

Research Article

A Study on Perception of Community on The Quality of Education Provided Under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

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Abstract: The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), a flagship program of the Government of India, aims to universalize elementary education by improving access, equity, and quality of education. This study examines community perceptions of the quality of education provided under the SSA initiative, focusing on their awareness of the programs, satisfaction with the quality of education, and challenges in its implementation. The research adopts a mixed-methods approach, incorporating surveys and discussions with teachers and local stakeholders across various regions. The findings provide insights into the community's expectations, the perceived impact of SSA on student learning outcomes, and the role of infrastructural and pedagogical support in shaping their views. Based on these perceptions, the study highlights key recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of SSA, ensuring its alignment with the educational aspirations of the community.

Keywords: Community Perception, Quality of Education, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Educational Reform, Stakeholder Engagement

INTRODUCTION

Introduction of Research Area

Education is a fundamental right and a key driver of socio-economic development. In India, the government has taken significant steps to ensure that every child has access to quality education. One of the most notable initiatives is the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), launched in 2001, which aims to universalize elementary education for children aged 6 to 14 years. The primary objectives of SSA are to bridge the gender and social gaps in education, enhance enrolment rates, reduce dropout rates, and improve the overall quality of education. Despite these efforts, the perception of the community regarding the quality of education provided under SSA varies widely, which makes it crucial to study how these perceptions influence the success of the program. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) focuses on several key areas, including infrastructure development, teacher training, curriculum reform, and the implementation of technology in classrooms. It aims to create an inclusive education system where every child, regardless of their background, has access to a conducive learning environment. SSA also places a strong emphasis on providing free textbooks, uniforms, and midday meals to students, which are intended to improve both attendance and the learning outcomes of students. However, while the program has made significant strides in increasing enrolment, the quality of education remains a concern in many regions.

The perception of the community plays a crucial role in the success of educational initiatives like SSA. Community involvement and feedback are essential for understanding the actual impact of such programs. Perceptions are shaped

by various factors, including the availability of qualified teachers, the adequacy of educational resources, the effectiveness of the teaching methods, and the overall school environment. If the community perceives the quality of education as poor, it can lead to a lack of trust and engagement, which may ultimately affect students' learning outcomes. A study on community perception can provide valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the SSA program from the perspective of those it directly affects—parents, students, teachers, and other stakeholders. Understanding community perception also allows policymakers to make data-driven decisions that better align with the needs and expectations of the public. It encourages a participatory approach to educational reform, where the voices of the community are heard and considered. This can lead to targeted interventions that directly address the concerns of the community, ultimately leading to an improved quality of education. In conclusion, studying the perception of the community on the quality of education provided under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is vital for assessing the true impact of the program. It provides a comprehensive understanding of how the program is viewed by those it serves and offers a pathway for continuous improvement, ensuring that the goals of SSA are fully realized.

Introduction of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

The Government of India's flagship program, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), intends to achieve Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) within a set timeframe. This is mandated by the 86th amendment to the Indian Constitution, which declares free and compulsory education for children aged 6 to 14 a

fundamental right. To serve the needs of 192 million children in 1.1 million households across the nation, SSA is being implemented in collaboration with State Governments. By providing more classrooms, restrooms, drinking water, maintenance grants, and school improvement grants, the program aims to strengthen the infrastructure of existing schools and establish new ones in communities lacking educational facilities. Additional teachers are assigned to existing schools with a shortage of teachers, and the academic support system at a cluster, block, and district levels is being strengthened, along with comprehensive training and grants for the creation of teaching-learning resources. SSA aims to offer life skills along with high-quality elementary education. Girls' education and children with special needs are two areas that SSA is particularly focused on. Additionally, SSA aims to bridge the digital divide by offering computer education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- 1. Challenges in Universalisation of Elementary Education in India: An Analysis of SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan):** Education is key to societal progress, and initiatives like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (2001–02) and the Right to Education Act (2009) aim to ensure free, quality education for children in India. This study evaluates the challenges faced by SSA and proposes strategies to improve its effectiveness.
- 2. Empowering Women Through Education Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan for Promoting Girl Child Education in India:** Despite constitutional equality, many Indian women lack literacy skills, hindering their empowerment and societal participation. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), launched in 2001–02, aims to close gender gaps by providing quality education to children aged 6–14. In 2017, the SSA introduced the "ShaGun" portal to enhance teacher preparation and school quality, with a focus on girls' education and special needs students. This study examines the impact of SSA and ShaGun on girls' education.
- 3. Impact Of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan on The Quality of School Education:** This study examines the impact of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) on elementary schools in Patna, Bihar, using survey data from 2006–2017. It assesses students' reading and writing skills in math, English, and Hindi, employing basic statistical tools. Findings reveal increased enrolment but limited improvement in education quality.
- 4. Contribution Of Sarva Shiksha abhiyan To Primary Education:** The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) aims to provide community-driven, high-quality elementary education while bridging social and gender gaps. Using data from NSS (52nd Round) and NFHS I & II, this study explores educational access for children aged 6–14 across states. Focused on universalizing education, it emphasizes equal quality, positive interventions, and a fulfilling learning experience.

