for education is to find out the literacy rate in India for those who are near to the BPL line.

As per the Multi Dimensional Poverty Index , 650 million people (53.7% of population) living in poverty in India, of which 340 million people (28.6% of the population) were living in severe poverty, and that a further 198 million people (16.4% of the population) were vulnerable to poverty . Now a survey of literacy rate in this section of people will reveal how successful we have been in RTE and SSA. The proportion of students in Private Schools has increased from 18.7 % to 25 %, owing to the pathetic conditions of the Governmental counterpart.

Compared to this, here are some of the statistics showing the growth stories of Institutes like Teach for India (TFI) who have taken up the initiative of free education. TFI has impacted 12000 students in 2011-2012, compared to 2800 in 2009-10. Such is the growth of these organizations. MAD (Make a Difference) also aims at improving the retention ratio of children in school. Although India has a literacy rate of 72-74 %, most of them drop out by the time they reach 10th Standard. As a result, MAD has designed courses accordingly. Currently they work in 11 districts in India with over 800 volunteers, teaching 2500 children.

So what have such organizations done correctly which our Government has not been able achieve till date? Compared to them, Government has more power, more workforce at its disposal, reach to a bigger mass of people, and adequate funds at disposal – and what its programmes yield are disheartening.

The organizations work on the simple principles of providing education to all. They are not cash rich, instead they work hard and sustain from the funds of the sponsors – Be it Corporate or Pooling of Donations. At the core, they understand what they stand for; realize the importance of the responsibility on their shoulders. TFI has fellowship programs through which they invite the Next Gen to be a part of teaching community, and bring out innovative ways of teaching.

Why can't the Government run such programs with everything on their side? Why can't they keep such programs free from red tape and other bureaucratic nonsense?

What is required here is not some rocket science invention, but a knowledge of the basic steps of Management. There are various surveys saying that Indian students are not on par with International students, that even the state of primary education is as dismal. We have taken the initiative to teach everyone, which is obvious, but not at the cost of quality of education. *Why do we wait for such surveys to tell us where we stand? Why can't we have our own internal monitoring policy to see the effectiveness of our actions, to tell us how well we have fared and what kind of improvements are to be done?* There needs to be a committee that takes care of the quality and conducts regular checks to fix the things are just not in place, in order to ensure that resources are being utilized efficiently.

In today's highly competitive world, having education for the sake of it is not as good as not having it. Also, undue attention has to be given to the teachers and systematic and frequent monitoring of the teaching practices and their abilities in delivering the required results.

Centralized tests can be conducted throughout to see where the students stand. This will serve 2 purposes: First, it will tell the average score school wise and class wise so we can easily compare and find the loopholes. Also, the average scores of the class can tell you about the teaching efficiency of the teachers as well.

SSA prepares and issues Joint Review Mission reports talking about implementation and the progress. What it does talk basically is about number of intakes, fund flows, infrastructure facilities and what it does not mention is the quality of the teachers and students. The reports have references for training for the teachers but not the results or efficiency of such training. Why so?

Whenever we discuss about the development, the rise of India as the "superpower", we compare only the Gross Domestic Product growth, and not such basic parameters. When the basics of the country are in such appalling condition, how do you expect the country to sustain such high levels of growth? If the foundations itself are not strong enough, even minor setbacks can cause large scale damages.