CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Education plays important role in the transformation of the mind of the students, which helps in modification of behavior (Kazdin, 1981). Government of India launched various schemes from the elementary level to higher secondary level to reach out to every students of the country. Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (2001-02) for elementary education and Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhiyan (2009-10) for Secondary Education were the schemes introduced for the universalization of different level of school education. Samagraha Siksha Abhiyan was introduced with the merge of SSA, RMSA and Teacher Education in the year 2018 for primary level to higher secondary level and for the teacher education (Ministry of Education, 2018). All this schemes was launched for the universalization of elementary, secondary and higher secondary education in the country.

Secondary education plays a significant role in bridging the gap between elementary and higher secondary education (Barah, 1970). National Education Policy (1986) said that:

Secondary and higher secondary education is terminal for those who enter the world of work after school education (Ministry of Human Resource Department, 1992).

This indicates that the secondary education plays a vital role for the students to pursue for higher education. To opt for higher education quality of secondary education is must. Quality of secondary education helps in producing the quality students from where they will be able to decide to choose the subject as per their interest and the scope of subject. The quality of education depends on the facilities the school provides to the students (Maisnam & Singh, 2021). Facilities in the school signifies the infrastructures

like school buildings with sufficient and spacious classroom, Smart classroom, proper desk bench, playground indoor sports, etc. and the manpower facilities like regular head teacher, sufficient well trained teachers and other non-teaching staff for administrative work plays vital role for the quality of education (Ministry of Human Resource Development 2010). In para 8.1.5 of Programme of Action (1992) it said that:

The 1986 POA outlined specific initiatives aimed at ensuring the availability of ample playgrounds, the construction of extra classrooms, and the provision of laboratory facilities. These directives were established based on standards developed by different organizations.

1.2 Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan

The Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) is a flagship scheme of the Government of India to heighten access to secondary education and advance its quality. It was launched in March 2010 with the objective of providing universal access to secondary education by 2017. The scheme is being implemented in all the states and union territories of India (RMSA Framework, 2009-10). Framework for RMSA (2009-10) in para 1.1.4 highlighted that:

As the universalization of elementary education has become a constitutional mandate, it is imperative to advance this vision further to progress toward achieving universalization of secondary education, a goal that has already been realized in numerous developed countries and several developing nations.

It clearly depicted that the RMSA was introduced for the universalization of secondary education in the country.

The RMSA is being implemented through a partnership between the central government, the state governments and the local communities. The central government provides financial assistance to the states, which in turn implement the scheme at the

district and block levels. The local communities are involved in the planning and implementation of the scheme through various committees and forums (Ministry of Human Resource Department, 2010).

The main objective of RMSA was to ensure the provision of physical facilities, staffs and financial assistant to all the government secondary schools. To improve the access to secondary schools for all the students within the 5 km and 7 km of distance for senior secondary school from the residential area. To ensure quality secondary education irrespective of cast, socio-economic status, gender and disabilities barrier (Ministry of Human Resource Department, 2010).

Vision of RMSA

According to Ministry of Human Resource Department (2010) there are following vision of RMSA (2009-10) to be fulfilled under the scheme:

1. To facilitate secondary school within 5 km for secondary school and 7-10 km for higher secondary schools which is within a reasonable distance of the habitation of the students.
2. Guarantee universal access of secondary education by 2017 with GER of 100% and universal retention by 2020.
3. Facilitating access to secondary education for financially weaker section of the society, the CWSN, the educationally backward, and girl child of the area especially residing in rural areas and other categories like SC, ST, OBC.

Goals and Objectives of RMSA

According to Ministry of Human Resource Department (2010) there are following Goals and objective of RMSA (2009-10):

1. To facilitate with physical facilities and sufficient staffs to all the secondary schools according to the prescribed standards through financial support in all the government aided schools.
2. To facilitate with the access of secondary school for all the students within the 5 km and 7-10 km for secondary and higher secondary school respectively, convenient transport facilities, residential facilities especially in the geographically challenging areas.
3. To make sure that no child is deprived of quality secondary education due to disability, socio-economic, and gender barriers.
4. To ensure quality secondary education for all the students.
5. To advance secondary education for intellectual, cultural and social learning.

For the universalization of secondary education there is the need of improving the physical infrastructure, teachers and other facilities in the school to impart quality education for all.

For the universalization of secondary education and its quality RMSA has the following components elaborated in the following paragraph:

1.2.1 Access

For the quality secondary education accessibility of secondary education to all part of the country is essential with all the facilities. As per Ministry of Human Resource Development (2010) Access in secondary education under RMSA (2009-10) is one of the component which helps in fulfilling the need of the students as follows:

1. Expansion of existing secondary schools and higher secondary schools in existing schools.
2. Up gradation of existing schools to higher level based on micro planning with all necessary infrastructure and teachers in required areas.

3. Opening of new secondary and higher secondary schools in unserved areas based on the school mapping exercise.
4. All the building under RMSA must have rain harvesting system installed to cater with the scarcity of water.
5. New and existing school building compulsorily made disable friendly.
6. New schools would set up in public private partnership mode.

1.2.2 Quality

According to Ministry of Human Resource Development (2010) Quality Intervention in secondary education under RMSA (2009-10) is one of the component which helps in fulfilling the need of the students as follows:

1. Providing required infrastructure for quality secondary education like computer labs, black board, libraries, furniture, science and mathematics laboratories and toilet cluster.
2. Appointment of additional teachers and in-service training of teachers under RMSA.
3. Bridge course for enhancing learning ability for students passing out of class VIII.
4. Reviewing curriculum to meet the NCF 2005 norms.
5. Residential facilities for the teachers especially in rural and difficult areas with preference for female teachers.

1.2.3 Equity

2 According to Ministry of Human Resource Development (2010) Equity Intervention in secondary education under RMSA (2009-10) is one of the component which helps in fulfilling the need of the students as follows:

1. Free boarding and lodging facilities for SC, ST, OBC and minority students.

2. Residential schools, uniform, books, cash incentive, separate toilets for girls.
3. Providing scholarships to needy and meritorious students at secondary level.
4. Providing necessary amenities for differently abled and needy children in all the school with inclusive education.
5. Expansion of open and distance learning should be undertaken for the children who cannot afford to go for formal education.

1.2.4 Financial Pattern under RMSA

According to Ministry of Education, Government of India, (2010) 75 percent of the total cost endure by the central government to implement all the components and State and Union Territories has to bear 25 percent. For the North East States 90 percent funds will be given by central government and only 10 percent has to bear by the state government during 11th Five Year plan. The sharing between central and state government has changed to 50:50 in other state and union territory and in north east the sharing remain 90:10 for 12th five year plan. Separate bank account has to be opened for funds in state, district and school levels under the scheme. The head of the school and vice principal has to be the joint account holder at the school level and the district programme coordinator will be a joint holder of the account at the district level (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2010).

In the context of Sikkim, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan has played pivotal role in the infrastructural development in school (Bhutia, 2013). RMSA provides annual grants to secondary and higher secondary schools to meet the basic requirements of school on the basis of 90:10, where 90% grants is funded by RMSA and only 10% grants has to be bear by the state government in Sikkim and other North East Region of India (Education Department, 2018).

1.2.5 Equity intervention in secondary Education

The RMSA program focuses on vital equity interventions aimed at improving access to quality secondary education and mitigating persistent inequalities at this level (Government of Telengana, 2011). The RMSA guidelines precisely outline targeted initiatives designed to confront the challenge of insufficient enrolment and low progression rates, particularly among the marginalized groups like Scheduled Tribes (STs), Scheduled Castes (SCs), Children with Special Need (CWSN) and girls students. These strategic interventions encompass a spectrum of enhancements, ranging from bolstering infrastructure facilities to ensuring the presence of adequately trained educators. Additionally, the RMSA program seeks to enhance the educational curriculum itself, rendering it more effective and inclusive. Furthermore, a focus on imparting vocational skills aims to equip students with practical proficiencies that align with real-world demands. Ultimately, these complex strategies collectively strive to reshape the landscape of secondary education, fostering improved accessibility, equality, and enhanced prospects for educational attainment among sections of the population that have historically faced disadvantages.

