Chapter 6
SOCIAL GAP FILLING IN THE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

For providing elementary education to all children in the age group of 6-14 years, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan(SSA) was launched in 2001-2002. An important objective of SSA is ensuring of universalisation of elementary education and bridging of gender and social gaps by 2010. In August 2009, the Indian Parliament has passed the historic Act titled Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE). This Act provides the right of children to free and compulsory education till completion of elementary education in a neighbourhood school. This Act contains several provisions that require to be put in place in order to ensure its proper implementation. The RTE Act has important implications for the overall approach and implementation strategies of SSA and it is necessary to harmonize the SSA vision, strategies and norms with the RTE mandate. The mandate of the RTE Act, particularly the need, is to provide education to all the children of the country of equitable quality. This equity meant not only equal opportunity, but also creation of conditions in which the disadvantaged sections of the society, i.e., children of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Muslim minorities, landless agricultural workers and children with special needs can avail the opportunity. One of the important aims of SSA was to bridge the gender differences and social category gaps at primary stage (class I-IV) by 2007 and at elementary education level by (class I-VII) 2010. The SSA mode strategies to focus on the groups, which include children from SCs/STs, minority groups, urban deprived children, children of the disadvantaged groups and children with special needs. In this connection the SSA has undertaken drives to enroll the students at elementary school level. The _priority in education of girls‘, especially girls belonging to SCs/STs and minority groups was one of the principal

concern of SSA (Annual Report, 2003-2004, SSA, Assam). SSA also introduced Meena Club to ensure enrolment of all girl children in schools at the suitable age, their regular attendance and completion of elementary education without any break. The Meena club was formed by teachers of the schools / EGS with the support of the community groups in the special focus areas like Tea Gardens, SCs, STs and minority community. In this chapter, effort has been made to observe the social gaps among students of different religions and castes.

I

MINORITY STUDENTS

In the Silchar Educational Block,Muslims are minority and Hindus are majority. There existed gap of minority students with majority students in the elementary education in all the three types of schools; namely, L.P., U.P. and Composite schools in the rural and urban areas. SSA intervention focused on filling this gap among others and attempted to achieve this objective during the period of 2003-2010. The focus here is on the gaps of enrolment in the pre- SSA (year 2002) and the SSA intervention periods in order to determine to what extent the SSA could minimize the gaps. The following tables present the information pertaining to students‘enrolments that are classified on the basis of religion.

The following table gives the distribution of the Muslim and the Hindu students enrolled in the L.P. schools in the pre-SSA and during SSA periods:

Table 6.1

Enrolment of Muslim and Hindu Students in L.P. Schools

(Percentage in Parentheses)

Community of Enrolled Student	**Pre-SSA Period**	**SSA PERIOD**								
	2002	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**Avg. of the SSA Period**
Muslim	24 (11)	30	27	37	27	27	39	39	41	33 (15)
Hindu	191 (89)	209	194	211	172	192	190	171	153	187(85)
Total	215 (100)	238	221	248	199	219	229	210	194	220(100)

Source: Field Survey Conducted during January 2011 – April 2012

The table reveals the enrolment of Muslim and Hindu students in L.P. schools**.** In L.P. schools, in the pre- SSA year of 2002, the percentage of Muslim students' enrolment was 11% whereas during the SSA period; it has gone up to15% on an average. It clearly shows that the percentage of Muslim students increased as compared to the enrolment rate of Hindu students. On the other hand, the percentage of enrolment of Hindu students was 89% in the pre-SSA year 2002 and it has been declined to 85% in average during SSA period. But it does not mean that number of Hindu students enrolled in the schools declined as a result of increased enrolment of Muslim students. In fact, enrolment of students from both the communities increased after launching of SSA. However, this increase shows opposite trends in the two communities. From the Muslim community the enrolment of students by and large has been gradually increasing over all the years (2003-2010) during the SSA period assessed under the study from the Hindu community the students' enrolment suddenly increased in the first year (2003) of SSA and thereafter it has been on a gradual

decline. This difference of students' enrolment in the two communities indicates that more Muslim students were out of school and they are increasingly drawn into L.P. schools over the years while comparatively less Hindu students were out of school at the time of launch of SSA and therefore in the first year of SSA Hindu students' enrolment increased significantly and then it maintained a downward trend. Enrolment trend is different in the U.P. schools. Let us see the minority and majority students' enrolment in U.P. schools.