- 5. Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan – A Paradigm Shift in Preprimary Education:** Preschool education (ages 4–6) prepares children for formal schooling starting at age six. The ICDS program provides play-based learning through anganwadis. To enhance this, the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) integrates preschool to senior secondary education, aiming to strengthen anganwadis near primary schools, improve preschool quality, and expand services to underserved areas.
- 6. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan: Its Present Scenario in National Perspective:** India's unique socio-economic conditions require active community participation for the success of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). While access, enrolment, retention, and quality education are often seen as government and teacher responsibilities, community engagement is vital to address these challenges and achieve SSA's objectives.

OBJECTIVES

- To understand the community's awareness level on the Government initiative Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).
- To analyse the community's perception of the quality of education provided under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).
- To examine the level of community satisfaction with SSA.
- To gather suggestions from the community for improving the SSA program.

METHODOLOGY

- **Research Design:** The research type for the project will be Descriptive research. The research describes the perceptions of the community regarding the quality of education provided under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. It helps in capturing the current status and views of the community.
- **Research Approach:** The research approach is used is Qualitative as well as Quantitative for the research study.
- **Data collection Method:** The Project information is collected by Primary as well as Secondary Method of Data collection. Primary data is collected by structured questionnaire and secondary data collected by the Websites of government bodies like the Ministry of Education, SSA official portal.
- **Source of the Data:** The Data collection includes Community members such as parents, students and Teachers and school administrators under SSA. Secondary Sources are Reports and documents from SSA, Government publications and statistics.
- **Sample Population:** Participants such as parents, students and teachers.
- **Sample Size:** For surveys, a sample size of approximately 105 respondents is taken from the community.

- **Sample Technique:** For the research Snowball sampling technique is considered.
- **Data Collection Period:** From 15th September, 2024 to 15th October, 2024.
- **Statistical Tools:** Mean, median, mode, frequencies, and percentages to summarize the survey data. Chi-square test to compare perceptions across the community.

Hypotheses:

Hypothesis Test 1

Test would be Applied: Chi-Square Test

Null Hypothesis (HO): There is no association between Improvement in the overall quality of education by SSA and rating of the overall quality of education provided in schools under SSA in the community.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): There is an association between SSA has improved the overall quality of education and rating of the overall quality of education provided in schools under SSA in the community.

Hypothesis Test 2

Test would be Applied: Chi-Square Test

Null Hypothesis (HO): There is no association between education provided under SSA prepares students well for the future and recommending SSA schools to others in community.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): There is an association between education provided under SSA prepares students well for the future and recommending SSA schools to others in community.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Analysis of Primary Data