As for the important equity interventions under RMSA, the program aims to enhance access to quality secondary education and address persistent inequality at the secondary level of education. Specific interventions have been stated in the RMSA guidelines to address the issue of low enrolment, low transition among the STs, SCs, and girl children. These strategies include better infrastructure facilities, availability of trained teachers, improved educational curriculum, imparting vocational skills, etc. The study also analyses the implementation of the RMSA program in two states, Bihar and Himachal Pradesh, and compares their performance in terms of equity in secondary education (Singh & Kundu, 2016).

1.2.6 Accessibility and quality of secondary education in India

A comprehensive approach is crucial to enhance the accessibility and quality of secondary education in India. This approach should encompass several interrelated factors that collectively contribute to a holistic improvement in the education system. Firstly, addressing the availability of schools is paramount. Ensuring that schools are established in remote and underserved areas provides equitable access to education, particularly for marginalized communities.

Singh & Kundu (2016) suggests that improving the accessibility and quality of secondary education in India can be achieved by focusing on a number of factors such as availability of schools that provide access, separate toilets for girls and boys, libraries, science laboratories, availability of teachers, revision of curriculum, training of teachers, and vocational skills. The RMSA guidelines also provide strategies to address the challenges faced by marginalized groups. However, it is important to ensure that these specific strategies are backed by adequate budgetary allocations.

Within these schools, essential facilities play a pivotal role. Separate toilets for girls and boys not only promote hygiene but also encourage girls' attendance, as it helps address a critical barrier to their education. Libraries and science laboratories further enrich the learning experience by providing students with resources and hands-on opportunities to explore concepts beyond textbooks (Human Resource Development Department, 2013).

The presence of well-trained and motivated teachers is at the core of quality education (NCERT, 2016). To this end, initiatives that focus on recruiting, training, and retaining competent teachers are imperative. Teacher training programs should be designed to equip educators with modern teaching methodologies, ensuring they can effectively

engage students and foster critical thinking skills (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2010).

An essential element in elevating the quality of education is revising the curriculum to align it with contemporary needs and global standards. A curriculum that emphasizes practical skills, critical thinking, and problem-solving can equip students for the challenges of the modern world.

The importance of vocational skills cannot be overstated. Not all students follow a traditional academic path, and providing vocational education equips them with practical skills that can lead to immediate employment opportunities after secondary education. This contributes to both personal development and the country's economic growth (Education for all in India, 2023).

The Right of Children for free and Compulsory Education Act and the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA, 2009-10) guidelines provide a framework for improving elementary and secondary education, with a specific focus on addressing the challenges faced by marginalized groups. However, it's vital to ensure that these guidelines are effectively implemented and that they have the necessary financial backing. Adequate budgetary allocations are essential to fund infrastructure development, teacher training programs, and the provision of necessary resources.

1.3 Secondary Education and the Constitution

In 2002, the Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act of India introduced Article 21-A, which guarantees the Fundamental Right to free and compulsory education for all children between the ages of six and fourteen, with the specific implementation left to be determined by the State through legislation (Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education). Subsequently, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act of 2009, a law stemming from Article 21-A,

underscores that every child possesses the entitlement to receive a full-time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality within a formal school that adheres to specified essential criteria and standards (Home Department, 2009). The RTE Act includes the terms 'free and compulsory.' 'Free education' signifies that no child, except a child enrolled by their parents in a school not funded by the relevant Government, shall be obligated to pay any fees, charges, or expenses that could hinder them from accessing and completing elementary education (Home Department, 2009).

When the Commission released its Consultation Paper, the Constitution (93rd Amendment) Bill was being discussed. However, the proposed Amendment focuses on free and compulsory education for children aged 6 to 14. The Commission believes it should extend to children up to 14 years, with education beyond that age depending on the state's economic capacity and development stage (Department of Legal Affairs, 2017).

Further Department of Legal Affairs (2017) highlighted that the Commission emphasizes the importance of upholding the constitutional mandate for free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of fourteen without any compromise, and the State should fully commit to this duty. It was also mentioned that the responsibility for ensuring universal elementary education should be delegated to Panchayats and local self-government institutions.

Every child between the ages of six and fourteen is entitled to receive free and compulsory education at a local school until they finish their primary schooling. No child will be subjected to any fees or expenses that might hinder their ability to pursue and complete their elementary education. Additionally, any child with a disability, as defined in Clause (i) of Section 2 of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection, and Full Participation) Act, 1996 (1 of 1996), has the right to access free

and compulsory elementary education in line with the regulations outlined in Chapter V of the aforementioned Act (Home Department, 2009). Department of Legal Affairs (2017) also stated and it was suggested that the provisions in the Constitution (93rd Amendment) Bill of 2001, which establish the right to education for children from six to fourteen as a Fundamental Right, should be revised and expanded and it said that:-

> "Every child shall have the right to free education until he completes the age of fourteen years; and in the case of girls and members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, until they complete the age of eighteen years."

1.4 Commissions and committees for Secondary Education

There are number of commissions and committees in India which has made recommendations on secondary education.

1.4.1 Mudaliar Commission (Secondary Education Commission, 1952-53)

The Mudaliar Commission, officially titled the "Secondary Education Commission, 1952-53," was a crucial educational body established by the Government of India to evaluate and propose enhancements for secondary education. Led by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, who later became India's President, the commission aimed to improve the quality and accessibility of secondary education across the nation (Ministry of Education, 1953).

The primary focus of the Mudaliar Commission was to assess the state of secondary education in India and suggest ways to enhance its standards. Its report, known as the "Mudaliar Commission Report," was presented in 1953 and significantly impacted the evolution of secondary education in the country (Yadav, 2021).

The commission's significant contributions and recommendations for secondary education revolve around several key aspects. It emphasized the reorganization of secondary education into three tiers: lower secondary, higher secondary, and post-

secondary stages, designed to meet student and societal needs (Ministry of Education, 1953). The commission advocated for a well-rounded curriculum, blending academic subjects with practical and vocational skills, catering to diverse student interests and abilities. Recognizing the pivotal role of educators, it suggested enhancing teacher training programs to improve the overall teaching and learning experience (Deepak, 2017). The commission emphasized a shift in examination methods from rote learning to holistic evaluation, focusing on comprehension and analytical skills rather than memorization. Addressing language concerns, it recommended mother tongue instruction at the lower secondary level, while promoting linguistic diversity through the introduction of a second language. To ensure equitable access, the commission aimed to provide equal opportunities regardless of socioeconomic status, proposing measures to enhance access for rural and marginalized communities. It also suggested integrating academic and vocational subjects for a comprehensive education that prepares students for higher studies and vocational pursuits. Highlighting the bridging role of higher secondary education, the commission stressed the importance of aligned curricula for smooth transitions. Lastly, the commission underlined the significance of community participation in school management, suggesting increased engagement to ensure accountability and quality. The Mudaliar Commission's recommendations offered insights into challenges and opportunities within India's secondary education sector. While not all suggestions were fully implemented, the commission's report left a lasting influence on policy development and reforms in secondary education. Its impact resonated through subsequent educational commissions, shaping the trajectory of secondary education in India.

1.4.2 Kothari Commission (Education Commission, 1964-66)

The Kothari Commission, also known as the Education Commission, was a pivotal educational body formed by the Government of India in 1964. Led by Daulat Singh Kothari, a prominent scientist and educator, it was formally titled the "Indian Education Commission, 1964-66," often referred to as the Kothari Commission.

The central objective of the Kothari Commission was to evaluate the status of education in India and provide recommendations for its enhancement across all levels, with specific emphasis on secondary and higher education (Anil, 2023). The commission's proposals were intended to serve as guidelines for educational policies and planning in the nation.

