

All India Primary Teachers' Federation

Attainment of the Goal – Education for All

**A Study of
Effectiveness of
In-service Education of Teachers**



2008

All India Primary Teachers' Federation

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A study of Effectiveness of In-service Education of Teachers

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Preface

There has been substantial progress in reducing poverty in the Asia Pacific region, but poverty continues to be high in Nepal, Bangladesh and India. In India nearly 29 per cent of population (over 30 crores) live below the official defined poverty line. There is poverty in the country because the productivity of the workforce is low. If the labour productivity rate is increased, many labourers can emerge out of extreme poverty.

Basic education is an important ingredient to build human capabilities. It is essential for any society's economic growth. It is not possible to eradicate poverty without education. Realizing the importance of universal elementary education for economic growth of the country, the framers of the Indian Constitution incorporated in the Constitution that the State shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of the Constitution for free and compulsory education to all children until they complete the age of fourteen years. India has made steady progress in education since independence in 1947. The growth in literacy rate since then has been impressive. The number of children enrolled and attending school has increased significantly over the years. Many significant programmes such as District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) have been launched with a view to achieving Education For All (EFA). Under the SSA programme, there is a substantial increase in resource flow into primary and upper primary education. Despite of all the endeavours, the goal – Education for All is still elusive. It appears that the country may not achieve EFA by 2015. Since the long cherished goal – EFA is still a mirage, the India's flagship programme - SSA, is off the track. This study was therefore, launched to determine effectiveness of the inputs being made under SSA for achieving universal elementary education.

We are indebted to the Education International for financial support in conducting this study. We are also thankful to Mr. Fred van Leeuwen, General Secretary-EI, Mr. Aloysius Mathews, Chief Coordinator, Ms. Shashi Bala Singh, Coordinator, Mr. Sagar Nath Pyakuryal, Coordinator, EI-APR for providing academic support in planning and conducting the study. My thanks are due to Shri M.P. Shahi, General Secretary, Bihar Rajya Prathmik Shikshak Sangh and his colleagues and Shri S. Anbalagan, General Secretary of Tamilnadu Elementary School Teachers Federation and his colleagues for their ceaseless endeavours in collecting the requisite data for the study.

I also appreciate the endeavours made by Dr. Ajit Singh, Director-Professional Development Project for planning and executing this study and for generating the report of the study. My thanks are also due to Shri Sanjeev Kumar for the pains he took in word processing the report.

(S. ESWARAN)
Secretary General,
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Executive Summary

Under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, significant inputs are being made to achieve the goal-Education For All. One of these inputs is the in-service education of teachers on a continuing basis every year. The main objective of this study was to determine the effectiveness of in-service education being imparted to primary teachers and to study the functioning of Cluster and Block Resource Centres. The dropout and school completion rate at the primary level were also studied. The study was conducted in two states – Bihar and Tamil Nadu. In each of these states, one district was selected. Two blocks were selected in each district. Further in each block, at least two clusters were selected. Ten per cent of schools in each of the selected blocks were covered in the study. The main findings of the study are the following:

- The students' dropout rate at the primary level in Bihar is very high. It is 52.9 per cent. The dropout among girls is slightly higher than those of boys. In the state of Tamil Nadu, the drop out rate is very low i.e. 1.13 per cent.
- Primary school completion rate is quite low in the state of Bihar. It is about 42 per cent. It is quite high i.e. about 84 per cent in the state of Tamil Nadu.
- In the state of Tamil Nadu, nearly 72 per cent teachers reported that the training content of the training programmes they underwent was relevant to their professional learning needs. The remaining teachers (28%) expressed that it was not relevant at all to their professional learning needs. Of the teachers who perceived the training content relevant to their needs, nearly 94 per cent expressed that it was relevant to some extent. Only six per cent expressed that it was relevant to a great extent. Further only 61 per cent of the teachers expressed that training content can be implemented in the classroom. Of these, nearly 93 per cent further expressed that it can be implemented to some extent only.
- Teachers from Tamilnadu by and large further reported that no substitute teacher was posted against their position in the school during the period of their in-service training. As a consequence, learning of their students was affected adversely. They further reported that their image among parents/guardians of their students also declines because of their absence from the school due to their in-service training.
- Only 2.9 per cent teachers from Tamil Nadu reported that their teaching process improved to a large extent as a result of their in-service training under SSA. Nearly 73 per cent reported that it improved to some extent only. The remaining teachers (23.7%) reported that they do not perceive any improvement in their teaching process as a result of their in-service training.
- Nearly 74 per cent teachers reported that transactional approaches followed by facilitators/ resource persons were appropriate to some extent only. About ten per cent reported that the approaches were appropriate to a great/large extent.

- Seventy five per cent teachers from Bihar reported that the training content was relevant to their professional learning needs. Further 23.7 per cent teachers reported that the training content can be implemented in the classroom to a great extent. Nearly 49 teachers reported that it can be implemented to some extent only.
- Nearly 24 per cent teachers from Bihar reported that training received by them was useful to them to large extent. About 58 per cent teachers reported that it was useful to some extent only. The rest (18.4 per cent) reported that it was not useful at all.
- Only 28 per cent teachers reported that the transactional approaches followed by resource persons/facilitators were appropriate to a great/large extent. More than 60 percent reported they were appropriate to some extent only.
- In both the states of Bihar and Tamilnadu, in-service training programmes for teachers are designed by the state level agency/District Institute of Education and Training. BRCs/CRCs do not have any role in this regard. As a consequence, local specific needs of teachers are not addressed appropriately.
- In both the states, BRCs/CRCs have not conducted any study to determine the impact of in-service education on teachers' classroom processes.
- BRCs are ill-staffed.
- Teachers are imparted training during working days. This affects adversely learning of students. This is because their learning hours are reduced. State authorities should review the duration of training of teachers in a year and reduce it suitably as desired by teachers.
- State authorities should examine the possibilities of providing school based training to teachers as desired by them.
- Training programmes should lay a great deal of emphasis on developing among teachers' skills such as preparing working models and puppets.

I

The Context

1.0 Backdrop

Education is a human right. It is an essential tool for attaining the goal of equality, development and peace. It breaks the vicious circle between poverty and illiteracy. It is a driving force for human development because it aids the upliftment of the weaker sections of society by providing them with a set of useful and marketable skills. This helps in increasing employment opportunities and thereby reducing an individual vulnerability to poverty. Basic education helps an individual to meet his/her basic needs. It helps human beings to develop their capabilities, to live and work with dignity, to participate fully in the national development and to improve the quality of their lives.

Basic education is an indispensable passport to life (Delors 1996). “The primary education is very crucial in the sense that it is during this stage that we acquire the instruments for the future development of our faculties of reason and imagination, our judgment and sense of responsibility and when we learn to be inquisitive about the world around us” (Delors, 1996). Basic Education provides necessary knowledge to an individual to make an optimum use of scarce resources and better use of available services. Improvement in nutrition particularly among infants and young children greatly enhances their learning capacity.

Realizing the importance of elementary education towards the development of an individual, the framers of the Indian Constitution took care to see that Article 24, 45, 39 (e and f) are incorporated in it. Article 45 which forms a part of the Directive Principles of State Policy stipulates that the State shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of the Constitution for free and compulsory education to all children until they complete the age of fourteen years.

India has made tremendous progress in education since independence. There has been a phenomenal expansion of educational facilities at all the levels over the period. The number of children enrolled in class-I has increased manifold. But our achievements though spectacular have not taken us to our long cherished goal – Education For All (EFA). Endeavours to attain EFA gained impetus after the international community gathered for first time in

Jomtein in 1990 and adopted a resolution to achieve Education For All (EFA) by 2000. Over the years, there have been significant interventions made by the Government of India to attain EFA. One of these interventions has been District Primary Education Programme (DPEP).

The World Education Forum, Dakar Senegal which met in April 2000 committed that the international community must ensure universal access to quality basic education. It is to be achieved and sustained by 2015. India is a party to the Dakar Convention. The 86th Constitutional amendment in 2002 provided free and compulsory education to all children in the age group 6 to 14 years as a Fundamental Right under Article 21A. The Fundamental Right to Education is yet to become a reality. This is because the Act to operationalize it is yet to be passed by the Central Legislature.

Despite of all the endeavours being made by the Govt. of India during the last more than 60 years, the achievement of the goal - Education For All is still elusive. It seems to be a distant dream and is a mirage. This is primarily due to the appalling high dropout rate at the primary level in the country. On an average, out of 100 children who are admitted in class-I, about 30 drop-out on the way before completing primary education. As such, primary school completion rate is 60 per cent or so. There are a number of reasons contributing to this situation in the country.

1.1 Need for the Study

In 2001, India launched another prestigious programme which is known as Sarva Shika Abhiyan (SSA). Its goals are the following:

- i) All children in school by 2003;
- ii) All children complete five years of primary schooling by 2007;
- iii) Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality;
- iv) Bridge all gender and social category gaps; and
- v) Universal retention by 2010.

Enormous human and material resources are being invested into elementary education with a view to achieving the said goal. But the attainment of the goal is hardly visible. This is visible from the data flowing from research studies/surveys being conducted by various agencies. In August 2004, Pratham conducted a survey of 19 districts in 17 states of India. They found that percentage of children enrolled in schools is very high (80-90%+) in most of the states especially in the 6-10 age group (Provisional Annual Status of Education Report, 2006).