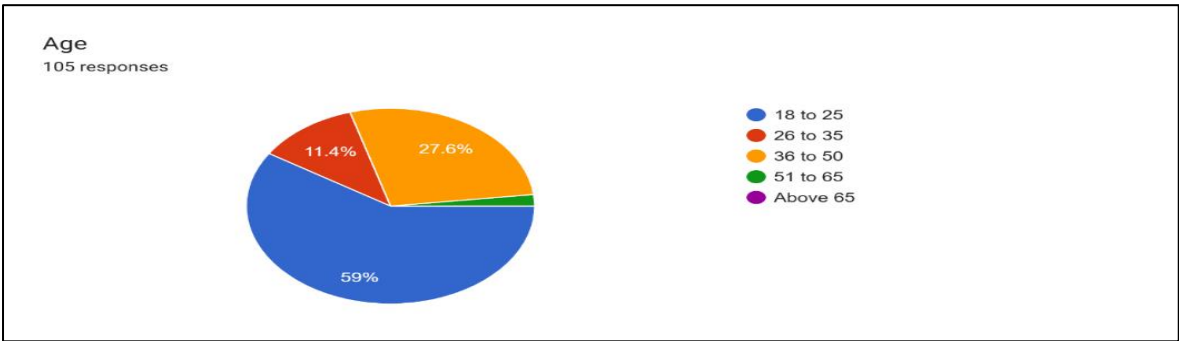


Chart No 01: Age

Interpretation: The age group of 18 to 25 comprises 59% of the total respondents. This suggests that younger respondents were drawn to the survey possibly as a result of the platforms used for reach or the survey's relevance.

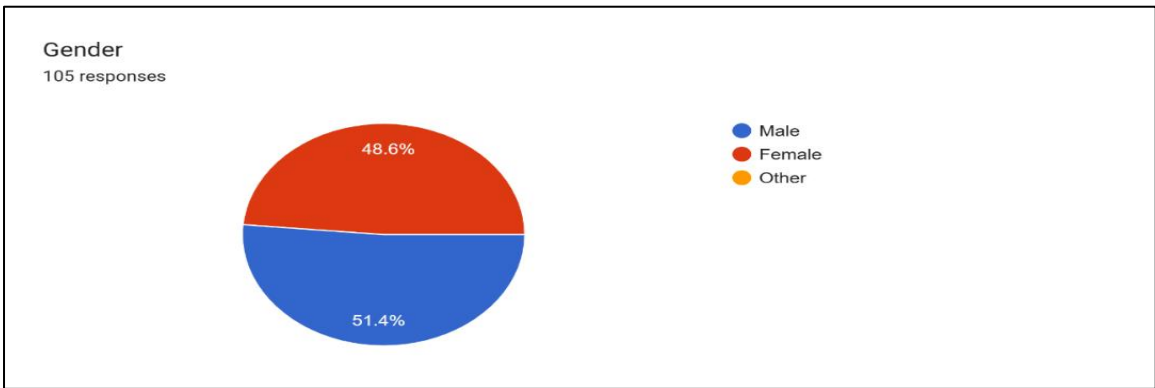


Chart No 02: Gender

Interpretation: 51.4% of respondents were men and 48.6% were women. This is the range of perspectives from both genders and no respondents identified as a different gender.

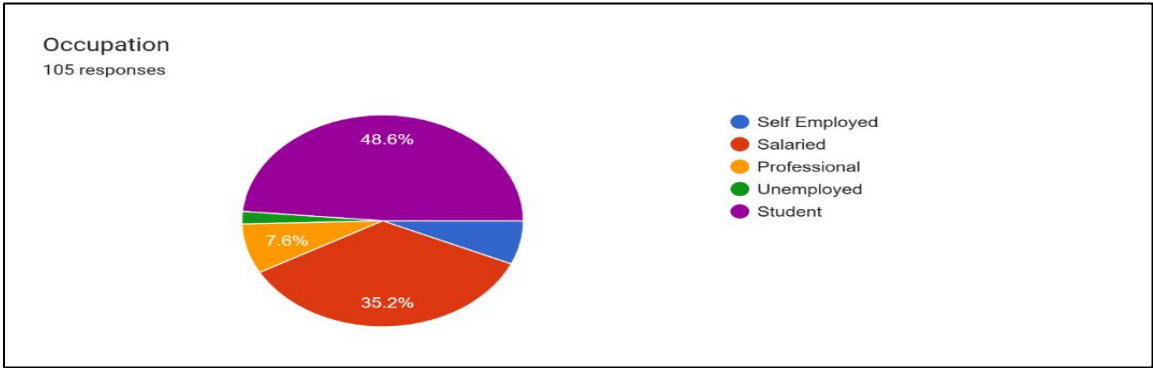


Chart No 03: Occupation

Interpretation: The majority, 48.6%, are students, are involved in academics. Salaried people are the second-largest group, with 35.2% of the total. Professionals are 7.6%, self-employed make up 6.7% and the unemployment rate among the respondents is an only 1.9%.