The commission's recommendations revolve around several pivotal areas of educational enhancement. It underlined the urgency to extend educational reach to rural and marginalized communities for a more inclusive society. Prioritizing universal elementary education, the commission offered policy suggestions to actualize this goal (National Council of Educational Research and Training, 1967). It endorsed a dynamic curriculum encompassing practical skills and vocational training, along with reformed examinations to foster holistic learning. Recognizing educators' significance, the commission stressed high-quality teacher training and continuous development (Thanavathi, 2016). Emphasizing research's importance, it proposed measures to promote educational innovation. Administrative and management reforms were recommended to boost efficiency and accountability. Acknowledging linguistic diversity, the commission advocated a flexible approach to the medium of instruction to accommodate various cultural contexts (Anil, 2023).

The Kothari Commission's influence on secondary education is noticeable through various significant facets. It advocated for expanding access to secondary education,

with a focus on unserved areas. While primarily addressing primary education, the commission indirectly facilitated smoother transitions to secondary levels (National Council of Educational Research and Training, 1970). The commission's endorsement of a diverse curriculum, incorporating vocational and technical education, equipped students with practical skills for the workforce. In response to exam-related stress, the commission suggested holistic assessment reforms. Recognizing the pivotal role of proficient educators, it recommended improved training programs (Patra, n.d.). The commission's support for science and mathematics education aimed to nurture innovation. Acknowledging linguistic diversity, it proposed flexible language instruction. Its emphasis on educational research informed enhanced practices. Promoting gender equity, the commission prioritized girls' education (Tilak, 2007).

1.4.3 National Policy on Education (1986)

The National Education Policy (NPE) of 1986 stands as a pivotal policy document within the Indian educational landscape, intended to establish a comprehensive framework for the enhancement and progression of education across all tiers. This policy's notable contributions to secondary education are both substantial and far-reaching:

Firstly, the NPE of 1986 placed a marked emphasis on the universalization of secondary education, underlining the imperative of granting all children access to education beyond the primary level. This ambitious directive aimed to guarantee that every child could continue their learning journey. To accommodate the burgeoning student populace, the policy recommended the expansion of secondary schools, aligning with the nation's evolving educational needs (Kumar, 2023).

Furthermore, a significant hallmark of the policy was its advocacy for a diversified curriculum within secondary education. The recognition of diverse student needs and

interests propelled the policy to advocate for the integration of vocational education and practical skills into the curriculum. By intertwining traditional academics with vocational training, students were being prepared for the dual challenges of higher education and the dynamic job market (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 1986).

The policy also championed the empowerment of students through flexibility and choice. Acknowledging the multiplicity of talents and aptitudes among students, the NEP of 1986 proposed granting students the autonomy to select subjects aligned with their interests and proficiencies. By facilitating personalized educational paths, the policy aimed to foster a more engaged and self-directed learning experience (Shukla, 2020).

In recognition of the pivotal role teachers' play in shaping educational outcomes, the policy emphasized the significance of well-qualified and motivated educators. Through its recommendations for heightened teacher training programs and continuous professional development opportunities, the NPE sought to elevate the quality of instruction within the secondary education sector (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 1986).

Moreover, the policy exhibited a steadfast commitment to equity and inclusion within secondary education. Through its initiatives aimed at bridging the urban-rural educational divide, the NPE sought to equalize educational opportunities for all, especially for underserved communities and remote areas (Bhattacharyya, 2021).

Lastly, the NPE of 1986 underscored the pivotal role of technical and vocational education in preparing students for the demands of the workforce. The policy acknowledged the practical relevance of technical skills and recommended the

augmentation of technical and vocational education programs at the secondary level (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 1986).

In conclusion, the National Policy on Education of 1986 holds a significant position in India's educational evolution, orchestrating substantial transformations within secondary education. Its holistic approach, encompassing universalization, curriculum diversification, flexibility, teacher empowerment, examination reforms, equity, and vocational education, has left an indelible mark on the nation's educational fabric.

1.4.4 National Curriculum Framework (2005)

Despite attempts to identify competencies and values, the educational system has been dominated by high-stakes exams and heavy textbooks. The ongoing review aims to consider positive and negative trends and address future educational needs by focusing on education goals, social context, knowledge, human development, and learning processes. The term "National Curriculum Framework" is misunderstood as uniformity, while it actually seeks to respond to India's diverse cultural contexts while maintaining core values. The framework is intended to modernize the education system, emphasizing relevance, flexibility, and quality (National Curriculum Framework, 2005).

Expensive private schools serve urban elite students, while working-class families opt for schools with mediocre curricula. Consequently, India's educational landscape faces significant challenges that warrant inclusion in the framework. The National Curriculum Framework underscores the need for schools to adopt pedagogical approaches that foster critical awareness and collaboration among diverse communities for effective curricular development (Borkar, 2021). Secondary school signifies a period of significant physical and identity development. Abstract reasoning emerges, allowing engagement with knowledge beyond the present. Self-awareness in society

also grows. Courses aim to introduce disciplines and identify interests. Counselling is essential for diverse needs. Access to libraries and labs is crucial. Exam focus diminishes holistic learning. Reconsider pacing, exam policies, and subjects. Optional and vocational courses should expand, bridging real-world skills. Quality of vocational streams must improve for meaningful learning (National Curriculum Framework, 2005).

The National Curriculum Framework advocates a multilingual approach to language teaching in schools. It recommended a three-language structure, with the mother tongue as the first language. In Hindi-speaking states, modern English is suggested as the third language, while non-Hindi-speaking states should prioritize Hindi, the national language (Borkar, 2021). National Curriculum Framework (2005) emphasized that language education should be approached with a multilingual perspective, utilizing the classroom's linguistic diversity as an asset. The primary medium of instruction should be the child's home language(s), as mandated by Article 350A of the Indian Constitution. Even in cases where higher-level education necessitates a different language, the child's home language(s) should still be respected in primary education. The three-language formula aims to foster multilingual communication skills aligned with India's diversity. In non-Hindi-speaking states, children learn Hindi, while Hindi-speaking states introduce a non-local language. Sanskrit may also be offered as a Modern Indian Language (MIL), with the potential for studying classical and foreign languages at advanced stages. The objective is to cultivate a truly multilingual educational environment for the nation.

1.4.5 National Education Policy (2020)

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is founded upon several key principles. These include prioritizing holistic and interdisciplinary education, fostering critical

thinking and experiential learning, ensuring equity and inclusivity for all learners, and acknowledging the significance of technology and digital literacy in education. Additional principles encompass adopting a flexible and student-centred approach to learning, enhancing teacher professional growth, and promoting research and innovation within the educational realm (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2020).

According to Ministry of Human Resource Development (2020), NEP 2020 places a strong emphasis on addressing equity and inclusion within education. It envisions providing equal access to quality education for all students, with special attention to socio-economically disadvantaged groups (SEDGs). The policy recognizes that access to quality higher education can be a catalyst for lifting both individuals and communities out of disadvantage. To achieve this goal, the policy suggests several measures. These include creating Gender Inclusion Funds, establishing special education zones for marginalized regions, and expanding early childhood education programs. Furthermore, the policy aims to bridge gaps in access, participation, and learning outcomes across social categories in school education. Additionally, the policy intends to take decisive action against substandard, independent Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs), even considering closure if necessary (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2020).

The NEP 2020 introduces transformative changes to secondary education in India. It envisions a curricular and pedagogical structure of 5+3+3+4, aligned with cognitive and socio-emotional developmental stages of students. The policy seeks to revamp secondary education by making it more holistic, multidisciplinary, and adaptable. It proposes the introduction of vocational education starting from Class 6, incorporating internships, and offering multiple entry and exit points within secondary education. The

policy also strives to ensure access to high-quality secondary education for all students, with a particular focus on SEDGs. To achieve this, various initiatives are recommended, including expanding the existing Samagra Shiksha scheme, establishing special education zones for disadvantaged areas, and providing scholarships and mentorship for talented students from SEDGs (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2020).