The study revealed that the most disturbing phenomenon is that close to 1.4 crore children are still out of school. The situation in Bihar (13.5%), Rajasthan (10.4%), Jharkhand (9.8%) and even Andhra Pradesh (7.4%) is quite worrisome. Almost 8 years of DPEP and 7 years of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) apart from state specific projects like Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project (1987-1994), Bihar Education Project (1991) till it merged with DPEP in 1994, Rajasthan Shiksha Karmi Project (1987 to 2003) and Rajasthan Lok Jumbish (1992 to 2004) seem to have had limited impact.

The alarming findings relate to pupils' achievement in reading and arithmetic. Close to 35% children in the 7-14 age group could not read a simple paragraph (grade-1 level difficulty) and almost 60% could not read a simple story (grade 2 level difficulty). Further 41% of children in the 7 to 14 age group were unable to do either two digit subtraction problems or division problem-3 digit by 1 digit. 24.4% of the same age group could do the subtraction problems (2 digit problem with borrowing) but could not correctly do the division problems that were given to them.

Findings of the Pratham study though slightly controversial do demonstrate that the primary school quality is quite low. This makes us to think that the scheme – Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is not providing the desired dividends. It is off the track. It is not being implemented on proper lines. Further, it has been observed that different functionaries at the state level are fudging the statistics relating to various aspects of primary/elementary education. They are bloating figures for certain obvious reasons.

Under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, significant inputs are being made such as augmenting infrastructure facilities in schools (construction of additional classrooms etc.) and teaching work-force by para and regular teachers; induction training of para-teachers, in-service education of para and regular teachers on a continuing basis every year; and setting up of in-service training centres at the block and cluster level. It is assumed that if the goal of 'Education For All' is not being achieved within the stipulated time –frame, then the inputs being used are not as effective as they should be. In the light of this situation, the All India Primary Teachers' Federation (AIPTF) felt the need to determine the effectiveness of certain inputs such as in-service education of teachers, and the functioning of Block and Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs) to achieve the goal - EFA. The study was thus conducted with the objectives cited below:

1.2.0 Objectives of the Study

Main objectives of the study were to:

- assess the dropout rate at the primary stage;
- determine the school completion rate at the primate stage;
- determine the effectiveness of in-service education being imparted to primary teachers; and
- study the functioning of Cluster Resource Centres and Block Resource Centres and their effectiveness.

1.3.0 Design of the Study

1.3.1 Sample

The study was conducted in two states – Bihar and Tamil Nadu. In each of these states, one district was selected. Further, two blocks were selected from each district. Thus the study was conducted in four blocks in the said states. In each block, at least two clusters were selected. Blocks and clusters in a district were selected randomly. The selected districts, blocks and clusters in the said states are mentioned below in Table 1.1. Ten per cent of schools in the selected blocks were covered in the study.

Table 1.1 Districts, Blocks and Clusters covered

State	District	Block	Cluster	No. of Teachers Covered
Bihar	Muzaffarpur	a) Mushahari	i) U.M.S. Mushahari farm Mushahari ii) M.S. Salhajalapur Mushahari	48
		b) Muroul	iii) M.S. Dholi Bazar iv) M.S. Muroul, Muroul	28
Tamilnadu	Vellore	a) Anaicut	i) Otteripalayam ii) Vettuvanam iii) Poigai iv) Eraivankadu v) Mandaiveli vi) Odugathur	121
		b) Alangayam	i) Alangayam ii) Kalandhiva iii) Nimmiyanpattu iv) Vallipatta	82
				279

1.3.2 Instruments

The following instruments were developed to collect the requisite data:

- i) Dropout of Pupils from Schools – Interview Schedule;
- ii) Teachers’ Perceptions regarding Effectiveness of their In-service Education under SSA – Questionnaire
- iii) Functioning of Cluster Resource Centres – Interview Schedule; and
- iv) Functioning of Block Resource Centres – Interview Schedule.

1.3.3 Try out of instruments

Instruments were tried out and later finalized in the light of feedback emanating from the process of try out.

1.3.4 Appointment of Investigators

Both the affiliates of the AIPTF - Bihar and Tamilnadu appointed two investigators each for collecting of requisite data from the selected schools, teachers, and Cluster and Block Resource Centres.

Training of Investigators

Investigators appointed by the State Teachers’ Association of Bihar and Tamilnadu were provided training at Shikshak Bhawan, New Delhi for two days on 20th and 21st April 2007. In this training programme, instruments developed for collecting data were discussed at length with the investigators. Guidelines for collecting data were developed and explained to the investigators.

1.3.5 Collection of Data

The investigators visited primary schools with a view to determining the dropout rate of students, primary schooling completion rate and teachers’ perceptions regarding effectiveness their in-service training under SSA. Investigators also visited Block and Cluster Resource Centres to determine the effectiveness of their functioning.

The investigators used the instruments for collecting the requisite data from different functionaries. Investigators took more than two months to collect the requisite data.

1.3.6 Delimitations of the Study

The following were the delimitations of the study:

- ➔ The study was conducted in two states only – Bihar and Tamilnadu. In case of these states, only one district was selected. Further in each of the selected districts, two blocks were selected. In each block, at least two clusters and ten per cent of schools in these selected clusters comprised the sample of the study.

- ➔ Among the inputs being made under SSA to the achieve the goal – Education For All, only the effectiveness of in-service education of teachers and functioning of Block and Cluster Resource Centres was studied.
- ➔ The effectiveness of in-service teacher education programme was determined in terms of teachers' perceptions.

II

Students' Dropout Rate

2.0 Students' Dropout Rate

Students' dropout rate at the primary stage was determined in both the states of Bihar and Tamilnadu.

2.1 Students' dropout rate in Bihar

The most significant stumbling block towards the achievement of the goal is the high dropout at the primary level. Surveys being conducted by the National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA) on a continuing basis do indicate that the dropout though declining slightly is persisting in states particularly educationally backward ones. In this study, an endeavour was made to determine dropout rate among students at the primary stage in the states of Bihar and Tamilnadu. Table 2.1 depicts dropout rate in the state of Bihar. Though the sample of the study in this regard is very limited, but the data do indicate somewhat the current status of dropout rate in the state of Bihar.

Table 2.1 Percentage of Pupils Dropping out from schools in Muzaffarpur Distt.

Name of the block	No. of schools covered	No. of pupils in grade-I four years back 2001-02			Enrolment in grade-V during 2005-06 in these schools			No. of pupils who dropped out			Percentage of dropped out children		
		B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T
Mushahari	13	1313	962	2275	633	432	1065	686	530	1210	52.2	55.1	53.2
Muroul	07	721	455	1176	346	213	559	375	242	617	52.0	53.2	52.5
Total	20	2034	1417	3451	979	645	1624	1061	772	1827	52.0	54.5	52.9

Table 2.1 depicts the dropout rate of students in Mushahari and Muroul blocks of Muzaffarpur district in Bihar during 2005-2006. The dropout rate is alarmingly very high. It is 53.2 per cent and 52.5 per cent respectively in the blocks of Mushahari and Muroul. Further drop out rate in the both the blocks is 52.9 per cent. The dropout rate among girls is slightly higher than that among boys.

Surveys conducted to determine reasons for students' dropout from schools reveal that parents particularly in states where poverty is high, want their children to supplement their income. Besides, parents' indifference or lack

of interest in their education is also a significant factor responsible of the phenomenon of high dropout rate. Students also dropout from school to take care of their younger siblings. On the other hand, parents cite lack of facilities in schools as the major reason for their children frequent absence/dropout from school.

The dropout rate at the primary level in Bihar is very high. This reflects that the steps being taken by the state government are hardly effective in arresting the dropout rate. The state may consider the guidelines provided by the Supreme Court of India in this regard. The Supreme Court while dealing with politically sensitive and socially important issue of 27 per cent reservation in higher education for OBCs did not lose sight of the importance of primary education and felt that a lot needs to be done to universalize the elementary education.

From among the Constitution Bench comprising five judges, Justices Arijit Pasayat, C.K. Thakker and Dalveer Bhandari stressed on the need for urgent measures for ensuring elementary education to all children aged between 6 and 14 years. Justice Bhandari, widening the compass of scrutiny, was blunt to observe that “the current patchwork of laws on compulsory education is insufficient”. He said the monetary fines for not sending children to school have not worked and suggested the Centre to enact a legislation having drastic measures like:

- provision of financial incentive to low-income parents so that they can send their children to school;
- criminally penalize those who receive financial incentive yet do not send their wards to school;
- penalize employers who preclude children from attending schools; and penalty should include imprisonment.

Justice Bhandari mentioned that the government should continue to increase the education budget to fulfill the mandate under Article 21A of the Constitution for free and compulsory education for children between 6 – 14 years, (Times of India dated 11th April 2008).

In the light of said guidelines, the state of Bihar should take suitable steps to arrest dropout rate among students.

2.2 Students’- Dropout Rate in Tamilnadu

Table 2.2 highlights drop-out rate of students in Anaicut and Alangayam blocks in Vellore district.

