

RASHTRIYA MADHYAMIK SHIKSHA ABHIYAAN IN KULLU DISTRICT OF HIMACHAL PRADESH: A CASE STUDY

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Abstract

This study is an attempt to understand the status of Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyaan in Kullu District of Himachal Pradesh. The recently launched centrally sponsored scheme for secondary education, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), offers a strategic opportunity to improve access and equity, enhance quality, accountability and ability to measure learning outcomes, and examinations across states. The RMSA scheme is for universalisation of access to and improvement of quality at the secondary and higher secondary stage. With a view to providing relevant and necessary input for enhancing the understanding of the educational administrators, field functionaries and teachers, a need was felt by the researcher to examine various aspects of quality education in relation to RMSA specifically in District Kullu. The prime goal of RMSA is universalisation of secondary education. In order to meet the challenge of universalisation of secondary education (USE), there is a need for a paradigm shift in the conceptual design of secondary education. In this paper efforts have been made to study the status of the strategies adopted by the district and state of Himachal Pradesh to achieve the target of universal access, equality and social justice, relevance and development and structural and curricular aspects. In this paper researcher also made an attempt to study the perception of teacher educators working in DIETS about the RMSA in-service training programme who have been made responsible for the implementation of RMSA activities in the district. This paper will be helpful for many researchers to understand the status of various interventions under RMSA viz. ICT, NSQF and IEDSS and Quality of secondary education.

Keywords: Secondary Education, RMSA, ICT, NSQF, IEDSS and Quality Improvement, Professional Development, School Leadership.



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Introduction

Secondary Education is a crucial stage in the educational hierarchy as it prepares the students for higher education and also world work. Classes IX and X constitute the secondary stage, whereas classes XI and XII are designated as the higher secondary stage. The rigor of the secondary and higher secondary stage, enable the Indian students to compete successfully for education and for jobs globally. Therefore, it is absolutely essential to strengthen this stage by providing greater access and also by improving quality in a significant way. The Government of India has committed to the goal universalisation of secondary and higher

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secondary education. The 11th Five Year Plan document particularly emphasised on the universalisation of secondary and higher secondary education in the same line and committed for. In the Tenth Plan Mid-Term Appraisal (MTA) document of the Planning Commission of India recommended for setting up of a new Mission for Secondary Education on the lines of SSA. Finally, it is the recommendation of the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) which is the highest deliberative and advisory forum on Education in the country, committee report 2005. In accordance with the goal of universalisation of secondary and higher secondary education, initiatives are made for the plan of action in this direction. The Centrally Sponsored Scheme Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) is a scheme for universalisation of access to secondary education and also improvement of quality of education at this stage. In accordance with the commitments of Government of India to universalize the secondary education of the age group of 14-18 years, provision of universalize of secondary education has become a salient feature of the secondary Education Commission and National Policy of Education since independence.

RMSA makes efforts to universalize access to and relation in schools, while at the same time, emphasizes quality in secondary education through field based holistic and convergent approaches. In this context, Government of India identified the nodal agency at the national level to bring about improvement in the quality of education at secondary level through multiplicity of initiative.

Goals and Objectives of RMSA

The prime goal of RMSA is universalisation of secondary education. The guiding principles in this regard are: universal access, equality and social justice, relevance and development and structural and curricular aspects. Universalisation of secondary education gives opportunity, to move towards equity. The goals translate into the following main objectives:

- i) To ensure that all secondary schools have physical facilities, staff and supplies at least according to the prescribed standards through financial support in case of Government/ Local Body and Government aided schools, and appropriate regulatory mechanism in the case of other schools;
- ii) To improve access to secondary schooling to all young persons according to norms through proximate location (say, Secondary Schools within 5kms, and Higher Secondary Schools within 7-10 kms), efficient and safe transport

arrangements/residential facilities, depending on local circumstances including open schooling.

- iii) To ensure that no child is deprived of secondary education of satisfactory quality due to gender, socio-economic, disability and other barriers;
- iv) To improve quality of secondary education resulting in enhanced intellectual, social and cultural learning;
- v) Achievement of the above objectives would also, inter-alia, signify substantial progress in the direction of the Common School System.