The following table shows the enrolment of students the two communities over the two periods:

Table 6.2

Enrolment of Muslim and Hindu Students in U.P. Schools
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Community of Enrolled Student	**Pre-SSA Period**	**SSA Period**								
	2002	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**Avg. of the SSA Period**
Muslim	138(62)	115	159	198	216	221	178	189	112	173.5 (59)
Hindu	84 (38)	123	112	123	150	99	115	89	172	122.9 (41)
Total	222 (100)	238	271	321	366	320	293	278	284	296.4 (100)

Source: Field Survey Conducted during January 2011 – April 2012

The table reveals the enrolment of Muslim and Hindu students in U.P. schools**.** In U.P. schools, in the pre- SSA year of 2002, the percentage of Muslim students' enrolment was 62% whereas during SSA period it has come down to 59 % on an average. On the other hand, the percentage of enrolled Hindu students was 38% in the pre-SSA year 2002 and it has increased to 41% on an average during SSA period. It

clearly reveals that the percentages of Hindu students which has recorded an increase of 3% during SSA period.

The data show that Muslim students' enrolment in U.P. schools is quite higher than that of Hindu students in both the periods. The students of both the communities have registered a phenomenal growth of students' enrolment in U.P. schools. Hindu students' enrolment rate is slightly above that of the Muslim students. However, number of Muslim students is still greater than Hindu students. Thus, enrolment has been boosted by the SSA. The greater number of enrolled Muslim students than that of Hindu students is perhaps due to more people resides near by schools. Let us now see enrolment status of students from the two communities in composite schools. The following table shows the enrolment of Muslim and Hindu students in composite schools in the SSA and during SSA periods:

The table reveals the enrolment of Muslim and Hindu students in Composite schools**.**

Table 6.3
Enrolment of Muslim and Hindu Students in Composite Schools
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Community of Enrolled Student	**Pre-SSA Period**	**SSA Period**								
	2002	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**Avg. of the SSA Period**
Muslim	200 (41)	179	166	195	200	167	181	173	187	181 (36)
Hindu	289 (59)	293	330	273	317	338	319	305	293	321 (64)
Total	489 (100)	472	496	568	517	505	500	478	480	502 (100)

Source: Field Survey Conducted during January 2011 – April 2012

In Composite schools, in the pre- SSA year of 2002, the percentage of Muslim students' enrolment was 41% whereas during SSA period it has come down to 36 % on an average. On the other hand, the percentage of enrolment of Hindu students was 59% in the pre-SSA year of 2002 and it has been increased to 64% on an average during SSA period. It clearly reveals that the percentage of Hindu students has increased by 5% during SSA period. Though both the communities have registered increase in their students in composite schools, it reveals that under impact of SSA also more Hindu students are continuing education after U.P. schooling. The Muslim students seem to be a majority at U.P. school level. Perhaps, the Muslim students discontinue after U.P. schooling to take up jobs.

Enrolment scenario of Muslim and Hindu students is not similar in rural and urban schools. More Muslims are settled in rural areas while more Hindus are settled in urban areas. Therefore, let us examine the enrolment of Muslim and Hindu students in the two periods in the context of rural and urban schools.

We take up first the enrollment of the students in urban L.P. schools. The following table distributes the enrolment of Muslim and Hindu students in urban L.P. schools over the two periods:

Table 6.4
Enrolment of Muslim and Hindu Students in Urban L.P. Schools
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Community of Enrolled Student	Pre-SSA Period	SSA Period								
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Avg. of the SSA Period
Muslim	2(1.2)	3	3	4	3	4	5	9	8	5 (3)
Hindu	159 (98.8)	179	166	184	145	169	165	154	126	161 (97)
Total	161 (100)	182	169	188	148	173	170	163	134	166 (100)

Source: Field Survey Conducted during January 2011 – April 2012

The table reveals the condition of enrolment of Muslim and Hindu students in urban L.P. schools in pre-SSA year of 2002 and in SSA period (2003-2010). In pre-SSA year, the enrolment rate of Muslim students was 1.2% whereas during the SSA period it increased to 3% in L.P. schools. But the enrolment rate of Hindu students in pre- (SSA) year 2002 was 98.8% and during the SSA period it has gone down to 97%. It indicates that the enrolment of Muslim students marginally increased whereas, the enrolment of Hindu students got marginally decreased in the urban area**.** This decrease in the enrolment of Hindu students is due to relative increase in the enrolment of Muslim students. But the fact is that enrolment of the students from both the communities have registered increase; however, in case of Muslim students the increase is phenomenal, i.e., double that of the pre-SSA year. Thus, SSA has specially impacted on the minority students' enrolment in SSA schools. Yet a huge gap between the minority and majority students registered in L.P. schools is perceived in terms of their percentage.