The NEP 2020 recognizes the challenge of high dropout rates in India and outlines strategies to mitigate this issue. Ensuring children's enrolment and attendance in schools stands as a primary objective. The policy proposes achieving this by ensuring adequate infrastructure to provide safe and engaging education at all levels, from pre-primary to Grade 12. In addition to deploying trained teachers, efforts will be made to eliminate infrastructure deficiencies in schools. Government schools will be upgraded and expanded to reinstate their credibility. Moreover, safe transportation and hostels, especially for girls, will be provided to enhance accessibility. The policy also suggests introducing vocational education from Class 6, allowing re-entry and exit options for students who drop out. Early childhood education programs will be expanded to establish a strong foundation for learning and development, addressing the dropout issue comprehensively (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2020).

According to Ministry of Human Resource Development (2020), NEP 2020 acknowledges the pivotal role of teachers in shaping the future of both students and the nation. The policy proposes several measures to elevate the quality and motivation of teachers. Recognizing current shortcomings in teacher education, recruitment, deployment, and empowerment, the policy aims to restore respect and status to the teaching profession. Initiatives include establishing a National Mission for Mentoring, deploying experienced faculty to mentor new teachers, and addressing substandard TEIs. Teachers will be granted more autonomy in pedagogical approaches, fostering

effective teaching tailored to their students. A caring and inclusive school culture will be encouraged, and teachers will be relieved of non-teaching tasks. This holistic approach aims to elevate the quality and motivation of teachers in India, attracting and retaining the best educators (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2020).

1.5 Overview of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was a flagship programme for the universalization of Elementary Education which was started in the year 2000-2001, launched under the banner of MHRD, Government of India (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2010). The main goal of SSA was universal access and retention in elementary education. It was also focused on the bridging the gender and social gap in elementary education. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan also focused on the opening of new schools, additional classrooms and construction of schools, periodic teacher training, provision for teachers, and academic resource support, toilets and drinking water, textbooks and support for learning achievement (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2010).

Sarva shiksha abhiyan focused on the children age group between 6-14 years and provides free and compulsory elementary education. Children's rights and equitable quality education based on principles of equity and non-discrimination is the priority provided for children (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2010).

As per the SSA facilities of elementary schooling should be within the reasonable area of all children. As per the RTE Act 2009, Section 6 The competent governmental bodies and local authorities must set up a school within a neighbourhood's area or boundaries, where one doesn't already exist, within three years from the Act's initiation (as cited in SSA revised framework, 2009). According to RTE Act, Section 12 (cited in SSA revised framework, 2009), (a) all government and local body schools shall provide free and compulsory education to all children enrolled therein, (b) all aided schools

receiving aid or grants to meet whole or part of its expenses shall provide free and compulsory education to such proportion of children as its annual recurring aid or grants, subject to a minimum of 25% (c) all unaided and 'specified category' schools, namely Kendriya Vidyalaya, Navodaya Vidyalaya, Sainik Schools or any other school having a distinct character as specified by notification by the State government/UT, shall provide free and compulsory education to at least 25% children belonging to weaker sections and disadvantaged groups in the neighborhood.

1.6 Overview of Samagraha Shiksha Abhiyan

The 2018-19 Union Budget proposed a comprehensive approach to school education from pre-nursery to Class 12. Consequently, the Samagra Shiksha program was formulated, aiming to enhance effectiveness of the school through equal schooling opportunities and fair learning results. This program includes the merger of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), and Teacher Education (TE) schemes (Ministry of School Education & Literacy, 2019).

According to Samagraha Shiksha Abhiyan (2018) the primary goals of the Scheme include ensuring high-quality education and improved learning achievements for students, reducing social and gender disparities in schooling, promoting fairness and inclusivity across all educational levels, enforcing basic educational standards, promoting vocational education, assisting states in implementing the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, and reinforcing and upgrading SCERTs/State Institutes of Education and DIET as central agencies for teacher training. The Scheme aims to achieve key results, including ensuring universal access, equity, and quality, fostering vocational education, and reinforcing Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) (State Education Mission Authority of Meghalaya, 2021).

The current funding distribution model for the scheme involves a ratio of 90:10 between the Centre and States for the 8 North-Eastern States (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura) and 3 Himalayan States (Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand), and a ratio of 60:40 for all other States and Union Territories with Legislature. For Union Territories without Legislature, the funding is entirely borne by the central government. This follows the recommendations of the Sub-Group of Chief Ministers on Rationalization of Centrally Sponsored Schemes submitted in October 2015 (Swargiary & Roy, 2023)

1.7 Status of Secondary Education in Sikkim

Secondary education comprises the level from class IX-X where the students from 14-16 age group get quality and affordable education. According to Annual Report of Department of Education, Government of Sikkim (2020-21) there are 120 secondary school under the government sector, 90 senior secondary schools and all together there are 766 schools from primary level to senior secondary level in the state of Sikkim. Secondary education in Sikkim is imparted by the schools affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE), where all the government schools and some of the private schools are affiliated to CBSE and some of the Private schools are affiliated to the ICSE. The modern education is technologically advanced based on the need of the children. Every Indian state, in accordance with the guidelines set by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), has adopted extensive initiatives aimed at shifting away from traditional teaching methods and embracing a more student-centred approach to education (Barai, 2018). Sikkim has also adopted the new technology in school education with smart classrooms, which is highly benefitted and attaining education with Knowledge Yantra (K-Yan) which is an electronic device where the

teachers used to disseminate content in the classroom in an effective way with the training for secondary and sr. secondary school teachers (Education Department, Namchi, 2022).

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1.7.1 Growth of Secondary and Senior Secondary Schools in Sikkim since four years

The number of secondary and sr. secondary schools in Sikkim has increased in 2022 as compare to 2019

Table no. 1.1

Growth of Secondary and Sr. Secondary Schools in Sikkim since 2019

	Number of Secondary Schools in Sikkim		
	2019-20	**2020-21**	**2021-22**
Secondary	122	121	150
Sr. Secondary	96	96	117

Source: UDISE Report-2018-22

The table no. 1.1 showing the growth in the number of secondary and sr. secondary school in Sikkim since 2019 to 2022. The figure was taken from the UDISE Report from 2018-22. The data revealed that there was only 122 Secondary school in the year 2020 which has increased to 150 in 2022, where the growth of 28 schools was seen within the two year of duration. There were only 96 Sr. Secondary School which has increase to 117 from 2020-22 with the growth of 21 Sr. Secondary school with two year of duration. The growth of secondary and sr. secondary school in Sikkim is the positive indicators that the government of Sikkim is very much concern on the education of Sikkim.

1.7.2 Enrolment in Secondary Schools of Sikkim since five years

Enrolment is an important aspect of secondary education in India. In the last ten years, India has witnessed an increase in enrolment at the secondary education level. The enrolment numbers for the country increased from 2.8 crore in 2001 to 5.9 crore in 2013-14. However, these figures are not uniform across regions and different social groups. For example, at the national level, only 8.5 percent and 6.5 percent of the ST population are enrolled in secondary and senior secondary level respectively, which is the lowest among all the marginalized communities. A similar pattern of inequality can be seen at the level of states under study - Bihar and Himachal Pradesh. The difference in the proportion of enrolment of the SC/ST and Muslim children as compared to the general category is high in case of both Bihar and Himachal Pradesh (Singh & Kundu, 2016).