With a view to providing relevant and necessary input for enhancing the understanding of the educational administrators, field functionaries and teachers, a need was felt by the researcher to examine various aspect of quality education in relation to RMSA. Keeping in view the important contributions, previous studies can make, the review of literature was undertaken. Browsing through the research journals for consulting studies on RMSA was not of much help. The few studies which the investigators could lay their hands on are described as **Sathyanesan (2001)** in his study found that most explored theme in the in-service training programme delivered were learner centred approaches, objective based instructions, environment based approach, and teaching of mother tongue. **NCF (2005)** presents a fresh vision and a new discourse on key contemporary educational issues. According to NCF, there is a need to define the path that can be taken to empower individual teachers who can then empower the learner. **Sharma (2006)** reported in her study that all the teachers were aware of in-service training programme under SSA in Himachal Pradesh and they have been provided opportunities for participating in them and they receive full cooperation from their heads of schools attending these training programmes. **Chauhan, Sharma and Rawat (2008)** in their study highlighted that the training component has been found useful for the teachers to a large extent in the areas of use of TLM in classroom situations, activity based teaching and child centred approach followed by subject enrichment. The training material was made available to all trainees as and when the training programmes were organized. **Sharma (2009)** in his study suggested that teacher education is a very important part of any education system and it is urgent need of the present to reform the teacher education institution all over India. **Sood (2010)** in her study found that the present arrangement for in-service training programmes did not create any space for teachers to raise the real problems based on the actualities of the classrooms. Passive participation of

teacher was encouraged. **Abuhmaid (2011)** in his study found that ICT Professional development courses for teachers were of considerable help to them in improving their ICT skills and knowledge. **Yadav (2012)** conducted a study in 15 states of India and observed positive impact of INSET (In-service Education for Teachers) on class room transactions in the states of Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh **Singh (2013)** his study found that there was no proper mechanism for evaluation of various teacher training programmes. Most of the training programmes were theoretical, practical demonstration were rarely seen in these training programmes.

RMSA has been launched in the years 2012-13 through DIETs of Himachal Pradesh and many of its interventions are bringing lot of change in the school programmes. It is too early to comment upon the functioning of the programme. However, a case study can be taken to see whether the RMSA is approaching to realize its objectives effectively. Therefore the investigator has selected to study RMSA in Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh, its existing position and future prospects.

Objectives

The present study has been conducted to achieve the following objectives:

1. To study the RMSA in terms of:
 - i) Aims and objectives
 - ii) Enrollment and Retention trend in secondary education and Senior Secondary stages.
 - iii) Initiative for quality improvement in secondary education
 - iv) ICT Education
 - v) Inclusive Education for Disabled at Secondary Stage (IEDSS)
 - vi) Vocational Education.
2. To study the perception of teacher educators of DIET regarding in-service teacher training programmes under RMSA.
3. To examine the educational implications of RMSA.

Methodology: The case study method of research has been followed in the present case, therefore no sampling is required. One institution i.e. DIET Kullu which has been entrusted for implementing RMSA in District Kullu has been taken as a case and all the teacher educators who were present at the time of visit have been included in the sample. For collecting data following research tools were used by the investigator:

- 1) Interview Schedule
- 2) Secondary data which is collected from DIET Kullu.

Findings of the Study

The following conclusions were drawn on the basis of analysis and interpretation of data:

1. Universalisation of Enrolment and Retention

- **Access**

At present district has 54 Govt. High schools and 90 Senior Sec. schools having VI to X and VI to XII Classes in which 14 Senior Secondary schools have been newly upgraded in the years 2016-17. High schools are headed by Head Master and 8 other teachers in general and senior secondary schools are headed by the Principal of the schools. There are 8 other posts of teachers identical of post sanctioned for secondary stage high school and subject wise teacher at Sen. Sec. level.

- **Strength of Teachers and PTR at Secondary Level**

There are 12243 students enrolled at secondary and senior secondary level out of which 6208 girls and 6035 boys as per the UDISE 2017-18. There are 483 teachers working in secondary schools and 692 teachers are working at senior secondary level. The Pupil Teacher Ratio at secondary level is 1:25 and at Senior secondary level the PTR is 1:14 which a quite good indicator of quality education at secondary stage.

2. Civil work under RMSA

For the strengthening of 27 schools in the district an amount of Rs1082.00 lacs has been released under RMSA and target has also been achieved. An amount Rs 40.79 lacs has also been sanctioned for additional class rooms. To provide safe drinking water and toilet facilities to students an amount of Rs 4.5 lacs has been released in the current year 2017-18.

3. Annual Recurring Grants under RMSA

- **School Grant**

For the 144 Secondary & Higher Secondary schools annual recurring grant for repair/replacement of laboratory equipments, purchase of lab consumables, purchase of books for library, periodicals, news papers, an amount of Rs. 72.00 lacs has been released in the year 2017-18 @ Rs. 50000/- per school .