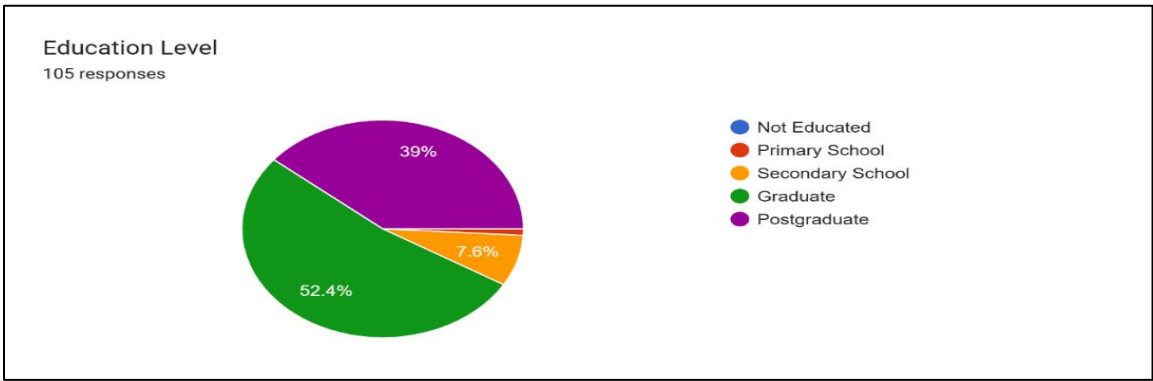


Chart No 04: Education level

Interpretation: The majority of the respondents have undergraduate degrees which is around 52.4%, whereas 39% have finished postgraduate degrees. Secondary school was chosen as the greatest level of education by 7.6% of respondents and 1% have completed primary schooling.

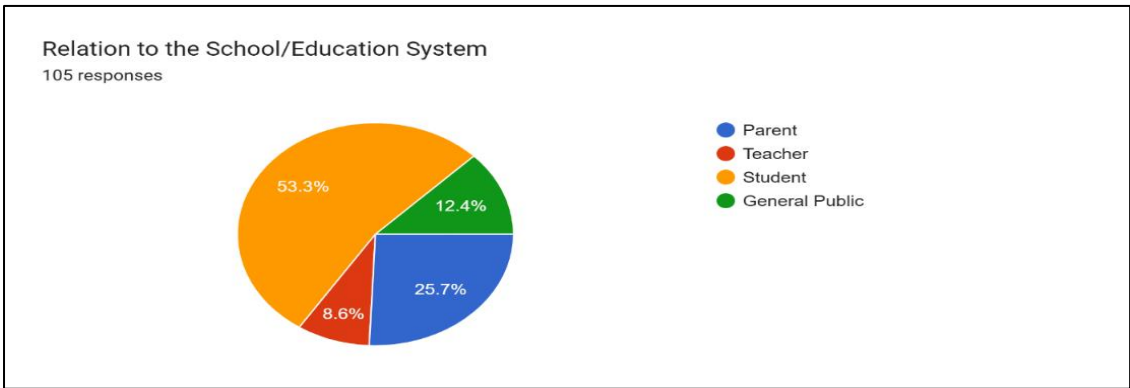


Chart No 05: Relation to the education system

Interpretation: 53.3% of the individuals are Students, parents are 25.7% of the total, 12.4% are teachers, and the remaining 8.6% are members of the general public.

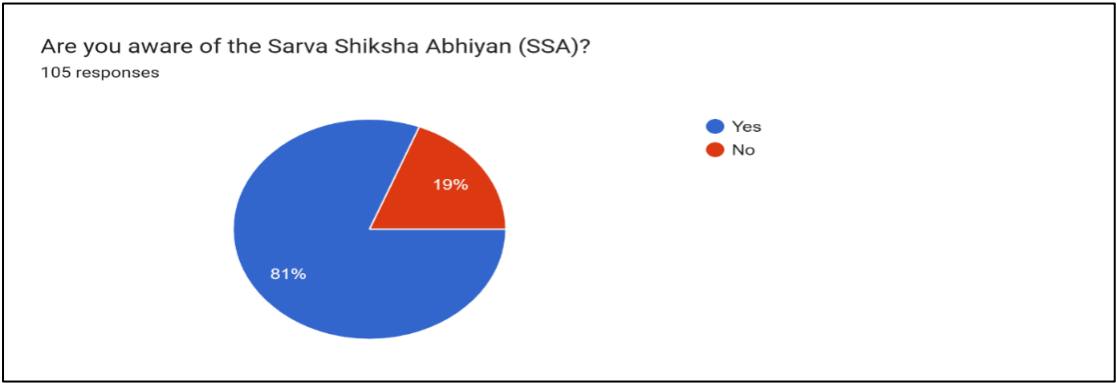


Chart No 06: Awareness of SSA

Interpretation: 81% of respondents, the majority, said they were not aware of the SSA of those surveyed, only 19% are aware of the program.