Table No. 1.2

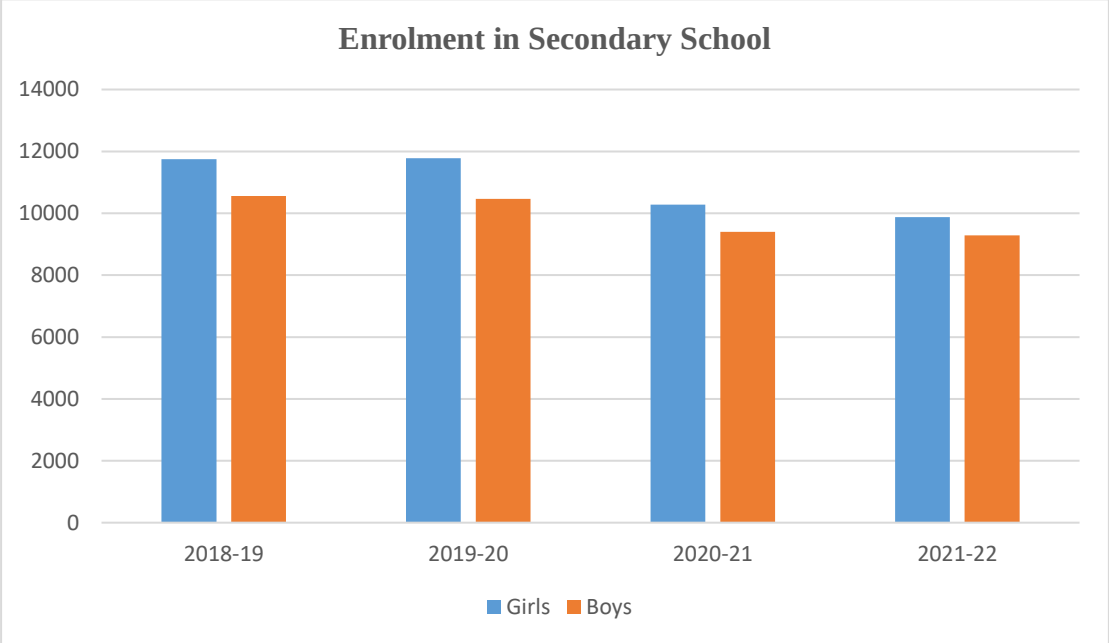
Enrolment in Secondary School in Sikkim since 2018-19

Enrolment in Secondary School from class IX-X				
	2018-19	**2019-20**	**2020-21**	**2021-22**
Girls	11748	11775	10275	9877
Boys	10556	10470	9394	9282
Total	**22304**	**22245**	**19669**	**19159**

Source: UDISE Report-2018-22

Figure no. 1.1

Enrolment in Secondary School in Sikkim



The provided data from the table no. 1.2 illustrates the enrolment in secondary schools (grades 9-10) over a four-year period from 2018-19 to 2021-22. The data is categorized by gender, detailing the number of enrolled girls and boys each year, as well as the overall total enrolment.

In the academic year 2018-19, the total enrolment was 22,304, with 11,748 girls and 10,556 boys. The following year, 2019-20, saw a marginal decrease in total enrolment to 22,245, with 11,775 girls and 10,470 boys.

However, a more significant decline occurred in the academic year 2020-21, where the total enrolment dropped to 19,669. Among this, there were 10,275 girls and 9,394 boys. Finally, in the most recent academic year, 2021-22, the trend of declining enrolment continued with a total enrolment of 19,159. This comprised 9,877 girls and 9,282 boys. The data indicates fluctuations in enrolment figures, particularly in the last two years, with declining numbers of students both for girls and boys.

1.7.3 Pupil Teacher Ratio in Secondary Schools since five years

The pupil teacher ratio is an important factor that affects the quality of secondary education. As per the recent report of UDISE-2018-22 the pupil teacher ratio in Sikkim are highly sufficient.

Table no. 1.3

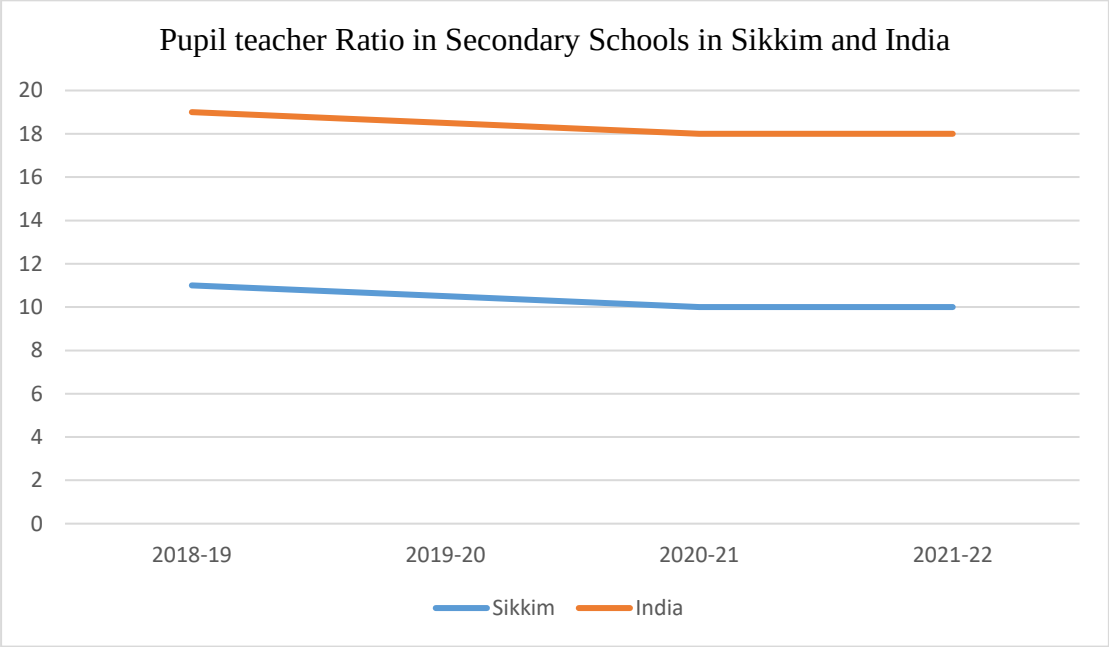
Pupil teacher Ratio in Secondary Schools of Sikkim and India (class IX-X) since 2018-19

Pupil teacher Ratio in Secondary Schools (Class IX-X)				
	2018-19	**2019-20**	**2020-21**	**2021-22**
Sikkim	11	10.5	10	10
India	19	18.5	18	18

Source: UDISE Report-2018-22

Figure no. 1.2

Pupil teacher Ratio in Secondary Schools in Sikkim and India



The table no. 1.3 presents the Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) in secondary schools (grades IX-X) over a four-year span from 2018-19 to 2021-22. The data is presented for both Sikkim and the broader context of India, detailing the ratio of students to teachers in these respective regions.

In the academic year 2018-19, Sikkim exhibited a PTR of 11, indicating that there were 11 students for every teacher in secondary schools. This ratio improved slightly in 2019-20, reaching 10.5 students per teacher. The trend continued in 2020-21 with a PTR of 10, suggesting a further reduction in the student-teacher ratio. Finally, in the most recent academic year, 2021-22, Sikkim maintained a PTR of 10.

In contrast, the overall PTR for India was higher. In 2018-19, the PTR for India was 19, signifying 19 students for each teacher. This ratio saw a slight decline to 18.5 in 2019-20 and further dropped to 18 in 2020-21. The PTR remained constant at 18 in 2021-22.

The data highlighted the comparatively lower student-teacher ratio in Sikkim as opposed to the national average in India. A lower PTR is often indicative of more favourable environment for personalized instruction and student-teacher interactions. It could imply that secondary education system in Sikkim is more equipped to provide individual attention and engagement to students.

1.7.4 Dropout Rate in Secondary School of Sikkim

In the context of education, the dropout denotes a student who prematurely exits school without achieving completion of education. It is frequently employed to characterize individuals who do not successfully complete their high school studies or other educational pursuits before attaining a degree. The act of dropping out of school can result in significant consequences for both the individuals involved and the broader society. Sikkim had dropout rate of 23.7% in 2018-19 and has decreased to 11.19% in 2021-22 as per the UDISE report of 2018-22. The below table showed the dropout rate in secondary school of Sikkim since 2018 till 2022.