Let us now see the enrolment status of the students from the two communities in urban U.P. schools over the two periods. The following table presents the enrolment status of minority and majority communities' students in urban U.P. schools over the two periods:

Table 6.5
Enrolment of Muslim and Hindu Students in Urban U.P. Schools
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Community of Enrolled Student	Pre-SSA Period	SSA Period								
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Avg. of the SSA Period
Muslim	44(55.7)	40	42	40	49	35	31	33	29	37.4 (32.9)
Hindu	35 (54.3)	55	88	100	116	53	49	64	86	76.4 (67.1)
Total	79 (100)	95	130	140	165	88	80	97	115	113.8 (100)

Source: Field Survey Conducted during January 2011 – April 2012

The table reveals the students about the enrolment of the Muslim and Hindu students in urban U.P. school in the pre -SSA and the SSA period. In urban U.P. schools, number of Muslim students decreased in the SSA period in comparison of pre-SSA period. The percentage of enrolment of minority students in pre-SSA period was 55.7% and during SSA period it comes down to 32.9%. It indicates that the rate of enrolment of Hindu students increased whereas Muslim students decreased during the SSA period in comparison of the pre- SSA period**.** The percentage of enrolment rate of Hindu student pre-SSA period was 54.3% and it has come up to 67.1% on an average during the SSA period. This means that urban UP schools get a few Muslim students from the urban area while most of them came from the rural area. Perhaps, were U.P. schools are in the rural area where more Muslims are found, therefore, enrolment of Muslim students in urban schools is on decline. On the other hand, enrolment of Hindu students in urban U.P. schools has increased phenomenally as the L.P. School pass out students could join U.P. schools and continue education under the SSA.

Let us now find out the enrolment status of minority and majority community students in urban U.P. schools. The following table gives distribution of the students in urban Composite schools over the two periods:

Table 6.6
Enrolment of Muslim and Hindu Students in Urban Composite Schools
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Community of Enrolled Student	Pre-SSA Period	SSA Period								
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Avg. of the SSA Period
Muslim	81 (35.4)	74	71	80	82	71	88	88	83	80 (35.1)
Hindu	148 (64.6)	148	137	145	124	128	169	153	169	148 (64.9)
Total	229 (100)	222	208	225	206	209	257	241	252	228 (100)

Source: Field Survey Conducted during January 2011 – April 2012

The table reveals the status of urban composite schools in relation to the enrolment of Muslim and Hindu students in pre-SSA and during SSA periods. In urban composite schools the percentage of Muslim and Hindu students remained the same in both the periods. The percentage of Muslim minority students in pre-SSA period was 35.4% and in the SSA period it is 35.1%. The percentage of Hindu students in pre -SSA period was 64.6% and their average in the SSA period is 64.9%. It indicates that in composite schools no significant change occurred in case of the students of both the communities.

Here, the fact is that one finds no change in the gap of enrolment between the Muslim and Hindu students, yet there is clearly seen increase in students‘ enrolment from both the communities. The enrolment of Muslim students marginally increased in urban L.P. schools during the SSA period while in the U.P. schools it decreased. But in the urban composite schools no significant changes occurred during SSA period

After the foregoing discussion on the enrolment of Muslim and Hindu students in three types of urban schools let us now proceed to discuss their enrolment status in three types of rural schools. We begin with the analysis of the data related to enrolment of Muslim and Hindu students in rural L.P. schools over the two periods as given in the following table:

Table 6.7
Enrolment of Muslim and Hindu Students in Rural L.P. Schools
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Community of Enrolled Student	Pre-SSA Period	SSA Period								
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Avg. of the SSA Period
Muslim	22 (40.7)	27	24	33	24	23	34	30	33	28.5 (52.8)
Hindu	32 (59.3)	30	28	27	27	23	25	17	27	25.5(47.2)
Total	54 (100)	57	52	60	51	46	59	47	60	54 (100)

Source: Field Survey Conducted during January 2011 – April 2012

The table reveals the status of rural L.P. schools in relation to the enrolment of Muslim and Hindu students in the pre-SSA year of 2002, and during the SSA period. In pre-SSA year (2002), in the L.P. schools, 40.7% were Muslim students whereas their average during the SSA period is 52.8%. In pre -SSA period the enrolment of Hindu students was 59.3% and in the SSA period it has come down to 47.2%. It clearly shows that the rate of enrolment of Muslim students' has considerably improved in rural L.P. schools during the SSA period.