- **Minor Repair**

There is provision of Rs. 25000/- per school for minor repair of schools. A total amount of Rs 304.50 lacs has been released under RMSA till the year 2017-18 for maintenance and repair of schools in Kullu District.

4. **Strengthening of Existing Schooling Provision**

All the secondary schools in Kullu District are being provided with basic minimum facilities such as minimum required furniture, drinking water, toilets both for boys and girls, electricity and a play ground.

5. **Initiative taken for the quality improvement under RMSA in the district:**

- **Teacher training and School Leadership Development Programme under RMSA**

2016-17: All the GSSSs and GHSs of the district are divided in to 17 clusters. Following steps have been taken to improve the quality in the learning level of the students in all the schools of the district:

- This year out of the 10 days Training, 5 days General Training and remaining 5 days Trainings (subject specific) were organised at Cluster Level under the supervision of Cluster Heads at each cluster (17 Clusters) .
- Newly appointed 10 Principals and 15 Head Masters were imparted 10 days Capacity Building Training under School Leadership Development Programme (SLDP) at DIET Kullu.
- The cluster level meetings have been organised once in every month to review the action plans undertaken by every school. Learning rounds are organised in one day workshops.
- A 100.00% target of in-service training programme for heads and language teachers LTs has been achieved in the 2016-17.

- **Remedial teaching :** An amount of Rs 57.00 lacs has been released under learning enhancement programme for all 144 school of the district under RMSA for the year 2017-18.

- **Mathematics and Science Kits:** These kits have been issued to newly upgraded 20 secondary and 14 senior secondary schools under science and mathematics project head of RMSA.

- **Promotion of Yoga:** To promote the aspect of yoga education five days Yoga training programme is proposed under this intervention

- **Readiness Programme for Subjects:** This programme is proposed for 9th and 10th class students in science, mathematics and English and also in other subjects.
- **Quiz Competition:** It has been decided by the district to organize quiz competitions at the school level once in month and quarterly at cluster level.
- **Professional Development of English teachers/Skill:** District has decided to send 19 English teachers to Regional Institute of English sector 32 C, Chandigarh to meet the changing needs of teacher training and to provide teachers with specialised content relevant to professional and personal success in a rapidly changing world.

6. **School support-professional Support Structure under RMSA**

The following support structures have been made functional for providing infrastructural support for the implementation of RMSA in the district:

- a) DIET
- b) BRCCs
- c) CRCCs

7. **Coverage of Special focus Group**

- **Girls Education:** Initiatives have been taken by RMSA like Gender sensitization of teachers, community mobilization and skill development programme for girls at secondary stage. An amount of Rs 12.99 Lacs has been sanctioned under this intervention.

8. **Coverage of children with special need:** There are 140 students have been identified as CWSN in the District. These students are covered under the scheme of RMSA IDSS. A total of Rs 9.16 lacs have been approved under IEDSS out of which Rs 5.204 Lacs has been spent on the various activities like purchasing of books and stationary, uniform, stipend for girls.

9. **ICT Education**

For expending the use of information technology in schools during the Year 2015-16 A total of 88 Govt. High schools and GSS schools are being covered in ICT phase –II in Kullu District with lab facilities. 11 GSSS and GHS schools were proposed for ICT Phase-III during 2016-17. ICT facility is being provided in 125 schools out of 144 GSS Schools and GH Schools in Kullu district and the remaining 19 schools are being proposed under ICT Plan for the year 2018-19.

10. Vocational Education (NSQF)

In district Kullu 6451 students are enrolled under NSQF programme in different trade at secondary stage. These trades are being run in 68 schools of the district. Total 136 vocational teachers have been appointed in the district to impart quality training to students opted these trades.

11. Perception of teacher educators regarding in-service teacher training programme under RMSA

- **Professional Development of teacher educators:** Majority of the teacher educators were of the view that special training programme must be organized for their professional development.
- **Achieving the goals of RMSA:** All the teacher educators reported that the training programme organized under RMSA are fulfilling the objective of the programme and proved very successful in developing the professional competence among the in-service teachers.
- **Preliminary activities before the commencement of training programme:** All the teacher-educators were claimed that all preliminary activities are carried out before the implementation of any training programme such as selection of resource persons, preparation of module & schedule of training programme, arrangement of venue of training programme.
- **Training Need Assessment:** Majority of the teacher educators were of the view that the training need analysis is carried out before the commencement of the training programme.
- **Various training programmes and duration of training programme:** All the teacher educators were of the view that different kind of training programmes like General training programmes, Induction Training, Subject specific training programmes and 15 days School Leadership training programmes are organized for all in-service teachers and Heads of secondary school..
- **Relevancy of training programme for in-service teachers:** All the teacher educators found that these teacher training programmes and workshops organized under RMSA are quite useful and are relevant for the professional development of in-service teachers.