Table no. 1.4

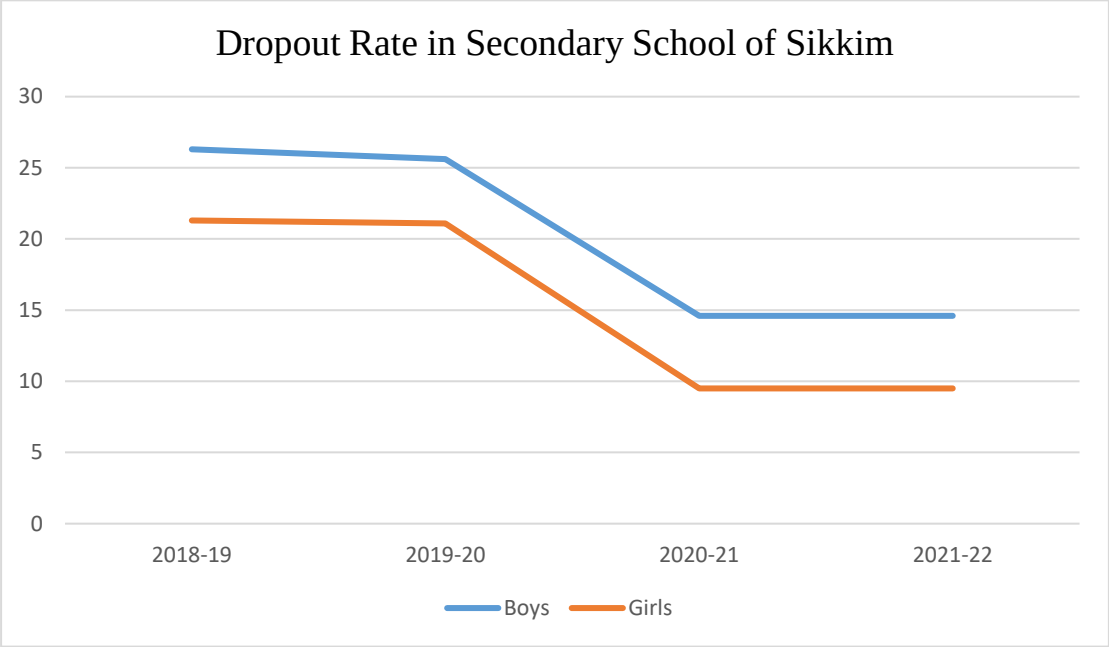
Dropout Rate in Secondary School of Sikkim since 2018-19

Dropout Rate in Secondary School of Sikkim				
	2018-19	**2019-20**	**2020-21**	**2021-22**
Boys	26.3%	25.6%	14.6%	14.6%
Girls	21.3%	21.1%	9.5%	9.5%
Total	**23.7**%	**23.2**%	**11.9**%	**11.9**%

Source: UDISE Report-2018-22

Figure no. 1.3

Dropout Rate in Secondary School of Sikkim



The table no. 1.4 showed the analysis of dropout rates in secondary schools of Sikkim over a four-year period from 2018-19 to 2021-22. The data indicated that there has been a general downward trend in dropout rates for both boys and girls over these years. This suggests a positive development in terms of student retention in secondary education. The data revealed that the dropout rates for boys consistently exceeded those for girls. Notably, the dropout rates for both boys and girls remained the same (14.6% for boys and 9.5% for girls) from 2020-21 to 2021-22. The most substantial reductions in dropout rates occurred between 2018-19 and 2020-21, where the overall dropout rate dropped from 23.7% to 11.9%. This significant reduction indicated a positive impact from interventions or policies implemented during this period.

1.7.5 Retention Rate in Secondary Schools of Sikkim

Retention signifies the practice of keeping a student at their current grade level for an additional year instead of promoting them to the next grade. Retention is considered when a student is struggling in academic and is not meeting the expected educational

standards for their current grade level. Retention is a way to provide additional time for the student to bust up on their academic skills and knowledge. The retention rate in Sikkim shows very high as per the UDISE report of 2018-22, as shown in below table.

Table no. 1.5

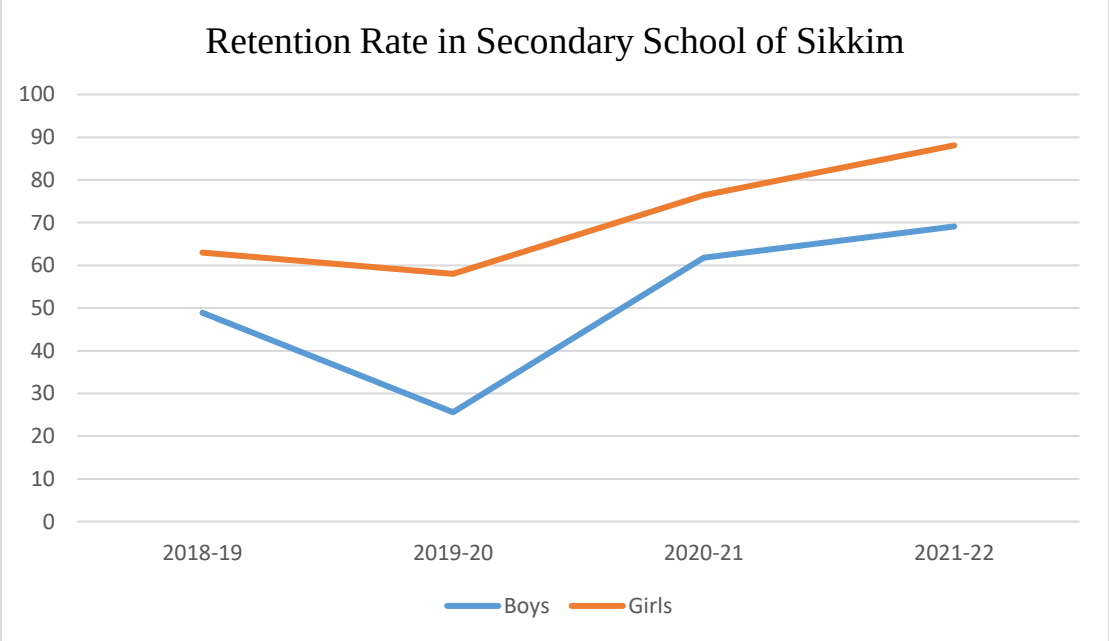
Retention Rate in Secondary School of Sikkim since 2018-19

Retention Rate in Secondary School of Sikkim				
	2018-19	**2019-20**	**2020-21**	**2021-22**
Boys	48.9	42.5	61.8	69.1
Girls	63.0	58.0	76.4	88.1
Total	**55.6**	**49.8**	**68.9**	**77.9**

Source: UDISE Report-2018-22

Figure no. 1.4

Retention Rate in Secondary School of Sikkim



The table no. 1.5 showed the analysis of retention rates in secondary schools of Sikkim over a four-year period, spanning from 2018-19 to 2021-22. The retention rates indicate

the percentage of students who have been successfully retained and continued their education in secondary schools.

The data revealed a consistent pattern of higher retention rates for girls compared to boys across all four years. There was a notable improvement in retention rates over the four years for both boys and girls. This improvement suggested that the efforts to enhance student retention in secondary education have yielded positive outcomes. The increase in retention rates was especially evident between 2018-19 and 2021-22, indicating a substantial positive trend.

Particularly the increase in retention rates for girls, especially from 2020-21 to 2021-22, where the retention rate for girls rose from 76.4% to 88.1%. Such a substantial increase indicated the successful implementation of Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan which aimed at supporting girls' education and addressing barriers they face.

1.7.6 Pass percentage at class X level under CBSE since 2007

The data for pass percentage at secondary level was taken from the Annual Report of 2007-20 of Government of Sikkim. The data was collected only from the school affiliated to Central board of Secondary Education. However, the data was missing in some years.