This means that the gap of enrolment between the students of the two communities has been bridged during the SSA period. Rather, during the SSA period the enrolment of Muslim students has been higher than that of Hindu students.

In a way, the enrolment of minority community students of rural L.P. schools is higher than that of majority community students. This trend is more conspicuous in case of rural U.P. schools. Let us discuss the data in the following table on the enrolment of Muslim and Hindu students in U.P. schools over the two periods.

Table 6.8
Enrolment of Muslim and Hindu Students in Rural U.P. Schools
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Community of Enrolled Student	Pre-SSA Period	SSA Period								
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Avg. of the SSA Period
Muslim	94 (65.7)	75	117	158	167	186	147	156	83	136 (74.5)
Hindu	49 (34.3)	68	24	23	34	46	66	25	86	46 (25.5)
Total	143 (100)	143	141	181	201	232	213	181	169	182 (100)

Source: Field Survey Conducted during January 2011 – April 2012

The table reveals the status of the enrolment of Muslim and Hindu students in rural U.P. schools in pre-SSA year of 2002 and during the SSA period. In U.P. schools, in pre-SSA period (2002), the enrolment of Muslim students was 65.7% and during SSA period it has gone up to 74.5% whereas the enrolment of Hindu students was 34.3% in the pre-SSA period and during the SSA period it has come down to 25.5% on an average. It implies that the enrolment of Muslim students has increased and the enrolment of Hindu students has decreased during the SSA period. Thus, it is found that the enrolment of Muslim students' has considerably improved during SSA period in rural U.P. schools and now it is for ahead of the enrolment of majority community's students.

But when we look at the enrolment status of students in rural composite schools the Muslim students are trailing behind the Hindu students. The enrolment status of Muslim and Hindu students in rural composite schools over the two periods is given on the following table:

Table 6.9
Enrolment of Muslim and Hindu Students in Rural Composite Schools
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Community of Enrolled Student	Pre-SSA Period	SSA Period								
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Avg. of the SSA Period
Muslim	119 (46)	105	95	115	118	96	93	85	104	101 (37)
Hindu	141 (54)	145	193	228	193	200	150	152	124	174 (63)
Total	260 (100)	250	288	343	311	296	243	237	228	274 (100)

Source: Field Survey Conducted during January 2011 – April 2012

The table reveals the status of the enrolment of Muslim and Hindu students in rural composite schools in the pre -SSA year (2002) and during the SSA period. In composite schools, in the pre -SSA year (2002), the enrolment of Muslim students was 46% and in the SSA period it is 37% on an average. Then, the enrolment of Hindu students in pre -SSA year (2002) was 54% and during the SSA period it is 63%. It implies that the enrolment of Muslim (minority) students decreased, whereas Hindu students increased during the SSA period. It is found that the enrolment of Muslim (minority) students has not improved during the SSA period in rural composite school whereas the enrollment of Hindu students has improved. Perhaps, this may be due to discontinuance of studies by Muslim students for jobs while many of Hindu students continue their studies. The discontinuity or continuity of studies may be due to difference of economic conditions of the two communities in the rural areas.

The enrolment of Muslim students significantly improved in rural L.P. and U.P. schools during the SSA period than the pre-SSA year (2002). But the overall enrolment of Muslim students has decreased.

In rural areas Muslim enrolment has significantly improved in L.P. and U.P. schools. In the urban area it marginally increased in L.P. and U.P. schools but enrolment during the SSA period is found to have decreased. In the rural Composite schools Muslim enrolment decreased while in urban area no significant changes occurred.

After this discussion on the minority and majority children and their enrolment in schools, let us now draw major patterns from the analyses and conclude this section. From above analysis the following important patterns of schooling can be drawn:

1. In L.P. schools the enrolment percentage of Muslim (minority) students has increased while in case of the Hindu students the percentage has decreased. On the other hand, in U.P. schools, the percentage of Muslim (minority) students has decreased.

2 In Urban L.P. schools, the enrolment of Muslim (minority) students has marginally increased whereas that of Hindu students has marginally decreased. In urban U.P. schools the enrolment of Hindu students has increased and Muslim minority student has decreased in the SSA period in comparison of the pre-SSA period. In composite schools no significant change is observed in the enrolment of the students of both the communities.