Table 2.2 Percentage of Pupils who dropped out from schools in Vellore District of Tamilnadu state

Name of the block	No. of schools covered	No. of pupils in grade-I four years back 2001-02			Enrolment in grade-V during 2005-06 in these schools			No. of pupils who dropped out			Percentage of dropped out children		
		B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T
Anaicut	28	335	359	694	331	351	682	04	8	12	1.2	2.2	1.73
Alangayam	27	520	469	989	518	464	982	02	05	07	0.39	1.07	0.71
Total	55	855	828	1683	849	815	1664	06	13	19	0.70	1.5	1.13

B – stands for boys, **G** – stands for girls, **T** – stands for total number of boys and girls

In the said blocks, only 55 schools were covered. Table 2.2 reveals that the dropout rate of students in Vellore district of Tamilnadu is very low. It is 1.73 per cent and 0.71 per cent respectively in the blocks of Anaicut and Alangayam. Though the sample is very limited but still the data do indicate that the dropout rate is very low in the state of Tamilnadu. It is 1.13 per cent in both the blocks. The situation is quite good. The state is on the threshold of achieving universal primary education.

2.3 Primary School Completion Rate

The school completion rate is an indicator of the efficiency of the primary education system. Therefore, an endeavour was made to determine the school completion rate in the selected schools in both the states of Bihar and Tamilnadu.

2.3.1 School Completion Rate in the state of Bihar

Table 2.3 depicts primary school completion rate in Muzaffarpur district of Bihar state

Table 2.3 Primary School Completion Rate in Muzaffarpur District

Name of the block	No. of schools covered	No. of children admitted in class-I during 2001-02 in these schools			No. of pupils appeared in Grade-V Examination in 2006			No. of pupils who passed out			Percentage of pupils who passed from these admitted in 2001-02		
		B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T
Mushahari	13	1313	962	2275	633	432	1065	568	402	970	43.2	41.78	42.63
Muroul	07	721	455	1176	346	213	559	301	188	489	41.74	41.31	41.58
Total	20	2034	1417	3451	979	645	1624	869	590	1459	42.7	41.64	42.28

Table 2.3 reveals that the primary school completion rate is 42.63 and 41.58 per cent respectively in the blocks of Mushahari and Muroul. The overall

school completion rate in both the blocks is 42.28 per cent. The completion rate is slightly higher in respect of boys than those of girls. The table thus reveals that out of 100 children who joined primary school in 2001-2002, only 42 per cent completed primary education in 2005-2006. The primary schooling completion rate is therefore, very low in Bihar. The table depicts stark reality of the situation with regard to achievement of universal primary education in Bihar. The situation is very depressing. It does not provide any light as to when will the state be able to achieve the long cherished goal - Education For All.

2.3.2 School Completion rate in the state of Tamilnadu

Table 2.4 depicts primary school completion rate in Vellore district in Tamilnadu state.

Table 2.4 Primary School Completion Rate in Vellore District

Name of the Block	No. of Schools Covered	No. of pupils in grade-I four years back 2001-02			No. of students who appeared in grade V examination in 2006			No. of pupils who passed out			Percentage of pupils who passed out from those admitted in 2001-02		
		B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T
Anaicut	28	335	359	694	324	341	665	324	340	664	96.72	94.7	95.68
Alangayam	27	520	469	989	389	372	761	387	371	758	74.73	79.11	76.65
Total	55	855	828	1683	713	713	1426	711	711	1422	83.16	85.87	84.50

Table 2.4 reveals that primary school completion rate in Anaicut and Alangayam blocks of Vellore district is 95.68 and 76.65 per cent respectively. The overall school completion rate in both the blocks is however, 84.50 per cent. The primary school completion rate is low in Alangayam block. The Education department needs to find out the reasons for this low school completion rate and take suitable steps to improve the situation.

III

Teachers' Perceptions

3.0 In-service Education of Teachers

School quality particularly at the primary level is low. This is a matter of serious concern. 'There is widespread agreement that the achievement of successful schooling is crucially dependent on the quality of teaching workforce'. (Husen et al, 2003). Teacher education – both pre-service and in-service is responsible for developing quality teaching work-force. It is generally observed that the quality of pre-service teacher education is low. It does not equip prospective teachers with requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes to perform effectively in their work-situation. 'In-service education of teachers is considered to be key aspect of school improvement efforts'. (Sparks and Loucks – Horsley, 1990). 'The training, retraining and updating of practicing teachers are widely recognized as essential factors in the development of teachers' quality. Teacher quality is a major, perhaps the major factor, contributing to improvement in learning outcomes of students (Husen et al, 2003).

Prior to 1986, in-service education of teachers was a sporadic affair. The National Policy on Education (NPE) (1986) laid a great deal of emphasis on in-service education of teachers on a continuing basis to improve school quality and thereby to achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Universal Elementary Education (UEE). Enormous resources-human and material are being invested into in-service education of teachers. Presently every teacher is being imparted in-service education for 20 days in a year under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan – the flagship programme of the Government of India.

Though in-service education programmes for teachers are being organised on a continuing basis, but very little is known about the effectiveness of these programmes. Very little information is available whether the training experiences have improved classroom processes of teachers. There are studies which reveal that pupils' achievement only increases when teachers present appropriate content in effective ways in the classroom. "Teachers attending in-service courses often complain that in-service courses are too theoretical, and are too far removed from their daily working experiences. Training activities therefore, do not result in improvement in teachers'

instructional behaviours” (Van Tulder, 1992). Bolam (1987) too reported that “information imparted to teachers is insufficiently related to the specific needs and concerns of the participants. They tend to offer theory which is unrelated to practice. They tend to over-use lecture and discussion methods. In consequence, they are ineffective in influencing teacher performance and school improvement”. It can be effective only if it is based on the entry level capabilities of teachers. “A look into the effectiveness of contemporary staff development literature reveals that teachers learn little from traditional in-service training workshops (Smylie, Mark and Miretzky, Debra (Eds.) (2004)”.

In the light of above, one of the objectives of this study was to determine teachers’ perceptions about the effectiveness of in-service training they had undergone. Teachers’ perceptions in this regard are presented in the following paragraphs.

3.1.0 Teachers’ Participation in In-service Education Programmes

Under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), every primary teacher is being imparted in-service education for 20 days in a year. A part of this training for about 10 days is imparted at the cluster and for the rest at the block resource centre level. An endeavour was made to determine as to what percentage of primary teachers is receiving training every year in both the states of Bihar and Tamilnadu.

3.1.1 Percentage of teachers who received in-service education from Vellore district of Tamilnadu

Table 3.1 presents data with regard to number and percentage of teachers who received in-service education from Anaicut and Alangayam blocks of Vellore district during 2004-2005 to 2006-2007.

Table 3.1 Primary School Teachers who received In-service Education in Vellore District

Block	No. and Percentage of teachers								
	2004-2005			2005-2006			2006-2007		
	No. of teachers in the block	No. of teachers who received training	Percentage of teachers who received training	No. of teachers in the block	No. of teachers who received training	Percentage of teachers who received training	No. of teachers in the block	No. of teachers who received training	Percentage of teachers who received training
Anaicut	320	261	81.5	331	318	96	322	307	94.7
Alangayam	288	257	89.2	274	245	98.4	366	340	92.9
Total	608	518	85.3	605	563	92.7	688	647	93.8

Table 3.1 reveals that of those teachers who are in the blocks of Anaicut and Alangayam, 85.3 per cent received training in 2004-2005, 92.7 per cent in

2005-2006 and 93.8 per cent in 2006-2007. This percentage is quite high and is appreciable.

3.1.2 Teachers’ Perceptions about Effectiveness of In-service Education

Teachers’ perceptions about different aspect of in-service education of teachers are presented below. These are presented in respect of Tamilnadu state first.

Relevance of Training Content to Teachers’ Professional Learning Needs

Teachers were asked to specify whether the training content of the in-service education imparted to them was relevant to their professional learning needs. Data with regard to their responses are presented in table 3.2

Table 3.2 Teachers’ Perceptions regarding Relevance of Training Content

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of Respondents	No. and Percentage of respondents who perceived training content			
			Relevant		Not relevant at all	
			N *	P **	N	P
1	Anaicut	121	86	71.0	35	29.0
2	Alangayam	82	60	73.2	22	26.8
	Total	203	146	71.9	57	28.1

Table 3.2 reveals that 203 teachers (121 from Anaicut block and 82 from Alangayam block) responded to this item of the questionnaire. Nearly 72 per cent teachers from both the blocks reported that the training content was relevant to their professional learning needs. The data in table 3.2 are also presented below in figure 3.1:

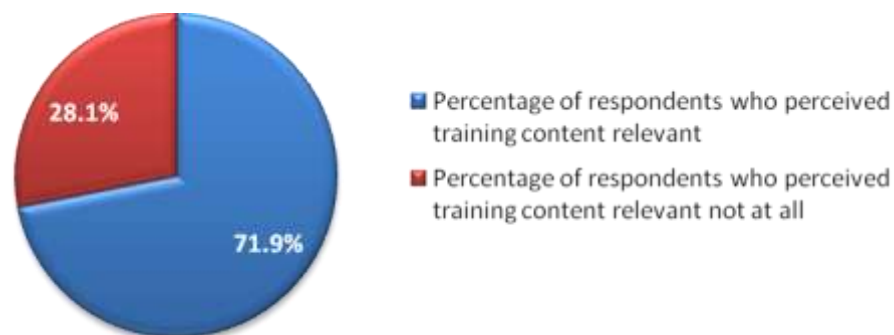


Figure 3.1

Teachers were further asked as to what extent the training content was relevant to their professional learning needs. Data in this regard are presented in table 3.3.