Table No. 1. 6

Showing the pass percentage of class X CBSE exam since 2007 to 2020

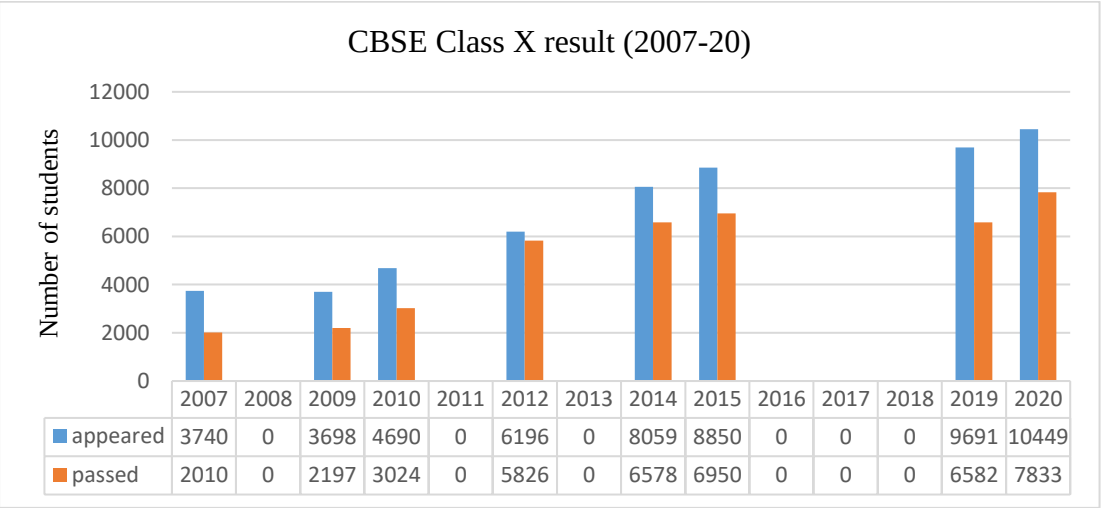
Year	Appeared	Passed	EIOP	Pass %
2007	3740	2010	1406	53.74
2008	*	*	*	*
2009	3698	2197	1365	59.40
2010	4690	3024	1619	64.40
2011	*	*	*	*
2012	6196	5826	354	94.00
2013	*	*	*	*
2014	8059	6578	1475	81.60
2015	8850	6950	1848	78.50
2016	*	*	*	*
2017	*	*	*	*
2018	*	*	*	62.92
2019	9691	6582	2732	67.92
2020	10449	7833	2225	74.96

Sources: Annual Report, Department of Education, Government of Sikkim (2007-20)

Noted: EIOP: Eligible for Improvement of Performance. The result of the Class X CBSE exam from 2007-2020 in Sikkim, '*': Data not found.

Figure no. 1.5

Pass percentage of class X CBSE exam since 2007 to 2020



The tabulated data in the table no. 1.6 showed the performance outcomes in the Class X Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) examinations spanning the years 2007 to 2020. This comprehensive data offered insights into the trends and shifts in student participation and achievement over this period.

One of the most prominent observations is the considerable growth in the number of students who took part in the Board exams between 2007 and 2020. Particularly growth is the remarkable surge in 2020, where the number of students who appeared for the exams reached a notable figure of 10,449. This is in stark contrast to the 3,740 students who participated in the exams in 2007. This surge of 279% over the course of these years indicated a significant escalation in the interest and engagement of students in appearing for the CBSE exams.

The data further revealed a noteworthy increase in the pass percentage of students over the years. Starting from a pass percentage of 53.74% in 2007, there has been a commendable important. This trend concluded the pass percentage of 74.96% in 2020. This marks a majority increase of 21.22% over the time span under consideration. This notable growth in pass rates indicated the improving academic performance of students over the years.

Exploring the factors that contributed to the increase in students' participation and the rise in pass percentages could provide valuable insights into changes in educational policies, teaching methodologies, student motivation, or any other elements that might have played a role in shaping these outcomes.

Table No. 1.7

Civil work at secondary level in the State of Sikkim

Item of Construction	Year	Approved	Completed	In-progress	Not Started
Construction of New School	2013-14	9	2	7	0
	2014-15	5	0	5	0
	2015-16	1	0	1	0
	2016-17	1	0	1	0
	2017-18	2	0	2	0
	Total	**18**	**2**	**16**	**0**
Construction of Additional Classroom	2015-16	3	0	3	0
	2018-19	4	0	4	0
	Total	**100**	**93**	**7**	**0**
Construction of Science Lab	2015-16	6	2	4	0
	2016-17	7	0	7	0
	2017-18	2	0	2	0
	2018-19	4	0	4	0
	Total	**75**	**58**	**17**	**0**
Construction of Computer Room	2015-16	3	1	2	0
	2016-17	7	0	7	0
	Total	**62**	**53**	**9**	**0**
Construction of Library Room	2011-12	20	19	1	0
	2015-16	4	2	2	0
	2016-17	9	0	9	0
	2017-18	2	0	2	0
	2018-19	3	0	3	0
	Total	**116**	**99**	**17**	**0**
Construction of Art/Craft/Culture room	2011-12	33	30	3	0
	2015-16	6	2	4	0
	2016-17	11	0	11	0
	2017-18	2	0	2	0
	2018-19	5	0	5	0
	Total	**144**	**119**	**25**	**0**
Toilet Block	Upto 2017-18	67	60	0	7
	Total	**67**	**60**	**0**	**7**
Drinking Water	2015-16	4	1	3	0
	Total	**50**	**47**	**3**	**0**
ICT at Secondary Level	2015-16	17	0	17	0
	2016-17	13	0	13	0
	2017-18	6	0	6	0
	2018-19	17	0	17	0
	2019-20	4	0	4	0

Source: *Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of School Education & Literacy, Government of India (2020)*

1.8 Overview of Sikkim

Sikkim is a small state of India merged in the year 16th May 1975 as 22nd state of India. The state is surrounded by three countries and one state, where Nepal in the west, Bhutan in the East, China in the North and West Bengal which is the Indian state in the south (Home Department, 2016). River Teesta and Rangeet are the main boundary between Sikkim and West Bengal where the Rangpo in the east and Melli in the South are the major entry point to reach out the Sikkim from rest of the country and Nathula Pass is the only gateway to China from Sikkim (State of Environment, Sikkim, 2007). Being a small state of India with 6.10 lacs population as per the 2011 census (ENVIS Hub: Sikkim, 2019), Sikkim is developing with other state of India. Majority schools of Sikkim are affiliated to CBSE and few schools are affiliated to ICSE. Till now the education system in Sikkim followed the old pattern because the National Educational Policy 2020 has not implemented in the schools. The pattern of school in Sikkim starts from primary level or elementary level lasts for 8 years, 5 years of primary from class I-V and 3 years of upper primary level from VI-VIII followed by 2 years of secondary level, class IX and X and Higher secondary level of 2 year comprises grade XI and XII. After the completion of school education students goes for higher education within and outside the state where they pursue under graduate and post graduate degree courses and professional and vocational courses.

Table No. 1.8

Census of India 2011 for Sikkim

Description	2011
Approximate Population	**6.11 Lakh**
Actual Population	**610,577**
Male	323,070
Female	287,507
Area km2	**7,096**
Area mi2	2,740
Literacy	**81.42%**
Male Literacy	86.55 %
Female Literacy	75.61 %

Source: Environmental Information System (ENVIS) Centre Sikkim (2019).

The table no. 1.8 provides a snapshot of a Sikkim including various key demographic and geographic indicators. The approximate population of Sikkim was recorded as 6.11 Lakh, while the actual population is 610,577, with 323,070 males and 287,507 females. The area of Sikkim is 7,096 square kilometres and 2,740 square miles. The literacy rate is relatively high with 81.42%, indicated a significant portion of the population. The male literacy rate is notably higher at 86.55%, while the female literacy rate is slightly lower at 75.61%.