3 The average percentage of enrolment improved during the average SSA period in the rural L.P. schools. Besides, the enrolment of Muslim students has improved in the SSA period in rural U.P. schools. The enrolment of the Muslim minority students comes down during the SSA period in the rural composite schools whereas the enrolment rate of Hindu students has improved. On the other hand, opposite trend is witnessed in case of both U.P. schools and composite schools. In these schools, the enrolment has decreased.

4. The positive trend has been observed that the status of enrolment and success rate of minority students, i.e., students from Muslim community has considerably improved during the SSA period, right from the inception of SSA. In the year 2003 in Cachar district, the trend of enrolment figures during the SSA period in different types and levels of schools, i.e., L.P. (I-IV), M.E. (V-VII), Senior Basic Schools (I-VII) and composite schools (V-X) shows that the students from minority community have achieved an encouraging rate of growth in elementary education. Presently on the basis of RTE Act 2009 L.P.

school‘s educational level has changed to I-V, upper primary level to class VI-VIII, Senior Basic school level to I-VIII and composite school level to VI-X.

II
GENERAL CASTE, SC, ST & OBC STUDENTS

In the Silchar Educational Block, there existed gap between General, SC, ST and OBC category students in the elementary education in all the three types of schools: namely, L.P. U.P. and composite schools in the rural and urban areas. SSA intervention focused on filling this gap among others and attempted to achieve this objective during the period of 2003-2010. The focus here is on the gaps of enrolment in the pre-SSA year (2002) and the SSA intervention periods in order to determine to what extent the SSA could minimize the gaps. The following table presents the information pertaining to students’ enrolments that are classified on the basis of caste. The following table gives the distribution of the General castes, SC, ST and OBC students enrolled in class I in L.P. schools.

The table (6.10) reveals that in pre- SSA (year 2002), enrolment of students in class-I shows that the general category of students enrolled were 80.9%, the scheduled caste students enrolled were 15.8%, the other backward students enrolled were 3.3% in lower primary schools whereas the average during the SSA period shows that 74.6% enrolled were general category students, 21.7% were scheduled caste students, other backward caste students were 3.6% and only 0.1% were enrolled from scheduled tribe students.

Thus, the scheduled caste students' enrolment has increased. Other backward students are almost the same but during SSA period scheduled tribes' students have been newly enrolled. During the SSA period the enrolment is fluctuating, due to communication, road condition, infrastructure condition etc. It was reported that the initial stage (2003-04) of SSA period, the approach road of Krishna Charan Pathshala was flood-affected. During these years, less number of students took admission. But when road condition improved the enrolment rate increased. Besides this, SSA's Jyoti Kendra and EGS centres extensively tried to bring the students into the formal education system in the initial stage.

The following table presents the enrolment status of general, SC and ST students in rural L.P. schools over the two periods:

The table (6.11) reveals that in pre- SSA year (2002), the enrolment of students in rural lower primary schools shows that General Caste students enrolled were 74% and SC students were 26% while during the SSA period 69.4% students were found from general category, 30.4% are from scheduled castes and 0.2% are from STs.

The data clearly indicate that the general students are decreasing and SC students are increasing. About 0.2% of students are ST students enrolled in the rural L.P. schools. During the SSA period the enrolment of students is fluctuating due to road condition and in the initial stage SSA conducted drives to increase the enrolment of the children in formal education. Besides this, SSA provided EGS centres and mainstreamed the students in formal schools.

The following table gives distribution of the students in urban L.P. schools:

The table (6.12) reveals that in pre-SSA year (2002), so far as the enrolment of students in class I for urban lower primary schools is concerned the general caste students enrolled were 83.2%, SC students were 12.4% and OBC students were 4.3% whereas the average during SSA period shows that general caste students enrolled were 76.3%, SC students were 18.9%, and OBC students were 4.8%. In both the cases, rural and urban, general caste students have decreased and SC students have increased. This means that gap of SC students' enrolment has decreased. The students' enrolment varies due to road condition and SSA provides the opportunity to the student to take education by Jyoti Kendras and it helped to improve the enrolment status.

The following table gives distribution of the students in class v of the U.P. schools.

The table (6.13) reveals the enrolment of students in class V of the U.P. schools in the pre- SSA year (2002) and the average during SSA period and shows that General category students enrolled were 84% in the pre- SSA and 84.7% during SSA period. SC students enrolled were 9.6% in the pre-SSA and 10.1% during the SSA period. Again, ST students enrolled were 0.4% in the pre- SSA and 0.3% during the SSA period. OBC students enrolled were 6% in to pre-SSA and during SSA period. They were 5.1%. The enrolment of students is fluctuating during the SSA period, due to SSA influence at the lower level and their continuation of education.