*** N – Stands for number **P – Stands for percentage**

Table 3.3 Teachers’ Perceptions regarding the Extent of Relevance of the Training Content

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of Respondents	No. and Percentage of respondents who perceived training content relevant			
			To a great extent		To some extent	
			N	P	N	P
1.	Anaicut	86	2	2.3	84	97.7
2	Alangayam	60	7	11.7	53	88.3
	Total	146	9	6.2	137	93.8

The data in table 3.3 also depicted below through figure 3.2

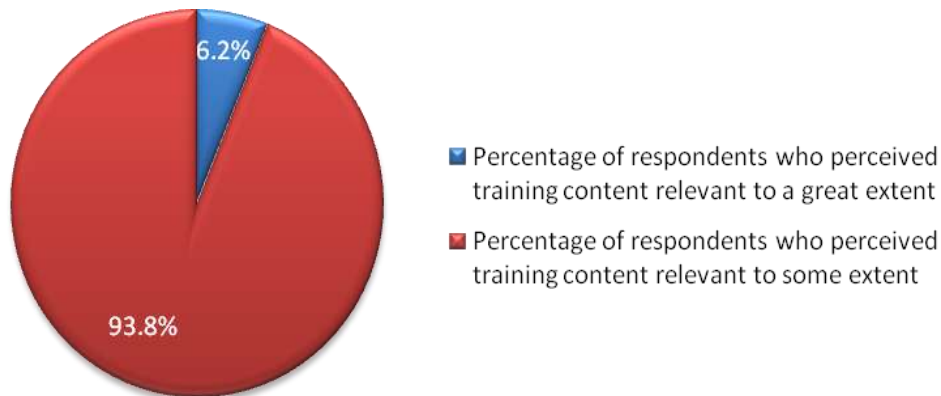


Figure 3.2

Table 3.3 reveals that of those respondents who perceived training content relevant, 93.8 per cent reported that it was relevant to some extent only. Only 6.2 per cent reported that it was relevant to a great extent. The situation is very depressing as teachers perceive training content relevant to the professional learning needs to some extent only. This calls for introspection on the part of the organising agencies/policy makers in the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme. The situation demands need assessment studies before launching training programmes.

3.1.3 Implementation of training content/experiences in the classroom

Teachers were also asked whether the training content/experiences gained by them can be implemented in the classroom. Teachers' responses in this regard are presented in table 3.4

Table 3.4 Teachers' Perceptions regarding Implementation of Training Content in the Classroom

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of Respondents	No. and Percentage of respondents who perceived training content			
			Can be implemented		Cannot be implemented at all	
			N	P	N	P
1.	Anaicut	121	67	55.4	54	44.6
2	Alangayam	82	57	69.5	25	30.5
	Total	203	124	61.0	79	39.0

The data in table 3.4 are also presented below through figure 3.3

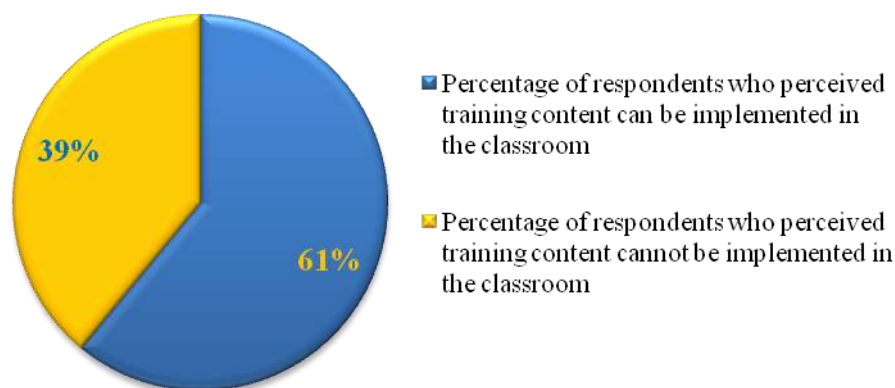


Figure 3.3

Table 3.4 manifests that in both the blocks, only 61 per cent teachers reported that the training content/experiences gained can be implemented in the classroom and the rest of the teachers (39 per cent) mentioned that it cannot be implemented at all. When we compare teachers' perceptions in both the blocks, we find that in Anaicut block, only 55.4 per cent reported that training content/experiences can be implemented in the classroom. The rest of the teachers 44.6 per cent expressed that it cannot be implemented in the classroom. This situation is quite serious. This makes one to ponder whether we are using fruitfully human and material resources for in-service education of teachers?

Further 93.5 per cent teachers who perceive that the training content / experiences gained in the training programmes can be implemented in the classroom reported

that these can be implemented to some extent only. This is evident from table 3.5 which is given below.

Table 3.5 Teachers’ Perceptions regarding Extent of Implementation of the Training Content/Experiences in the Classroom

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of Respondents	No. and Percentage of respondents who perceived training content can be implemented			
			To a great extent		To some extent	
			N	P	N	P
1.	Anaicut	67	1	1.5	66	98.5
2.	Alangayam	57	7	12.3	50	87.7
	Total	124	8	6.5	116	93.5

Data in table 3.5 also depicted below through figure 3.4

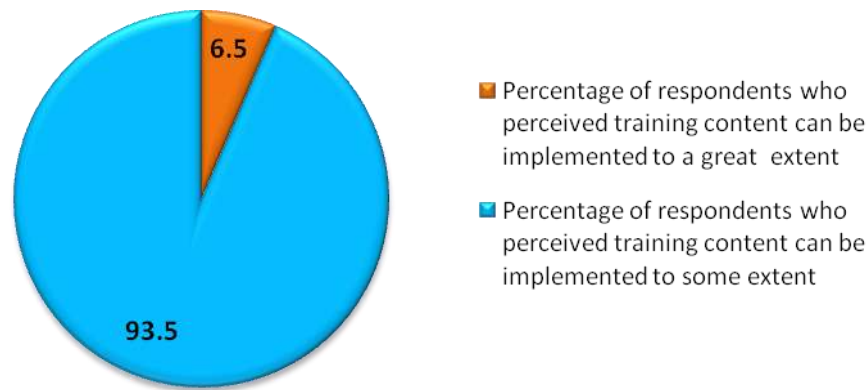


Figure 3.4

Only 6.5 per cent teachers reported that the training content/experiences can be implemented in the classroom to a great extent.

3.1.4 Posting of a Substitute teacher against the teacher under in-service training

Teachers were asked whether any teacher was posted against their post during the period they underwent in-service training. Their responses in this regard are presented in table 3.6

Table 3.6 Posting of a Substitute teacher during the Period of Training

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of Respondents	No. and Percentage of cases in which substitute teacher was posted			
			Posted		Not Posted	
			N	P	N	P
1.	Anaicut	121	5	4.1	116	95.9
2.	Alangayam	82	15	18.3	67	81.7
	Total	203	20	9.9	183	90.1

Table 3.6 manifests that 90.1 per cent teachers from both the blocks reported that no substitute teacher was posted against their post during the period of training. The rest of the teachers (9.9

per cent) reported that a teacher was posted in the school against their post during the period of training. Further almost all the teachers reported that the learning of their students was affected adversely during the period of their in-service training. These teachers further reported that their image among parents/guardians of their students also declines because of their absence from the school due to their in-service training. Few teachers, however, reported that the learning of their students was not affected adversely due to their absence from the school on account of their in-service training.

3.1.5 Teachers’ perceptions regarding improvement in teaching process as a result of training

The main objective of an in-service training programme is to deepen teachers’ knowledge in different subject areas and to improve their teaching/classroom processes. In the light of this, teachers were asked to mention the extent to which they perceive an improvement in their teaching process as a result of their in-service training under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). Data in this regard are presented in table 3.7. The data are also depicted through figure 3.5

Table 3.7 Teachers’ Perceptions regarding the Extent of Improvement in their Teaching Process as a result of their Training

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of Respondents	Extent of improvement in teaching process					
			To a large extent		To some extent		Not at all	
			N	P	N	P	N	P
1.	Anaicut	121	3	5	98	81.0	20	16.5
2	Alangayam	82	3	3.6	51	62.2	28	34.2
	Total	203	6	2.9	149	73.4	48	23.7

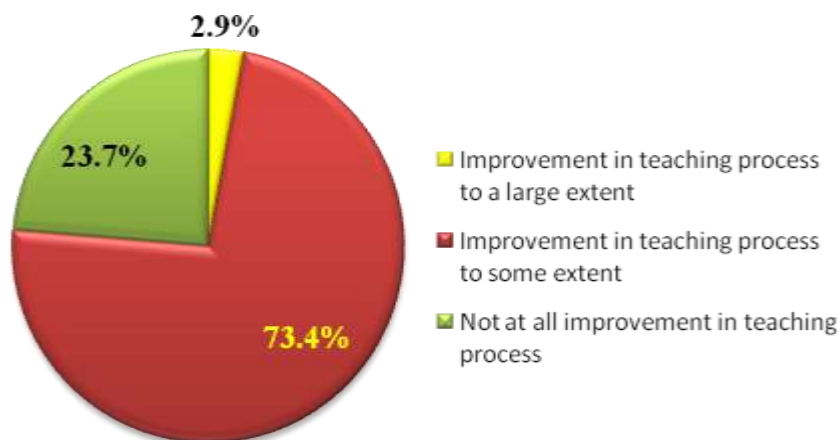


Figure 3.5

Table 3.7 reveals that only 2.9 per cent teachers reported that their teaching process/ classroom processes have improved to a large extent as a result of their in-service training under SSA. The situation is disgusting. However, 73.4 per cent teachers expressed that their teaching process has improved to some extent only. On the other hand, 23.7 per cent teachers reported that they do not perceive any improvement in their teaching process as a result of their in-service teaching under SSA. The scenario highlights that the resources both human and material being invested into in-service education of teachers are not providing the desired dividends. Policy makers need to design inputs to improve the effectiveness of training programmes.