1.9 Development of Education system in Sikkim

According to Dutta (1991) the society was categorized by three broad divisions in pre-merger Sikkim-the clergy, the nobles and the aristocrats and the third one was the commoners. Among this divisions the most advantaged feudal class were nobles and aristocrats. Top class of Sikkimese bureaucracy for the rulers were its members. Main authority behind the throne attained a social and economic dominance with the nobles and aristocrats. All of them have upper place while the commoners had a far lower place in the society (Dewan, 2012, p-169).

Earlier the subject taught in Sikkim were mainly based on Buddhist religion in Tibetan language and literature which was taught in Gumpa schools (Singh, 1977). Dewan

(2012) stated that the pupils of villages who were educated in Gumpa would engage themselves in household affairs doing religious duties of carrying rituals and rites.

Then the time comes when foreign Christion missionaries came to Sikkim to disseminate the education to the mass. Rhenock School and Mangan was the first school established by the Christian missionary in the year 1880 at Rhenock and primary school was also established by Finnish Mission in 1880 at Mangan. Sadam was the school established in 1886 by Scottish Mission followed by the Vok School in south Sikkim in 1890 (Dewan, 2012; Thulung, 1998).

The Bhutia boarding school started in the year 1906 was the first government school established in Sikkim and Kazi Dawa Samdup (Singh, 1977). Further the Nepali boarding school was the second government school started in 1907 at Lal Bazar with the headmaster Mr. Harka Dhoj Pradhan. In 1909 Enchey School was established by Sidkeong Tulku in Enchey Gumpa to provide liberal education lamas drawn from various monasteries in Sikkim. The first girls' school was established during the year 1924 at Gangtok which is known as Palzor Mangyal Girls' school by Christian missionary. (Dewan, 2012, 184). With the merge of Bhutia Boarding school and Nepali Boarding school the Sir Tashi Namgyal High school was established in the year 1924 (Singh, 1977)

1.10 Need and Significance of the Study

The Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) stands as a comprehensive initiative by the Government of India, aiming to profoundly reshape the landscape of secondary school education across the nation. The formidable challenge of achieving universal secondary education within our diverse and expansive society is acknowledged. The RMSA program encompasses all necessary elements to actualize the vision of universal secondary education in our country. Central to its mission are

accessibility, quality enhancement, and equity in education. A careful approach has been adopted to extend the program's reach to even the remotest corners of the nation, elevate the calibre of secondary education, and bridge societal disparities.

The universalization of secondary education, as embodied by RMSA, poses an intricate endeavour. This necessitates a comprehensive grasp of the existing realities at the grassroots level, encompassing state-level preparations concerning planning, teacher training, infrastructure development, logistics, administrative frameworks, and more.

In this study, the researcher delves deep into the factual details of the RMSA Scheme's implementation within the state of Sikkim. The significance of this study lies in the fact that RMSA is conceived to elevate the quality of secondary education throughout India. The study undertakings to illuminate gaps where the scheme's objectives might have fallen short and suggests viable measures to bridge those gaps, thereby advancing the attainment of RMSA's objectives. Realizing the RMSA's goals holds vital importance, as it aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals set by the global community for 2030. These goals encompass critical aspects such as poverty alleviation, hunger eradication, illiteracy reduction, and the mitigation of gender inequality.

The researcher recognizes the complex relationship of geographical conditions and implementation challenges. Sikkim, like other regions, deals with the complexities of executing schemes such as RMSA, often influenced by unique geographic factors. Despite these challenges, the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) has been launched in Sikkim, mirroring its introduction in other states, with the overarching objectives outlined above.

As the researcher embarks on this study, it becomes evident that the successful execution of initiatives of RMSA can transform challenging geographical circumstances into opportunities for equitable education. This study contribute insights

that cover the way for educational advancements in Sikkim, as well as contributing broader lessons for similar contexts. Ultimately, the implementation of RMSA holds the promise of not only shaping the educational landscape but also ushering in positive societal transformations aligned with global developmental aspirations. In view of this, the researcher identified the following problem for investigation:

1.11 Statement of the Problem

Sarva shiksha abhiyan was launched by the government to bring elementary education to all the children and it has been successful to universalize the elementary education but it did not fulfill the need of secondary education. Government of India on the recommendation of CABE launched RMSA as a funding agency and started funding for the secondary education in the country with the aim to facilitate on access, quality and equity intervention in secondary education. The present study evaluated the contribution of RMSA on Access, Quality and Equity intervention in secondary education of Sikkim. Therefore, the problem is stated as as "Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) of Samagraha Shiksha Abhiyan in the State of Sikkim-An Evaluative study".

1.12 Operational Definition of key terms Used

The different key terms used in the title of the study and to be used in the body of report is operationally defined as follows;

Rashtriya Madhymaik Siksha Abhiyan (RMSA): Rashtriya Madhyamaik Siksha Abhiyan (RMSA-2009-10) is a scheme of the government of India for universalisation of access to and improvement quality of education at the secondary stage (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2010).

Samagraha Shiksha Abhiyan: Samagraha Shiksha Abhiyan is a scheme launched by the Government of India in 2018 merging of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya

Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan and Teacher Education for the universalization of Elementary, Secondary, Higher secondary education and for the improvement of Teacher Education (Department of School Education and Literacy, 2018)

Access: It refers to the facilities like disable friendly school building, rain harvesting system in school, physical infrastructure and upgradation of schools to secondary and senior secondary school under RMSA in order to facilitate access of secondary education to learners from all background and categories (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2010).

Quality Intervention: This refers to the improvement in the quality of secondary and higher secondary education by providing infrastructural facilities and school mapping like appointment of additional teacher, in-service training of teachers, learning resource centre, health and physical activities for the students, residential facilities, adolescent education programme and role and support of parents and teachers for the students. The components of quality intervention is aimed to improve the quality of secondary education (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2010).

Equity Intervention: It refers to the intervention covering of special focus groups like education for girls, scheduled cast and schedule tribe children, children from educationally backward minority community and children with Special Need in order to equity of secondary education (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2010).

1.13 Research Questions

1. How is the access of Secondary Education under RMSA in Sikkim?
2. How is the implementation of quality interventions in secondary education under RMSA in Sikkim?
3. How is the implementation of equity interventions in secondary education under RMSA in Sikkim?

4. How is the financial assistance and utilization of funds in secondary education under RMSA in Sikkim?
5. How is the opinion of teachers on the implementation of RMSA in Secondary Schools of Sikkim
6. How is the impact of RMSA on Secondary Education in Sikkim?

1.14 Objectives of the study

1. To evaluate the access of Secondary Education under RMSA in Sikkim as per the following criteria:
    a) Disable friendly facilities in Secondary Schools
    b) Schools with rain harvesting system
    c) Physical infrastructure in secondary schools
    d) Upgradation of schools to secondary and Senior secondary
2. To evaluate the quality interventions in secondary education under RMSA in Sikkim as per the following criteria
    a) Mapping of the school
    b) Appointment of additional teachers in the secondary level under RMSA
    c) In-service training of teachers
    d) Learning Resource Centre (LRC)
    e) Health and Physical Activities for the students
    f) Residential facilities for Teachers
    g) Adolescent education programme
    h) Guidance and counselling
    i) Excursion tour for the students
    j) Role and support of head teachers and parents for the quality education

3. To evaluate the equity intervention in secondary education under RMSA in Sikkim as per the following criteria.
    a) Scholarships for meritorious and needy students
    b) Transport facilities for the students
    c) Emergency Medical room in the school
    d) Boarding facilities for the students
    e) Enrolment, retention and achievement activities in the school
    f) Incentives for the students
    g) Special coaching and remedial classes for educationally backward children
    h) Schemes for out of school children
    i) Equality on participation
    j) Convergence of open and distance learning students
4. To study the financial assistance and utilization of funds in the school under RMSA.
5. To study the opinion of teachers on the implementation of RMSA in Secondary Schools of Sikkim
6. To evaluate the impact of RMSA in Secondary schools of Sikkim.

1.15 Delimitation of the Study

The scope of the current research was delimited to 30 government schools providing education for students in grades IX and X, of four districts within the state of Sikkim.