INTRODUCTION

A very famous and old Chinese adage says “Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime”.

Educating a person is far more important than giving alms. No country can ever think of progress and prosperity without educating its people. Education not only provides livelihood, but also opens up one’s mind to new thoughts, possibilities and opportunities. The contribution of our learned leaders during the freedom struggle is a classic example.

With a view to providing quality basic education to children all over the country within a definite time frame and thereby provide an opportunity for improving human capabilities to all children, the Government of India (GOI) launched the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in 2001 for universalisation of elementary education. As a further step in this direction, on 1st April 2010, our government created history by giving right of free and compulsory education to Indian children under the Right to Education Act. This is a very significant step in a country where nearly eight million children do not go to school. It is now a legally enforceable right granted to every child between six and fourteen years to demand free and compulsory education.

Now that the Act is in place, it is up to us, citizens in general and educational institutions in particular, to implement this law both in letter and in spirit for promoting the worthy cause of educating the poor and less privileged children. In the light of the above referred programmes launched by GOI, an attempt has been made to study the educational scenario in and around Mumbai with specific focus on elementary education. My research paper aims at studying in-depth, among others, the following objectives.

1. Effect of Government Schemes on Attendance and Retention of students particularly girl students.
2. Impact of teacher training programme.
3. Utilization of Teacher grant, School grant and maintenance grant under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.
5. Reasons behind “out of school” children in slums.
SCOPE:

Mumbai: Mumbai stretches from Dahisar (last suburb on Western Railway) to Mulund (last suburb on Central Railway). In this Population, Wards will be selected randomly, and some schools from Central Railway line and some from Western Railway line. From each of these wards some BMC schools will be selected. Thus sample of 30 schools will be studied for my objectives. It was observed that Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is implemented in large number of schools in District areas and other parts of Maharashtra. The Two neighbouring Districts namely Navi Mumbai and Thane are taken for study.

Navi Mumbai: After proper study of this area 20 schools will be selected by proportionate sampling method so that results will be unbiased to some extent.

Thane District: Thane District will be divided into Western line and Central line, from each line 10 schools will be selected randomly where Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is implemented. Selection of two Slums will also be by Random Sampling or Probability Sampling method. Also within the slums, families will be selected randomly. Teachers for interview will be selected randomly.

UTILITY

Universalization of Education assumes paramount significance to achieve goal of inclusive growth. The findings of my study will be useful to

1. BMC Education Department.
2. Navi Mumbai Municipality Education Department.
3. Thane District Education Department in devising appropriate responses at their end to achieve the objectives envisaged under SSA/RTEA.

In turn it will also be useful to State Education Department to decide ‘How more projects will be taken and run successfully?’

My study will also help NGOs in the Educational field to better channelize their resources and activities. Major part of Slums will also be benefitted. Semi-literate persons in Slums will be motivated for education. Teachers in various age groups will be motivated for doing minor projects, some innovative projects.

The study may generate further research in the area; research scholars may find the study informative and educative, which may lead to similar region specific studies being undertaken by them.
Limitations

Although the “Universalization of Education”, Right to Education Act, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is applicable to all over India, my study will be limited to Mumbai, Navi Mumbai and Thane District only. Also only primary schools and municipal schools will be covered from Education Department. The survey will be limited to only two Slums from Mumbai. Irrespective of size of slums, only around 50 families will be covered. The study will be limited to age group 6 to 14 only. Though the Central Government project covers the entire country, my study is confined to only certain parts of Maharashtra.