The following table presents the enrolment status of General, SC and OBC students in rural U.P. schools:

The table (6.14) reveals that in the rural U.P. schools, in the pre SSA year (2002), different categories of students enrolled were General Caste - 93%, SC - 6% and OBC- 1%, whereas, during SSA period, the average of students enrolled was General Caste 88%, SC- 9 % and OBC- 3%. It shows that general category of students' enrolment has decreased whereas SC and OBC categories' students has increased.

The following table presents the enrolment status of General, SC,ST and OBC students in urban U.P. schools:

The table (6.15) reveals that in the urban U.P. schools, in the pre SSA period, the students enrolled were: General Caste- 70%, SC- 16%, ST -1% and OBC- 13% whereas during SSA period the students enrolled were general caste - 77.4%, SC- 12.9%, ST- 0.1% and OBC- 8.8%. It shows that general category students enrolled have increased SC and OBC students have decreased. Only in the case of ST students the figure remains constant. But the total scenario of enrolment status has out rightly changed. The following table gives distribution of the students in class v of the composite schools:

The table (6.16) reveals that in composite schools, enrolment of students in class V, in pre SSA year (2002) was: General category- 75% and SC- 25% whereas during the SSA period it was: General category- 66.5% and SC- 33.5%. It indicates that general category students' enrolment is decreasing and SC category students are increasing. The enrollment of SC students is increasing as compared with general students. But in case of urban areas general category students have increased in comparison of SC students. However, in rural areas, general categories of students have decreased while SC student have increased. It means that there is more social category gap in education in the rural areas.

The following table gives distribution of the students in class v of the urban composite schools:

The table (6.17) reveals that in the urban composite schools, enrolment of students in class V, in the pre- SSA year (2002), shows that general category students were 45.4% and SC were 54.6% whereas during the SSA period it is: General category- 46.2% and SC -53.8%. It indicates that in the urban areas number of general category students has increased while number of SC students has decreased. It might arise because general caste people were more and SC people were less in number.

The following table gives distribution of the students in class v of the rural composite schools:

The table (6.18) reveals that in rural composite schools, enrolment of students, in the pre- SSA year (2002), was: General category- 93% and SC- 7% whereas during SSA period the general category students were 83.4% and SC students were 16.6%. It implies that general category of students enrolment has decreased while that of SC students has increased.

After this discussion on the caste category and their enrolment in schools, let us now draw major pattern from the analysis and conclude this section. From above analysis the following important patterns of schooling can be drawn:

1. In L.P. schools the SC students' enrolment has increased, OBC students are almost the same but during SSA period ST students have newly enrolled. In both the cases, rural and urban, general caste students are decreasing and SC students are increasing. This means the gap of SC students' enrolment is decreasing. The students' enrolment varies due to road condition in a year and SSA provides the opportunity to the student to take education by Jyoti Kendra, EGS centre and it helped t5o improve the enrolment status.
2. In U.P. schools the enrolment of students is fluctuating during the SSA period, due to SSA's influence in the lower level and their continuation of education. In rural U.P. schools general category of students' enrolment has decreased whereas SC and OBC categories' students have increased. In urban U.P. schools the general category students' enrolled have increased, SC students decreased, ST students decreased and OBC students also decreased.
3. In Composite schools, general category students' enrolment has decreased and that of SC category has increased. In urban areas general category students

have increased in comparison of SC students whereas in rural areas general categories of students have decreased while SC students have increased.

A positive trend has been observed, that is, SSA's influence has minimized the caste.

III
Male-Female Students

In Silchar education block, both, male and female students were found in L.P. schools & U.P. schools in rural as well as urban area. But in case of composite schools only in the rural area male and female students were found. The foregoing tables No. 6.10, 6.11, 6.12, 6.13, 6.14, 6.15, 6.16 and 6.18 show the distribution male and female students in the categories of general, SC, ST, OBC students. These data are analysed below.

The table (6.10) reveals that in pre -SSA (year 2002), in class-I male and female students enrolled were 107(49.77%) and 108 (50.23%) respectively whereas the average during the SSA period were 109.9 (49.98%) and 110 (50.02%) male and female respectively. It does not any significant change.

The table (6.11) reveals that in class-I in rural area the male and female students enrolled in pre SSA (year 2002) during the SSA period were 26 and 28 each. It shows no change in the enrolment status of students.