3.1.6 Appropriateness of transactional approaches

The effectiveness of training not only depends upon training content but also on transactional approaches through which the content is presented to trainees. In view of this, an aspect of this study was to determine whether teachers perceived appropriate the transactional approaches followed by facilitators in training programmes. Data in this regard are presented in table 3.8

Table 3.8 Teachers’ Perceptions regarding Appropriateness of Transactional Approaches

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of Respondents	No. and Percentage of teachers expressing extent of appropriateness of transactional approaches							
			To a great extent		To a large extent		To some extent		Not at all	
			N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P
1.	Anaicut	121	2	1.6	7	5.8	101	83.5	11	9.1
2	Alangayam	82	1	1.2	9	10.9	49	59.7	23	28.1
	Total	203	3	1.5	16	7.9	150	73.9	34	16.7

Table 3.8 reveals that out of 203 respondents in both the blocks, only a very limited percentage 9.4 of teachers’ perceived transactional approaches appropriate either to a great or to a large extent. 73.9 per cent teachers reported that the transactional approaches followed by facilitators in the training programmes were appropriate to some extent only. Further 16.7 per cent teachers expressed that these were not appropriate at all.

Teachers’ dissatisfaction with the transactional approaches followed by facilitators makes us to think for bringing about an improvement in them. Some scholars like Malcom Knowles point out that the learning style of adults is different from the learning style of children. Transactional approaches for teaching of adults must match their learning style. These scholars highlight that cognitive problem solving and experiential learning are the main approaches through which adults learn the most. Organizers of training programmes need to encourage facilitators to use these transactional approaches.

3.1.8 Training sessions interactive and participatory

Teachers were asked to specify whether the training sessions of the programmes in which they participated, were participatory in character. This was determined on the premise that if there is an interaction between the teacher and the taught in the classroom, the better is the learning on the part of students. Teachers’ responses from both the blocks are presented in table 3.9

Table 3.9 Teachers’ Perceptions regarding Interactive and Participatory Training Sessions

Sl.	Name of the	No. of	No. and percentage of respondents
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No.	Block	Respondents	To a large extent		To some extent		Not at all	
			N	P	N	P	N	P
1.	Anaicut	121	3	2.5	80	66.1	38	31.4
2	Alangayam	82	4	4.9	50	61.0	28	34.1
	Total	203	7	3.5	130	64.0	66	32.5

Sixty four per cent teachers reported that the training sessions were participatory and interactive to some extent only. Nearly 32 per cent teachers reported that the interaction between the facilitators and the participants in the training sessions was not there at all. Only 3.5 per cent teachers reported that training sessions were participatory and interactive to a large extent. There is a need to exhort facilitators to make their session more interactive for facilitating better learning on the part of trainees.

3.1.9 Facilitators of training programmes

Teachers were asked to specify whether the facilitators who imparted training to them were qualified, experienced and prepared for the task. Teachers' reactions in this regard are presented in table 3.10

Table 3.10 Teachers' Perceptions regarding Quality of Facilitators

Name of Block	Qualified						Experienced						Prepared for Teaching					
	Well		Average		Below average		Highly		Average		Below average		Well		Average		Below average	
	N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P
Anaicut	2	1.7	104	85.9	15	12.4	2	1.7	94	77.7	25	20.6	1	0.8	86	71.1	34	28.1
Alangayam	44	53.7	38	46.4	-	-	14	17.1	50	87.7	18	21.96	18	21.96	38	46.3	26	31.7
Total	46	22.7	142	69.9	15	7.4	16	7.9	144	70.9	43	21.2	19	9.4	124	61.1	60	29.5

More than 60 per cent of the respondents reported that facilitators were average with regard to their qualifications, experience and preparedness for imparting training. Nearly 22 per cent reported that they were well qualified. Only about eight per cent reported that they were highly experienced. Only 9 per cent reported that they were well prepared for the task. On the other hand, more than 20 per cent perceived that facilitators were below average with regard to their experience and preparedness for the task. The selection of better qualified and experienced facilitators interested in EFA is highly essential to improve the quality of experiences being provided to teachers in training programmes under SSA.

3.1.10 Learning Material for Participants

From Anaicut block, 57 per cent teachers reported that they were not supplied learning material during the training programme. From Alangayam block about 24 per cent teacher reported that they were not supplied learning material during the training programme. If the learning material is not supplied during the training programme, it affects adversely the quality of the training.

3.1.11 Observations of Teachers

Observations of some teachers regarding different aspects of in-service training are reproduced below:

“Training programmes must be conducted by well equipped and skilled persons in the concerned subject or else these are useless”

“In rural areas, two teachers are working in elementary schools. The learning of students is affected adversely by in-service trainings of teachers. So it is better to reduce training days”

“Resource persons should take personal interest in order to make their interaction well and meaningful”

“We want to learn some new things in training programmes like attractive methods of teaching and how to make working models, puppets etc.”

“Teaching methods are known to experienced teachers. All these methods and techniques were studied by them in the pre-service training. No more training is necessary.”

“What we are learning in the training programme is not possible to use in the school situation”

“Trainings under SSA are not useful to highly experienced teachers because they know how to teach lessons to students. So BRC and CRC trainings are not helpful to teachers as well as to students. My suggestion is that the effectiveness of trainings needs to be improved by giving proper training related to the subjects.”

3.1.12 Suggestions for improvement in the Effectiveness of Training Programmes

The following are the main suggestions made by teachers to improve the effectiveness of training programmes.

- ➔ Training programmes conducted by ill-equipped and in-experienced resource persons lead to waste of resources- both human and material. Therefore, only experienced and well-equipped teachers should be selected as resource persons.
- ➔ Sometimes teachers are asked through mobile phone a day before the commencement of the training programme to participate. In such a situation, teachers come to the training programme unprepared to gain experiences from training situation. They need to be informed well in advance about their participation in the training programme.
- ➔ Training programmes should lay a great deal of emphasis on developing among teachers skills such as preparing working models and puppets and life skills.
- ➔ Training programmes spoil many school working days and students' learning hours. Therefore there is an urgent need to review the duration of training with a view to reducing it suitably.
- ➔ In-service education and training is important. But too much of anything does not provide the desired dividends. Like this, too much of training does not result in improvement in teachers' classroom processes.
- ➔ Training programmes are conducted in working days. This reduces the teaching hours in schools. Therefore, training should not be conducted during working days. School based training programmes need to be launched.
- ➔ Training sessions should be participatory and interactive. Resource persons should use transactional approach(es) which produce conducive environment in the training session for learning to happen. Training approaches presently being used by facilitators are not appropriate.
- ➔ Training under SSA is not useful to highly experienced teachers as they know how to teach.
- ➔ Entry behaviour of teachers must be considered while developing training design. Need assessment studies, therefore need to be conducted from time to time with a view to developing suitable training design.
- ➔ Training should be problem centred rather than subject centred.
- ➔ Training imparted at the DIET level is more useful than at the CRC level.
- ➔ Training needs to be imparted in the beginning of the academic session

- ➔ For training at the cluster level, annual plan should be given to teachers in the beginning of the year.

3.2.0 Teachers' perceptions about different aspects of In-service education programmes in Bihar

In the preceding pages, teachers' perceptions about different aspects of in-service education programmes in Tamilnadu have been presented. In this sub-section, teachers' perceptions from Bihar state are presented. As mentioned earlier, the study was conducted in Mushahari and Muroul blocks of Muzaffarpur district in Bihar.

3.2.1 Percentage of Teachers who underwent In-service Training

Table 3.11 presents number and percentage of teachers who underwent training under SSA during 2004-2005, 2005-2006 and 2006-2007.