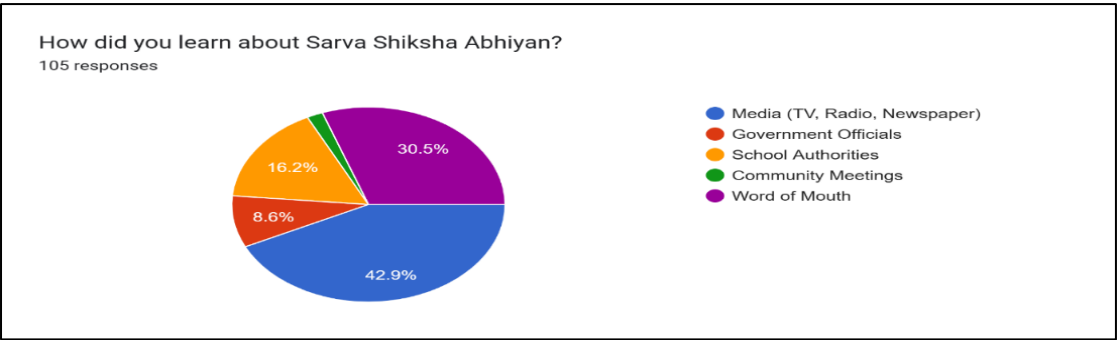


Chart No 07: Awareness Mode

Interpretation: The majority, 42.9%, learned about it through word of mouth. 30.5% were informed by media (TV, radio, newspapers). Government officials reached 16.2%, and school authorities informed 8.6%. Community meetings were the source for 1.8% of the respondents.

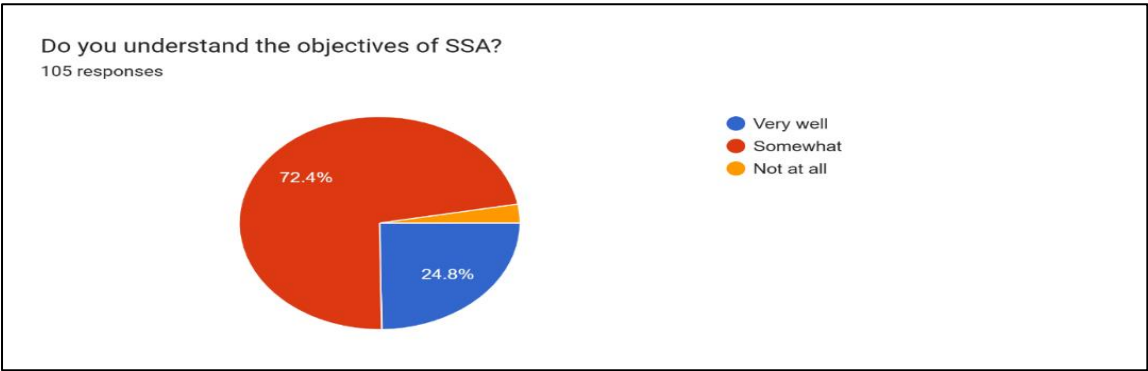


Chart No 08: Objective Awareness

Interpretation: The majority, 72.4%, have a very good understanding. 24.8% understand somewhat, and only 2.8% do not understand the objectives of SSA at all.

