PREFACE

Policymakers, educationists and others involved in education are seeking ways to utilize limited resources efficiently and effectively in order to identify and solve problems in the education sector and to provide quality education for children. Their efforts have contributed in realizing the significance and benefits of community participation in education, and have recognized community participation as one of the strategies to improve educational access and quality. The Community Participation in the light of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) itself is not a goal in educational delivery nor a panacea to solve complicated issues contributing to poor educational quality in both developing and developed countries. Through its project, the government aims at involving communities in various stages; preparation, implementation and evaluation. Communities are also expected to develop and strengthen these capacities so that they can take over and continue to carry on. This is not to say that community participation is something new in the education delivery, however. In fact, not all communities have played a passive role in children’s education. Until the middle of the last century, responsibility for educating children rested with the community. Although there still are places where communities organize them to operate schools for their children today, community participation in education hasn’t been fully recognized nor extended systematically to a wider practice. In preparing and implementing any efforts to promote community involvement in education, it is important to understand the whole picture of community participation: how it works; what forms are used; what benefits it can yield; and what we should expect in the process of carrying out the efforts. A deeper understanding of this issue is important since the link between community involvement and educational access and quality is not simple and involves various forms.

This study attempts to analyse the role of community for the upliftment and development of elementary education in the Cachar district after the implementation of Sarva Siksha Abhijan Mission. This study is designed to serve as a resource for research activities to know more about community participation
in SSA activities and clients who seek deeper understanding of community participation in education in order to enhance their work in this field.

The study is divided into eight chapters. The first chapter the framework of the study, this chapter includes the problem, review of the literature, objectives and methodology of the study. The second chapter introduces the elementary education and community participation in India, this chapter deals with historical evolution of community participation in elementary education, culminating into the SSA strategies. The third chapter highlights the Cachar District: historical development of elementary education and community participation, this chapter introduces the Cachar district in its socio-historical and geographical contexts and gives an account of historical development of elementary education and community participation in it from colonial times up till the implementation of the SSA. The fourth chapter is the socio-economic background of the respondents. This chapter reveals structural patterns of community participation in elementary education in schools under SSA, by presenting social background of the respondents with the variables like: respondents position in the SMC, sex ratio, level of education of respondents father, level of education of respondents mother, occupation, religion, caste, mother tongue, patterns of house, type of house, annual income, items of household consumption, marital status, respondents children age group, respondents children attended school and type of school attended by respondents children. The fifth chapter deals with community participation in monitoring of children’s schooling and teaching-learning activities. This chapter examines, number of SMC meetings conducted last year, percentage of members attended the SMC meeting, agenda of the SMC meeting, major problem of the school, SMC involvement in the improvement of the school environment and SMC monitoring in school functioning. The sixth chapter is about community participation in resource generation and monitoring of development plans. The chapter discusses the working of community participation in implementation of improvement plans and generation of resources in schools under SSA in terms of SMC members mobilize local resource for development of elementary education, community contribution for development of elementary education, type of contributions of the interested members, SMC member performing in school development activities,
SMC members participate in monitoring the children schooling activity, SMC members participate in monitoring the children teaching learning activities, preparation in monitoring of school development plan by SMC members and necessity of community participation for development of education as a whole. The seventh chapter deals with the impact of community participation on elementary education, in this chapter the nature and impact of community’s participation was analysed in terms of the dropout in school, steps taken by SMC to bring the dropout children to school, special drive conducted by SMC for retention of children at school, measures taken by SMC and types of measure for improvement of the enrolment of school, contribution of community people for quality education of their children, participation of SMC in bringing the out of school children within the preview of education, community participation in bridging the gender gap, uplifting girls education and the social gap(SC/ST/OBC/Minority and differently able child), utilization, implementation, supervision and monitoring of the annual school grants and other grants by the SMC provided by SSA, participation of the SMC in the children’s teaching learning process, usefulness of education community members livelihood and major obstacle faced by the people’s committee in universalization of elementary education. The eighth chapter is the concluding chapter which summarises all findings of the previous chapters along with some suggestions.

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