The table (6.12) reveals that in Pre-SSA year(2002) class-I in the urban area the male and female students enrolled were 81 (50.3%) and 80(49.7%) respectively where as the average during the SSA period shows the male & female were 83.9(50.6%) and 82(49.4%) respectively. It shows no change in male and female enrolment.

The table (6.13) reveals that in the pre-SSA year (2002) in class V of the U.P. schools the male and female students are 128(52.7%) and 115 (47.3%) respectively where as in the average of during SSA period shows the number 148 (49.8%) and 149 (50.2%) respectively. It shows change in male and female enrolment.

The table (6.14) reveals that in the pre SSA year (2002) the enrolment of students in class-v in rural area the male and female students are 73(51%) and 70 (49%) respectively where as in the average of during SSA period shows the number 92 (50%) and 92 (50%) respectively. It shows no change in male and female enrolment.

The table (6.15) reveals that in the pre SSA year (2002) the enrolment of students in class-V in urban schools the male and female students were 55(55%) and 45 (45%) respectively where as the average during the SSA period was 56.6 (49.8%) and 57.1 (50.2%) respectively. This shows significant gender gap filing in urban UP schools.

The table (6.16) reveals that in the pre SSA year (2002) in class V in composite schools the male and female students were 357(73%) and 132 (27%) respectively where as average during the SSA period were 356.5 (71%) and 145.5 (29%) respectively. This shows a little improvement of gender gap filling in rural composite schools.

The table (6.18) reveals that in the pre SSA year (2002) the in class V in rural area the male and female students were 128(49.2%) and 132 (50.8%) respectively where as the average during the SSA period shows 129 (47%) and 145.5 (53%) respectively.

On the basis of above analysis, now, major patterns of gender gap filling under SSA is drawn. These are as follows:

1. The male and female students are almost same in number but marginal changes occurred in L.P. and U.P. school in rural & urban area both as there existed very less gender gap in the schools.

2. The rural composite school female students were increased and male students were decreased.

3. In L.P. schools, no significant changes occurred in male and female enrolment.

4. The significant gender gap filling shows in urban U.P. schools.

5. In rural U.P. schools, no significant changes occurred in enrolment of male and female students.

IV
DIFFERENTLY ABLE CHILDREN

Disability is such a condition, when a disabled person cannot perform an activity which normally most of the people can do. A person cannot be termed as disabled until he or she faces any difficulty in educational, social, professional or other fields (Sankalpa Jatra 2009-2010). Disability of children may be social, physical or mental. The physique of the individual is one of the means of satisfaction. If the physical disability underlies this unsatisfaction, it means that the individual is ―physically backward‖. If the child behaves in the way, which is not accepted by society to satisfy his needs, it is the case of social backwardness‘. In case the needs are threatened because of conflict between emotions, mind loses balance. This mental

disorder combined with the sense of fear gives rise to mental conflict and a loss of mental health. This is known as _mental backwardness‘. Physical disability is defined as those non -sensory physical limitations or health problems interfere with school attendance or learning to such an extent that especially services, training equipments, materials of facilities are required. For the special education it divides orthopedically handicapped and health impairments.

It is unfortunate to say that the physically disabled are considered somehow burden of the society whereas, it is true that they are the backbone on the builders of the new dimensional nation with the help of proper educational skill and training. The education commission of 1964-66 observes much potential talent is lost to the country through the inability of the educational system to discover in time.

According to motto of _Education for All‘, special education is required for the disabled children. In this connection, administrative recognition of physical handicapped person is required. In India different commissions and committees have suggested different ideas to solve this problem to identify the persons and their education. SSA has also taken different steps for the disabled children.

The National policy on Education 1986 clearly states: _the new policy lays special emphasis on the removal of the disparities and equalities, education opportunity by attending to the specific needs of those who have been denied equality‘. Constitution (86thAmendment) Act in 2002 made elementary education a fundamental right for all children of 6-14 years. With this background, Government of India launched a new scheme _Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan‘(SSA) in 2001-2002 while in Assam SSA was initiated in 2002-2003.

The data have been collected from five lower primary schools, six upper

primary schools and three composite schools. SSA activities during 2007-08 like manuscripts of textbooks on Braille for class-I and class-II were prepared with support from SCERT, Assam.