Table 3.11 Primary School Teachers who received In-service Training

Name of the Block	No. of respondents	No. and Percentage of teachers who underwent in-service training during					
		2004-05		2005-06		2006-07	
		N	P	N	P	N	P
Mushahari	48	28	58.3	25	52.4	31	64.5
Muroul	28	22	78.5	24	85.7	21	75.0
Total	76	50	65.7	49	64.4	52	68.4

Table 3.11 manifests that in both of blocks nearly 65 per cent teachers underwent in-service training under SSA during the years 2004-2005 to 2006-2007. The percentage of teachers who underwent in-service training from Muroul block is higher than those from Mushahari block.

3.2.2 Relevance of training content to the professional learning needs of teachers

Teachers were asked to specify whether training content of in-service training programmes which they underwent was relevant to their professional learning needs. Table 3.12 presents data in this regard. The data are also depicted through figure 3.6

Table 3.12 Teachers' Perceptions regarding Relevance of Training Content

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of respondents	No. and Percentage of teachers who considered training content
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			Relevant		Not Relevant at all	
			N	P	N	P
1	Mushahari	48	37	77.1	11	22.9
2	Muroul	28	20	71.4	08	28.6
	Total	76	57	75.0	19	25.0

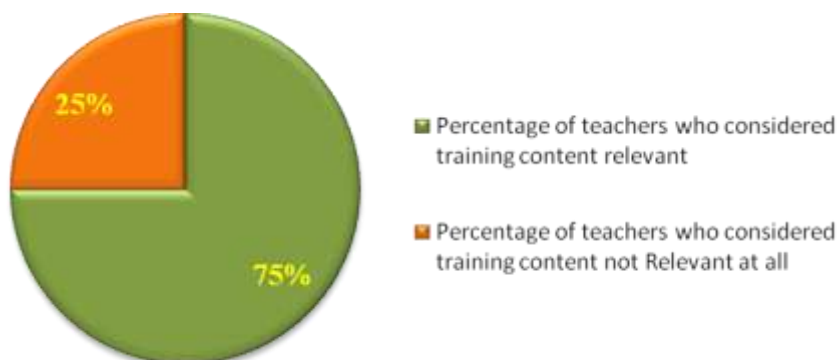


Figure 3.6

Table 3.12 manifests that in both the blocks, 75 percent teachers' perceived training content relevant to their professional learning needs. The remaining 25 per cent reported that it was not relevant at all.

3.2.3 Implementation of Training Content in the Classroom

Nearly 24 per cent teachers from both the blocks reported that the training content can be implemented in the classroom to a great extent. Nearly 49 per cent teachers reported that it can be implemented in the classroom to some extent. The rest of the teachers (27.6%) reported that it cannot be implemented at all. The said data are presented in table 3.13. Data in this regard are also depicted through figure 3.7

Table 3.13 Teachers' Perceptions regarding Implementation of Training Content in the Classroom

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of respondents	No. and Percentage of Teachers					
			Training content can be Implemented in the classroom				Training cannot be implemented at all in the classroom	
			To a great extent		To some extent		N	P
			N	P	N	P		
1	Mushahari	48	12	25.0	24	50.0	12.0	25.0
2	Muroul	28	06	21.4	13	46.4	09.0	32.1
	Total	76	18	23.7	37	48.7	21	27.6

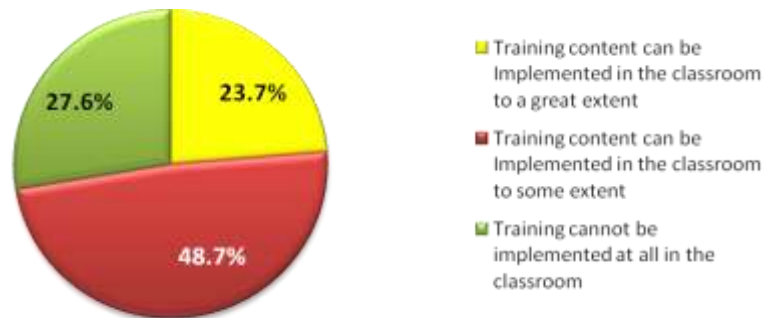


Figure 3.7

Since nearly 24 per cent teachers' perceived training content can be implemented in the classroom to a great extent, policy makers need to redesign the training content to make it more suitable for implementation in the classroom.

3.2.4 Posting of Substitute for the Teacher under Training

All the 76 respondents reported that no arrangements were made by the authorities to appoint a substitute teacher against their post for the period they were under training. They further reported that learning of students was affected adversely during the period they underwent in-service training. This is very serious. Policy makers need to ensure that students' learning is not affected adversely during teachers' absence from the school on account of their in-service training.

3.2.5 Transactional approaches used by facilitators

Learning of trainees depends to a great extent upon transactional process of facilitators. If their transactional process matches trainees' learning style, learning does happen. Teachers were asked to report as to what extent transactional processes of facilitators were appropriate. Data in this regard are presented in table 3.14

Table 3.14 Teachers' Perceptions regarding Appropriateness of Transactional Approaches used by Facilitators in In-service Training Programmes

Name of Block	No. of respondents	No. and Percentage of teachers considered transactional approaches appropriate							
		To a great extent		To a large extent		To some extent		Not appropriate at all	
		N	P	N	P	N	P	N	P
Mushahari	48	05	10.4	09	18.8	29	60.4	05	10.4
Muroul	28	03	10.7	04	14.3	18	64.3	03	10.7
Total	76	08	10.5	13	17.1	47	61.9	08	10.5

Nearly 27 per cent of the respondents reported that the transactional approaches used by facilitators were appropriate to a great / large extent. More than 60 per cent teachers reported that these approaches were appropriate to some extent. Very limited percentage of teachers (10.5) reported that they were not appropriate at all.

3.2.6 Training programmes

Table 3.15 presents data regarding teacher perceptions about the usefulness of training programmes in which they participated. Data in this regard are also depicted through figure 3.8

Table 3.15 Teachers’ Perceptions regarding Usefulness of their In-service Training

Sl. No.	Block	No. of respondents	Extent of usefulness of training					
			To a large extent		To some extent		Not at All	
			N	P	N	P	N	P
1	Mushahari	48	11	22.71	28	58.33	09	18.75
2	Muroul	28	07	25.0	16	57.14	05	17.85
	Total	76	18	23.7	44	57.9	14	18.4

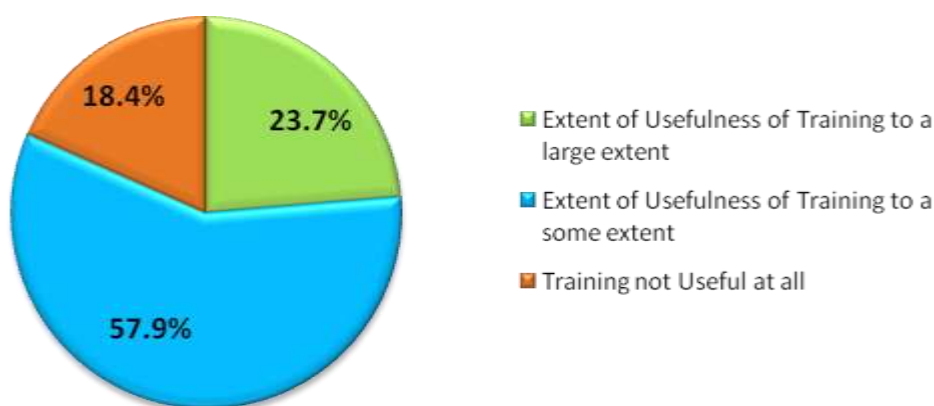


Figure 3.8

Nearly 24 per cent teachers reported that training programmes were useful a large extent. Nearly 57 per cent reported that these were useful to some extent. Very limited percentage of teachers (18.4) expressed that the training programmes were not useful at all. In the light of teachers’ perceptions, there is a need to improve the quality of training to make it more useful to the trainees.

3.2.7 Teachers’ Perceptions about Training Sessions

Table 3.16 presents data regarding teachers’ perceptions about the participatory character of training sessions.

Table 3.16 Teachers’ Perceptions about Training Sessions

Block	No. of respondent	No. and percentage of teachers who considered training sessions interactive and participatory					
		To large extent		To some extent		Not at all	
		N	P	N	P	N	P
Mushahari	48	12	25.0	33	68.7	03	6.3
Muroul	28	09	32.2	18	64.3	01	3.6
Total	76	21	27.6	51	67.1	4	5.3

Table 3.16 reveals that nearly 28 per cent teachers reported that training sessions were interactive and participatory to a large extent. About 67 per cent teachers reported that

training sessions were interactive and participatory to some extent. Only 5 per cent teachers reported that they were not participatory at all.

IV

Functioning of Resource Centres

4.0 Resource Centres

The National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 laid a great deal of emphasis on in-service education of teachers on a continuing basis. It inter-alia recommended the setting up of pace setting institutions - District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) with a view to providing academic and resource support at the grass root level to elementary education and adult education. It was visualized that these institutions would perform three main functions-training, development, and action research. Later, the experience revealed that DIETs were not able to reach out every primary school teacher in the district. To reach out every primary teacher for her/his professional growth, some mechanism at the sub-district level i.e. block and cluster level is required. The NPE (1986) as amended in 1992 recommended the setting up of Block Resource Centres (BRCs) and Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs) at the block and the cluster level in a phased manner. Block Resource Centres (BRCs) and Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs) were therefore, set up.