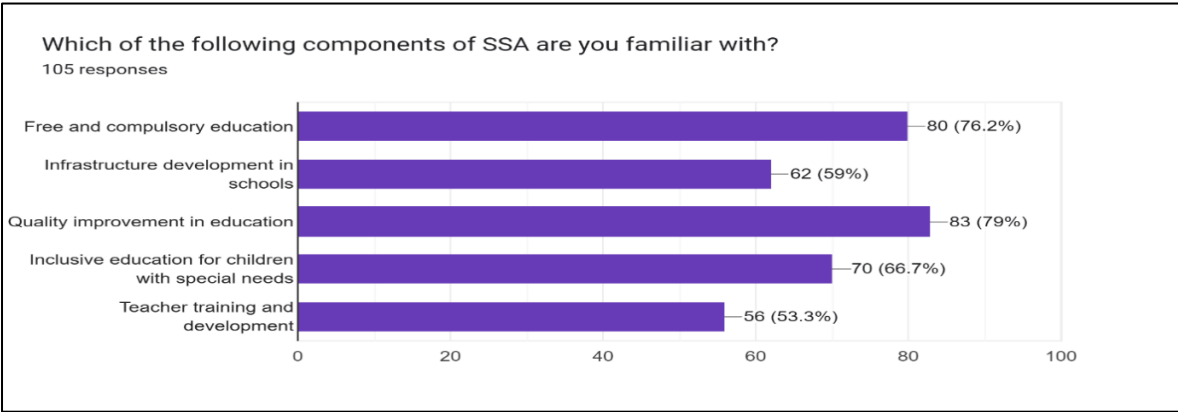


Chart No 09: Familiar Components

Interpretation: All the components mentioned are familiar with community where quality improvement in education is highest with 79% and 76.2% are familiar with the program's emphasis on free and compulsory education.

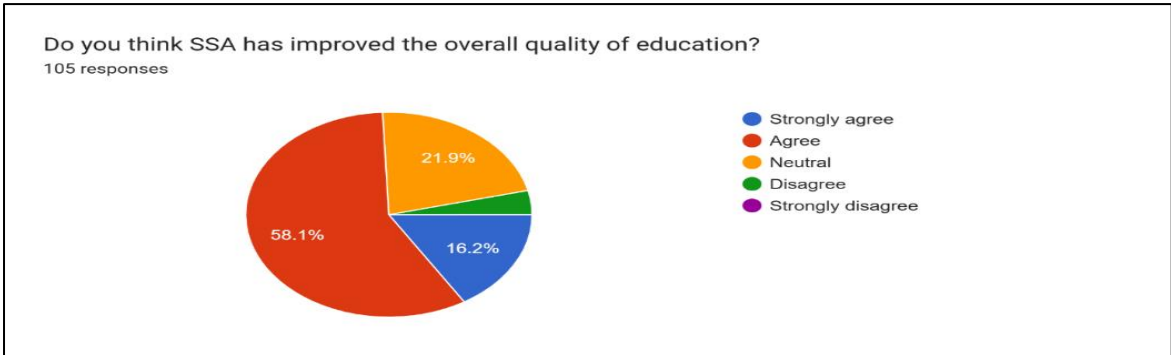


Chart No 10: Perception on quality of education

Interpretation: The majority, 58.1%, **agree** that SSA has improved the quality of education. 21.9% **strongly agree**. 16.2% are **neutral**, and only 3.8% **disagree** with the statement.

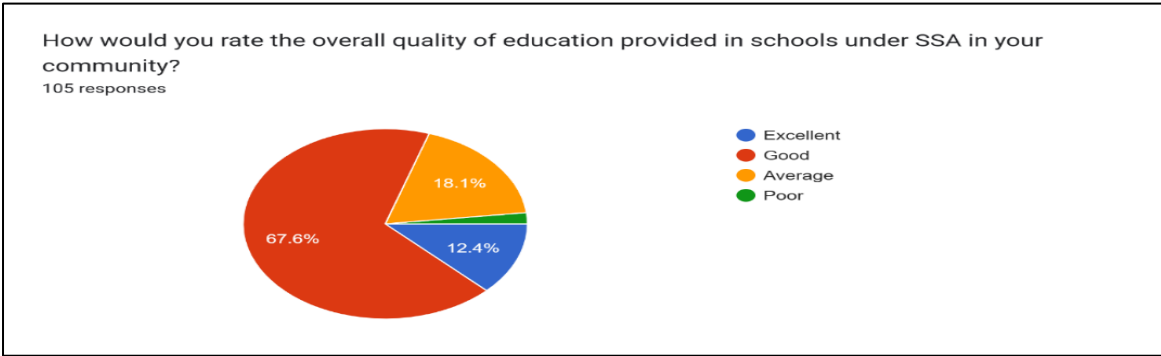


Chart No 11: Quality of Education

Interpretation: The majority, 67.6%, rate the quality as **good**. 18.1% consider it **excellent**. Only 12.4% find it **average**, and a small percentage of 1.9% rate it as **poor**.