Twenty one days' remedial teaching programmme for CWSN was organized at Gaon Panchyat level through IE RTs and Volunteers during the month of July 2007 (News Letter April 2008). In Silchar Educational Block total 547 disabled children have identified though DISE 2012. At present, at lower primary school there are identified 18 disabled children and 7 disabled children at upper primary school have been identified. These are low vision, speech impairment, orthopedically impairment, learning disability, multiple disability, mental retardation and autistic children. In lower primary schools low vision are (5), speech impairment (3), orthopedically impairment (2), learning disability (2), mental retardation (3) and autistic (3) where as in upper primary school there are low vision (1), speech impairment (3), orthopedically impairment (1), learning disability (1) and mental retardation (1).

From above analysis the important patterns of social gap filling in education through the SSA intervention are as follows:

1. To minimize the social category gaps, SSA took different steps for special focus group, like minority, SC, ST groups etc. In comparison to pre SSA year (2002) the Muslim minority students' enrollment has increased during the SSA period in lower primary school. In L.P. schools, in the pre SSA year (2002), Muslim minority were 1.2% and SC were 15.8% but during the SSA period Muslim minority students increased to 3% and SC students increase to 21.7%. Likewise Muslim minority students, the SC students' enrollment has also increased. During the SSA period ST students began to enroll in lower primary schools.

2. In U.P. schools, in the pre SSA year(2002), Muslim minority were 65.7% and SC were 9.6% while during the SSA period the average of Muslim minority went up to 74.5% and SC students to 10.17%. In upper primary schools Muslim minority students' enrollment has also increased during the SSA period while a very less percentage was increased in the case of general students and SC students during SSA period. ST and OBC students' enrollment have also decreased. Especially in rural area OBC and SC students' enrollment has increased while general category students' enrollment has decreased. But in urban area general category students' have increased while SC, ST and OBC category students' enrollment has decreased trend. In urban area general population was more than SC population.
3. In composite schools Muslim minority students' enrollment has not increased. Again, the enrollment of SC students in rural area has increased. But in case of urban places general category students have increased. It is true fact that overall SC students' enrollment shows an increasing trend.
4. During the SSA period the enrollment was fluctuating due to communication, road condition, infrastructure condition etc. SSA worked through Jyoti Kendra in urban places and EGS centres in rural places for improving the enrollment rate during the period of SSA. Again, in some areas, due to road condition (flood affected) the enrollment rate of the specific school is found unsatisfactory..
5. Sarva shiksha Abhiyan has further expanded its activity programme for disabled children in variety of ways – Low vision—apart from continuing supply of Braille text books, periodically medical treatment and associated supply of spectacles etc. are done. However, low vision impaired students of

composite school is still out of their ambit. Further operation in selected cases is done in collaboration with Lions Club, Speech impairment—this category of students is supplied with hearing aids and provides treatment is carried out, orthopedic impairment—same situation persists with orthopedic impairment students. There is no special step like operation or physiotherapy is done and mental retardation and autistic—categories of learners are treated as well as medically operated in selected cases.

In sum, SSA intervention has increased the enrolment rate of children and to some extent SSA has succeeded to minimize the gender differences and social category gaps at elementary level of education. To minimize the gender differences SSA introduced Meena Club to ensure enrolment of all girl children in school. SSA made strategies for focus on the groups which includes the children from SCs, STs, minority groups, urban deprived children, children of the disadvantaged group and children with special needs. During the SSA period the enrolment as fluctuating due to communication, road condition, infrastructure condition etc. In lower primary school, in comparison of pre- SSA year (2002), the Muslim minority and SC students' enrolment has increased during the-SSA period. In upper primary schools, in comparison to pre-SSA year (2002), the Muslim minority students' enrolment has also increased during the SSA period whereas very less percentage has increased in the case of SC students. But in composite schools, the Muslim minority students have not significantly increased. Especially in the rural area SC students have increased. Due to the intervention of SSA numbers of students in total have obviously increased. However, so far as the quality is concerned it is still a matter of question. For quality education, regular teacher-training programme is essentially required. For the

improvement of enrollment of SC/ ST and minority students government and NGOs have initiate sufficient awareness programmes for guardians, parents for sending their children to schools. The Government and Non- Government Organisations should collect the information about SC/ ST and minority students. On the basis of this information they should contact with parents of children for sending their children to schools. In this connection NGOs can arrange awareness programmes and also they can monitor the students' as well as parents of the children by taking follow up programme. As per RTE Act, now, it becomes mandatory for all to send their children to schools. And Girls may be given more emphasis to complete the elementary stage of education. The girls' Education is also given first preference in the Chief Minister's Vision to reduce the gender & social gaps.