4.1.0 Objectives of Block Resource Centres (BRCs)

The main objectives of BRCs are to:

- ⊙ identify in-service education needs of teachers working in primary schools and workers of Adult Education (AE) and Non-formal Education (NFE) Centres;
- ⊙ organize short-term training programmes for heads of primary schools, primary teachers; and AE and NFE functionaries;
- ⊙ provide feedback to the DIET and Regional Institute of Education (RIE) regarding training needs of teachers and the problems being encountered by primary schools in improving quality of primary schooling and achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE).

- ⊙ provide guidance to the Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs) in carrying out their assigned functions;
- ⊙ monitor academic activities of CRCs and primary schools; and
- ⊙ provide resource support- human and material and other basic facilities of library, audio-video cassettes etc. needed by CRCs.

4.1.1 Functions of Block Resource Centres (BRCs)

In the light of the objectives highlighted above, a BRC is required to perform the following functions:

- It is to organize in-service education programmes for heads and teachers of primary schools and the faculty of CRCs so as to help them to discharge their responsibilities effectively;
- The BRC faculty is to undertake field visits to have on the spot observation of the functioning of the CRCs and provide them guidance in the planning, management and supervision of in-service programmes and other educational matters; and
- BRC faculty is to maintain liaison between CRCs on the one hand and District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) and RIE on the other hand, and to see to the smooth functioning of CRCs under its jurisdiction.

4.1.2 Linkages with other institutions

A BRC is to maintain linkages with a number of government and non-government institutions and to organize programmes for capacity building of heads and teachers of primary schools and CRC faculty with a view to helping them to discharge their responsibilities. A BRC has also to maintain linkages with the DIET- the main agency for providing orientation to BRC's faculty regarding their role and responsibilities. A BRC needs to provide feedback to the DIET regarding activities and programmes of CRCs and help it in developing learning materials, their try-out and testing of innovations etc. It is also to keep DIET informed about its own academic programmes and the calendar of activities. A BRC is to forge a link between the DIET on the one hand and CRCs on the other hand. It is also to communicate the DIET's instructions/suggestions to the CRCs for an improvement in their functioning.

In this study, the functioning of four Block Resource Centres - two each in the states of Bihar and Tamilnadu was studied. The names of these Block Resource Centres are mentioned in the sample of the study. The functioning of these Centres has been analyzed in the light of their delineated functions.

4.1.3 Designing of In-service Education Programmes

In both states - Bihar and Tamilnadu in-service education programmes for teachers are designed by the state level agency/District Institute of Education and Training (DIET). In the state of Bihar, Bihar Education Project Muzaffarpur and the DIET Muzaffarpur design these programmes. In Tamil Nadu, the Directorate of State Educational Research and Training (DSERT) and a DIET design these programmes.

In both the states of Bihar and Tamilnadu, no specific need assessment studies have been undertaken by their BRC to determine the local specific needs of primary teachers working in the catchment area of their BRC. As such, their needs in this regard are not being addressed through specific training programmes. BRC personnel from the state of Bihar however, reported that local specific needs of teachers are addressed through cluster level monthly meetings.

One of the main objectives of setting-up Block Resource Centres is to identify local specific in-service education needs of primary teachers in the block. BRCs are failing in this regard as they have not conducted any study to assess local specific in-service education needs of teachers in the block. In-service education programmes are designed at the state/DIET level. BRCs are asked to organise training programmes for transacting training curriculum developed at the state level.

4.1.4 Impact of In-service Education Programmes on Teachers' Classroom Processes

In-service education is imparted to teachers on a continuing basis to deepen their knowledge of the subject(s) they are required to teach; to fine-tune their existing teaching competencies; and also to master a few promising new instructional strategies with a view to enabling them to become effective performers in their work-situation. Teachers have been / are being provided in-service education on a continuing basis since 1986. BRCs in the states of Bihar and Tamilnadu have not conducted any study to determine impact of in-service training on classroom processes of teachers.

There is a need to determine on a continuing basis the impact of training on teachers' classroom processes. Impact studies highlight the effectiveness of training on improving teachers' classroom processes. The studies also highlight strengths and weaknesses of in-service training programmes. This facilitates organizing agencies to take suitable steps to improve the quality of in-service education programmes on a continuing basis. Impact studies also provide feedback to the policy makers as to whether or not the resources being used for in-service education of teachers are providing the desired dividends. This facilitates redesigning the policy.

Problems being faced by Block Resource Centres

BRCs personnel reported that they are encountering the following problems:

- There is an inadequacy of academic staff. The strength of academic staff needs to be augmented to improve the functioning of the Block Resource Centres;
- There is a lack of community support. The community support is highly essential for a block resource centre to perform its delineated functions and to improve the quality of primary schooling with a view to achieving 'Education For All'; and
- There is a lack of desirable support from other institutions such as health department in the block.

4.2.0 Functioning of Cluster Resource Centres

A Cluster Resource Centres (CRC) is the lowest rung of the institutional ladder set up for the professional growth of primary teachers. Besides providing training; it aims at providing on-site academic support to teachers to function effectively at their work-place. The main objective of setting up these centres is, therefore, to improve quality of primary schooling.

A CRC is required to organize two types of programmes namely monthly meetings and orientation programmes. The monthly meetings are to be organised to deepen teachers' knowledge of their subject(s); and to improve their classroom processes by fine-tuning their existing skills and instructional strategies and also by adding to their repertoire additional new instructional strategies to help them to perform proficiently at their worksite and to solve problems being faced by them. The activities in monthly meetings may comprise of screening of cassettes, lectures, demonstrations

by resource persons on pertinent themes, group discussion on themes and academic problems faced by teachers impeding their effective performance at their workplace and hard spots in different subject areas; development of locally relevant teaching – learning material and evaluation tools; study visits, self study and community interaction. In one day orientation programmes, primary teachers are required to be exposed to themes such as handling of large classes and multi-grade situations; innovative instructional strategies; special needs of learners; factors impeding the attainment of Universal Primary Education (UPE)/Universal Elementary Education (UEE); and continuous and comprehensive evaluation.

4.2.1 Linkages with other Institutions

The linkage of a CRC with other institutions is crucial for achieving its objectives. CRCs are to draw upon the expertise of key functionaries of various departments/institutions in the cluster such as Health, Adult Education, Secondary/ Senior Secondary Schools.

4.2.2 Linkages with Block Resource Centre (BRC)

A CRC is required to maintain significant link between the BRC on one hand and primary schools in its catchment area on the other hand. It is required to provide feedback to the BRC regarding its activities and programmes as well as training needs of teachers in order to enable the BRC to organise programmes to meet their local specific needs. It is also expected to receive guidance and academic support from the BRC in organising its activities and providing academic leadership training to head-teachers of primary schools.

A BRC is required to render academic guidance and support to CRCs by organising group discussion on relevant themes; development of locally relevant teaching-learning materials and evaluation tools for different areas of the curriculum, community interaction, providing audio and video cassettes etc.

4.2.3 Linkages with Schools

The main function of a CRC is to foster growth of schools. It is to provide guidance to schools in their day-to-day work and a forum for discussion on academic issues and themes during monthly meetings. It is also to deepen

their knowledge of different school subjects and to fine-tune their classroom processes. It is also to help teachers to conduct action research to seek solution to the problems faced by them in their classroom. Thus a CRC is required to develop a sense of professionalism among teachers in its catchment area and thereby improving quality of primary schooling.

In this study, functioning of CRCs was studied in the states of Bihar and Tamilnadu. Investigators visited four Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs) in Bihar and ten in Tamilnadu. The names of these Centres have been mentioned in the sample of the study. The functioning of these centres has been analyzed in the light of their functions.

4.2.4 Monthly Meetings in Cluster Resource Centres

Investigators reported that in Bihar out of 4 CRCs they visited, the monthly meeting was taking place in 3 centres. No such meeting was taking place in the fourth one. About forty teachers were participating in each of the meetings in these CRCs. In Tamilnadu, investigators visited 10 CRCs – 6 in Anaicut block and 4 in Alangayam block. They reported that the monthly meeting was going on in all these CRCs. Teachers ranging from 27 to 47 were participating in each of these meetings.

4.2.5 Themes being discussed in Monthly Meetings

In CRCs of Bihar, discussion was taking place on hard spots in subjects such as Social Studies and Mathematics. The discussion was being moderated by the CRC Co-ordinator. In Tamilnadu, the discussion was on the activity based learning and it was being moderated by a resource person.

When we analyze the activities in the fourteen CRCs, we find that activities like development of evaluation tools and locally relevant teaching-learning material, screening of audio/video cassettes on important themes etc. were not being conducted in any of these centres. There is a dire need to improve upon the learning experiences being provided to primary teachers in Cluster Resource Centres. District Institutes of Education and Trainings (DIETs) need to undertake studies on an urgent basis to determine the nature and quality of experiences being provided to primary teachers in CRCs and take suitable steps to strengthen these experiences with a view to improving the quality of primary schooling.

4.2.6 Selection of Themes

Investigators reported that themes for discussion at the CRCs are identified/selected at the DIET level in Tamilnadu. Participating teachers and heads/Co-ordinators of CRCs have no role at all in the selection of these themes. Investigators from Bihar reported that the themes of discussion are identified/selected through open discussion with the participating teachers.