- **Method adopted and medium of instruction used during the training programme:** Majority of the teacher educators were of the view that lecture method is used by them during in-service training programme whereas all the teacher educators accepted that discussion as well as demonstration methods are also used during the training programme.
- **Supportive material for in-service teachers:** All the teacher educators claimed that printed materials and also the soft copy of the training material are provided to all the in-service teachers.
- **Use of technology in training programme:** All the teacher educators reported that power point presentations are prepared by them and presentation are demonstrated before the in-service teachers. ICT lab is also used by them to give hand on practice to the trainees.
- **Evaluation of training programme:** Majority of teacher educators reported that evaluation of training programme is also carried out by daily report and through feedback format.
- **Problem faced by the teacher educators during the training programme:** Majority of the teacher educators reported that they faced problems during the organization of in-service training programme and also reported that they do not get any cooperation from administrators and heads during the organization training programmes.
- **Quality improvement in secondary education:** Majority of the teacher educators reported that these in-service training programmes are quite useful for the quality improvement in secondary education.
- **Change in the performance of teachers after attending the training programme:** It has been found that cent percent teacher educators found quite significant change in the performance of school teachers who attended in-service teacher training programme.

Thus it has been found from the case study that RMSA in Kullu District is achieving its objectives effectively.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The implications are based on the finding of the study are given below:

1. Finding of the study indicate that Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan in District Kullu is progressing well and achieving its objectives of universalisation of secondary education effectively. The target of access, cent percent enrolment and retention will be achieved soon. The secondary schools are being opened with in the walking distance of 5-7 kilometers in the district and RMSA trying to strengthen the existing infrastructure through the provision of additional class rooms, art and craft room, toilets and safe drinking water facility, maintenance and school grants.
2. Findings of the study indicate that PTR is good enough, there is no scarcity of teachers.
3. It can be seen that the RMSA covers all special focus groups specially educational needs of girls. A number of initiatives in this direction have been taken to bridge the gender and social gap at secondary level.
4. One finding of the study indicates that RMSA in district is doing much better in the state in handling of the children with special need. Stipend for girls students is being given and also medical assessment camps have been organized every years for these CWSN. Books, uniforms and escort allowances have been provided to these students.
5. The study also indicate the fact that in-service teacher training programme organized by RMSA have brought change in the opinion of teachers about different aspect of teaching- learning process. Hence, it is suggested that such training programme should be made integral part of all educational programmes for secondary teachers.
6. It can further seen from the results that the module of the training programme is sometimes decided by the state project office and not specific as per the need of in-service teachers in the district. So there should be autonomy/flexibility to make change in the module as per the need of in-service teachers.
7. The study reflected that the in-service training given to in-service teachers is proved quite effective. But it was observed that there was no considerable difference in the class room practices between trained and untrained teachers. So there is a need to strengthen the process of monitoring.
8. The training programmes need to be experience-based, after identify needs of secondary school teachers in scientific way.

9. There can be greater use of ICT for promoting innovation. A majority of senior secondary schools of the district are covered under ICT programme of RMSA, but there is a urgent need to cover all the independent High schools, so that students at this stage can be given exposure to ICT.
10. It can be seen in the study that vocational education is being imparted in some schools of the district. Hence, it is suggested that all the senior secondary schools should be covered under the project NSQF.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The following are some suggested problems based on the finding of the study:

1. The present study can be replicated in other districts of Himachal Pradesh studying the impact of RMSA in achieving the target of universalisation of secondary education.
2. A study can be undertaken to see the impact of RMSA programmes on the qualitative improvement in education at secondary stage.
3. An evaluation study on the educational programme for special children under IEDSS or coverage of special focus group in each district of Himachal Pradesh.
4. Evaluation study of RMSA can be conducted in Himachal Pradesh.
5. A study may be designed to confirm the findings of the present study.
6. A study can be undertaken to see the impact of ICT programme on the teaching learning processes in the schools of Himachal Pradesh.
7. A study can be conducted on the impact of Vocational Education on the latest trends of enrolment in Government schools of Himachal Pradesh.

It is hoped that this paper will encourage other scholars to undertake further research and follow up work in this area as suggested.

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