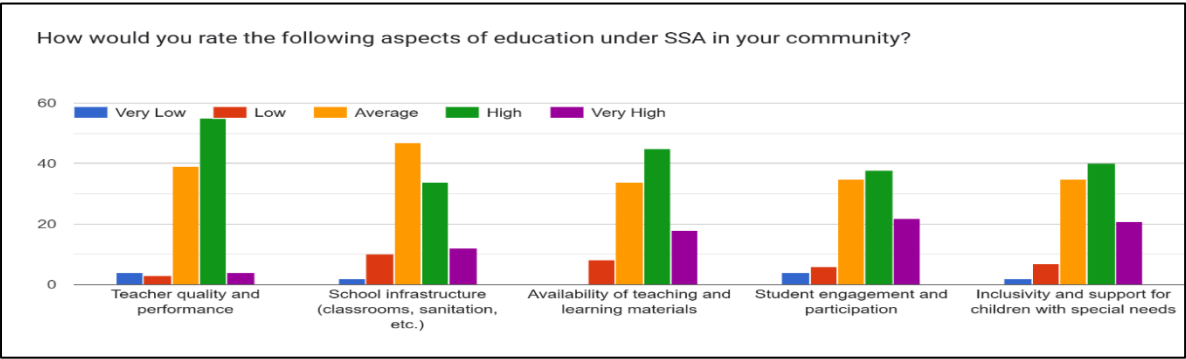


Chart No 12: Rating components

Interpretation: Most of the respondents has given average and high weightage to the teacher’s quality and performance and school infrastructure. The respondents have given almost average rating to the availability of teaching and learning materials. Student engagement and participation & inclusivity & support for children with special needs rated more than average.

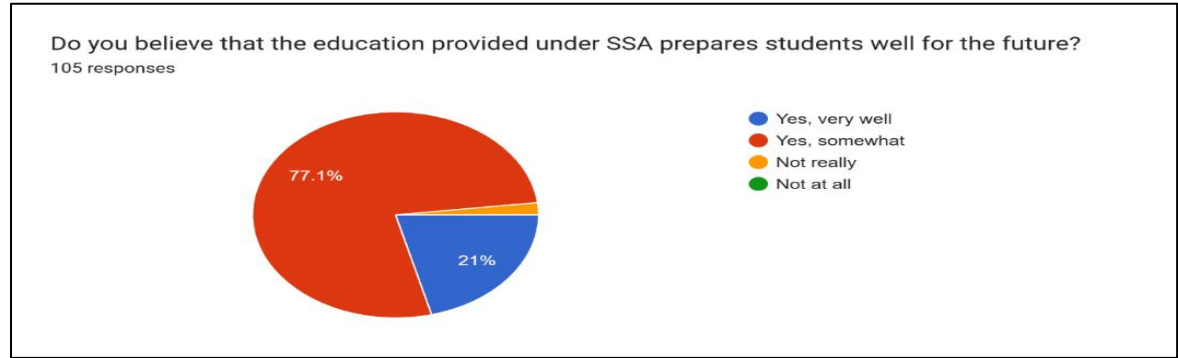


Chart No 13: Perception on Students future preparation

Interpretation: The majority, 77.1% respondents think that the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan prepares students well for the future, also 21% believe that its preparing students very well and less that 2% think that it is not really preparing well students.