When we look into the functions of CRCs, we find that group discussion should be held on themes and academic problems faced by teachers impeding their effective performance at their workplace and hard spots in different subject areas perceived by teachers. Themes for discussion need to be identified through open discussion with participating teachers. DIETs should only provide academic support by deputing their faculty member(s) to enlighten participating teachers by making their contribution in discussion.

4.2.7 Themes discussed during the last three months

Investigators were required to report the themes which were discussed in the last three meetings at the CRCs. Investigators from Bihar reported that the following themes were deliberated upon during the last three meetings:

- Use of different grants;
- Hard spots in different subjects and
- Community support

Investigators from Tamilnadu reported that activities based learning was the theme in all these meetings.

4.2.8 Assessment of Training Needs of Teachers

All the fourteen CRCs in the states of Bihar and Tamilnadu reported that they have not conducted any study to identify specific training needs of primary teachers working in schools in their catchment area. This defeats the purpose for which CRCs have been set up. CRCs need to assess specific training needs of teachers in their area and address them by including them in the training curriculum received from the DIET/SCERT/Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan authorities.

4.2.9 Feedback to BRCs

CRCs were asked to specify whether they provided regularly feedback to their BRC during the last two years about the level of pupils' achievement

and the academic problems being faced by teachers in their area. All the 10 CRCs from the state of Tamilnadu reported that they have not provided any feedback to the BRC in this regard. All the four CRCs from Bihar reported that they provide feedback regularly through evaluation reports.

4.2.10 Problems Faced by Cluster Resource Centres

CRCs from the states of Bihar reported that there is a lack of subject specific teachers in primary schools. As a consequence, teachers find hard spots in syllabi of Mathematics and Science. CRCs from Tamilnadu did not report any problem in this regard.

4.3.0 Suggestions for Improving Functioning of CRCs

The following suggestions are made to improve the functioning of CRCs.

- Themes for discussion in the monthly meetings of a CRC must be identified/selected in consultation with teachers working in the catchment area of the CRC;
- Action plan of a CRC should be developed every year in the beginning of the calendar year. Primary teachers in the cluster need to be apprised of this action plan during summer vacations;
- Each CRC should have a full-time Co-ordinator;
- Each CRC should monitor the functioning of schools particularly quality of instruction on a continuing basis. It should provide on site academic support to schools to function effectively;
- CRC Co-ordinators should also be provided intensive training particularly in the area of instructional supervision techniques. They should be able to identify weak teaching practices, be able to make appropriate and credible suggestions as to how teachers might improve their teaching practices/ classroom processes;
- Teachers need to be provided suitable experiences to use the technique of role play in transacting the curriculum; and
- Knowles (1980) highlights that learning style of adults is different from the learning style of children. For teaching children, one needs to use Pedagogy – Science of teaching children. In other words, one needs to use pedagogic techniques such as lectures, assignments, self reading and audio-visual presentations. Teaching/training of adults must match their learning style. For teaching adults, one needs to use Andragogy –

Science of teaching adults. Knowles mentions that adults learn effectively through cognitive problem solving and through experience. Therefore, BRC/CRC should impart necessary training to teachers through said approaches – problem centred and experiential learning than rather subject centred.

V

Main Findings and Suggestions

The following are the main findings of the study:

- The dropout rate of students at the primary stage in Bihar is alarmingly high. It is 53.2 per cent and 52.5 per cent respectively in Mushahari and Muroul blocks of Muzaffarour Distt. Dropout rate in both the blocks is 52.9 per cent. The drop out rate among girls is slightly higher than that among boys;
- The dropout rate of students at the primary stage is very low in the state of Tamilnadu. It is 1.13 per cent in Anaicut and Alangayam blocks of Vellore district; and
- The primary school completion rate in the state of Bihar is very low i.e. 42.28 per cent. It is very high in the state of Tamilnadu. It is 95.68 per cent in Anaicut block and 76.65 per cent in Alangayam block. In both the blocks, it is 84.5 per cent.

Perceptions of teachers from the State of Tamil Nadu

- About 72 per cent teachers perceived training content relevant to their professional learning needs. But of these, only 6 per cent perceived that the training content was relevant to a great extent. The rest (94%) perceived it relevant to their professional learning needs to some extent only;
- Sixty one per cent of teachers reported that the training content can be implemented in the classroom. Of these, only 6.5 per cent reported that it can be implemented to a great extent. The rest 93.5 reported that it can be implemented to some extent only;
- About 90 per cent of teachers reported that no substitute teacher was posted in the school against their position during the period of their in-service training. Almost all the teachers reported that learning of their students was affected adversely during the period of their in-service training. These teachers further reported that their image among parents /

guardians of their students has also declined because of their absence from school due to their in-service training;

- Only 3 per cent teachers reported that their teaching process/classroom processes has improved to a large extent as a result of their training under SSA. About 73 per cent teachers reported that teaching process has improved to some extent only. About 24 per cent teachers reported that there has been no improvement at all in this regard;
- Less than 10 per cent teachers expressed that the transactional approaches used by facilitators were appropriate to a great/large extent. Nearly 74 per cent teachers perceived transactional approach were appropriate to some extent. Only 16 per cent teachers reported that they were not appropriate at all;
- About 70 per cent teachers reported that the facilitators were average with regard to qualification and experience; and
- About 57 per cent teachers from Anaicut block reported that the learning material was not supplied to them during the training period.

Perceptions of teachers from the state of Bihar

- Seventy five per cent teachers perceived training content relevant to their needs;
- About 24 per cent teachers reported that training content can be implemented in the classroom to a great extent. About 49 per cent teachers reported that it can be implemented to some extent. The rest reported that it cannot be implemented at all;
- All the teachers reported that no substitute teacher was posted in the school against their position to teach their students when they were undergoing training. All of them further reported that the learning of their students was affected adversely during their absence from the school on account of their in-service training;
- About 24 per cent teachers reported that in-service training was useful to them to a large extent. Nearly 58 per cent teachers opined that it was useful to some extent only. The rest (18.4 per cent) reported that it not useful at all.

The following are the perceptions of teachers from both the states – Tamilnadu & Bihar

- Local specific learning needs of teachers are not being addressed as trainings of teachers are designed at the state level. Further needs assessment studies are not being launched to determine local specific needs of teachers;
- Research studies have not been conducted by and large to determine impact of training on teachers' classroom processes;
- Block Resource Centres are ill-staffed; and
- In Tamilnadu, themes for discussion in the monthly meetings at the CRC level are identified /selected at the DIET level. Participating teachers and heads/coordinators of CRCs have no role at all in the selection of themes of these meetings. However, in Bihar, themes for discussion are identified/selected through discussion with teachers' participation.

Suggestions

Mentioned below are a few suggestions to improve the situation with regard to the achievement of the goal-Education For All.

- ⇒ Students' dropout rate in Bihar is very high. This is the most significant stumbling block towards the attainment of the goal-Education For All. The State Government of Bihar needs to devise policy to arrest this drop out rate of students. The state Government may consider observations made by the Supreme Court of India in this regard. The state government may provide financial incentives to low incomes parents so that they send their children to school and do not allow them to dropout. The state government should criminally penalize those who receive financial incentives and yet do not send their wards to school and allow them to drop out before completing primary/ elementary schooling.
- ⇒ Very limited percentage of teachers (6 per cent) in Tamilnadu reported that training content was relevant to a great extent. The rest (94 per cent) in Taminadu reported that it was relevant to some extent only. More than 25 per cent of the teachers in both the states - Tamilnadu and Bihar reported that the training content of training programme was not relevant at all to their learning needs.

The situation calls for an immediate action on the part of state government /authorities of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. They should conduct need assessment studies of teachers with a view to rendering the training content relevant to their professional learning needs.

- ⇒ Almost all the teachers reported that learning of their students suffered during the period they underwent training. The state government should, therefore organize training programmes during vacations. Teachers further reported that 20 days training in a year is too much. They suggest that the training period needs to be reduced suitably;
- ⇒ DETs/CRCs need to conduct studies with a view to determining the impact of in-service education of teachers on their classroom processes and students' learning achievement;
- ⇒ Block and Cluster Resource Centres need to be equipped suitably with human and material resources. Each CRC should have one full-time coordinator;
- ⇒ There is a need to improve the transactional approaches being used by trainers. Since adults' learning behaviour is different from those of children, the teachers need to be imparted training through approaches such as cognitive problem solving and experiential learning rather than through pedagogical approaches. Trainers, therefore, need to be imparted training in these approaches. This would improve the quality of training programmes; and
- ⇒ BRCs and CRCs coordinators and head-teachers of schools need to be provided intensive training particularly in the area of instructional supervision techniques.
- ⇒ DIETs/BRCs need to motivate primary teachers to undertake action research in order to solve academic problems being faced by them in the classroom.
- ⇒ Faculty of DIETs/BRCs should also undertake action research to find solution to the academic problems faced by them in improving quality of primary education in the district/block.
- ⇒ The authorities should also examine the possibilities of organizing school based training programmes. and

⇒ Training programmes should lay a great deal of emphasis on developing among teachers' skills such as preparing working models and puppets and life skills.

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