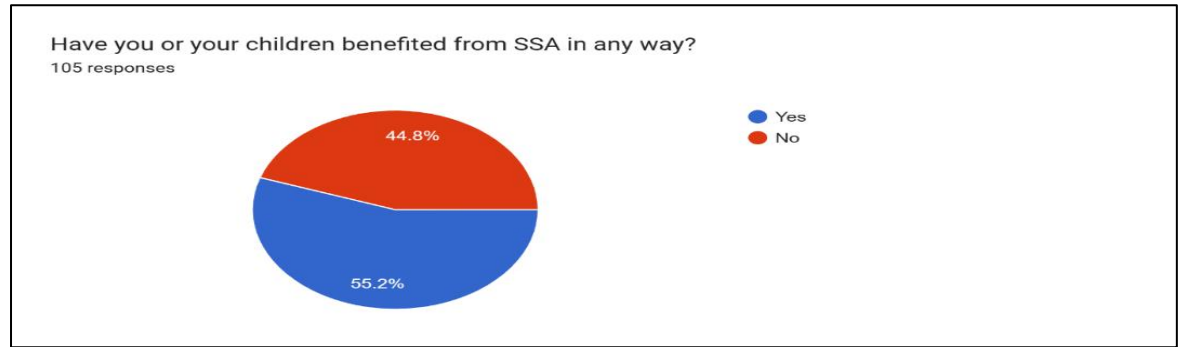


Chart No 14: Benefited from SSA

Interpretation: The majority respondents around 55.2% believe that they or their children have benefited with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

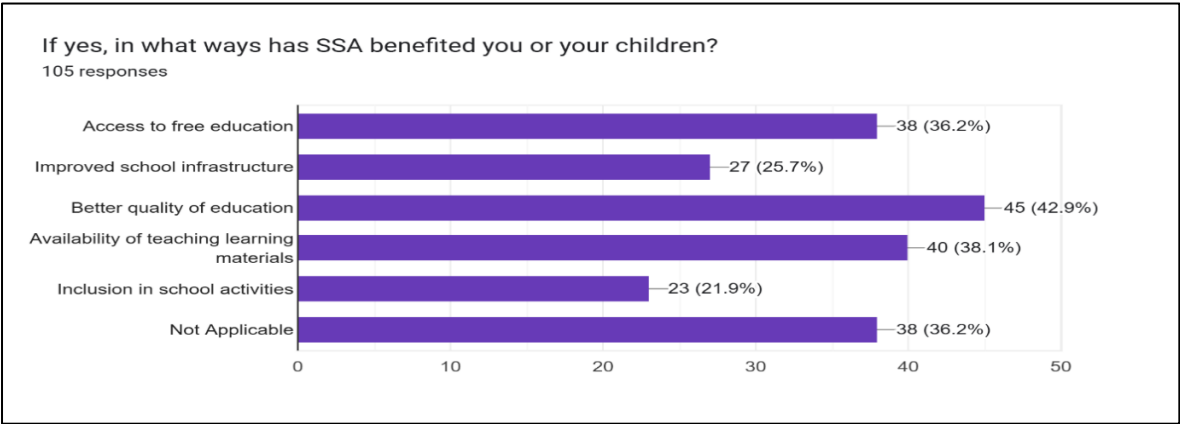


Chart No 15: Benefited from SSA

Interpretation: Those who have benefited from SSA stated They have benefited with the Access to free education, better quality of education and availability of teaching or learning materials which is approximately 40% of the respondents and approximately 25% have benefited with improved school infrastructure and inclusion in school activities.

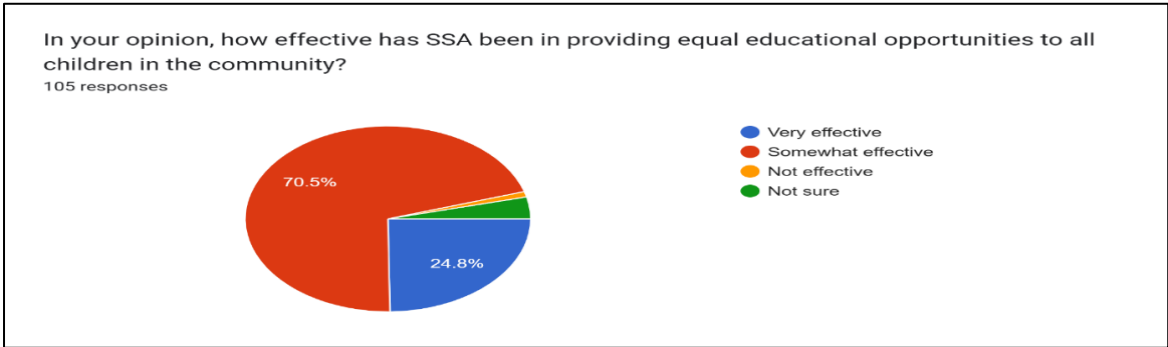


Chart No 16: Effectiveness in providing equal opportunities

Interpretation: Majority respondents around 70.5% and 24.8% think that SSA has been effective only minority group is not sure about effectiveness of providing equal educational opportunity to all children in community.

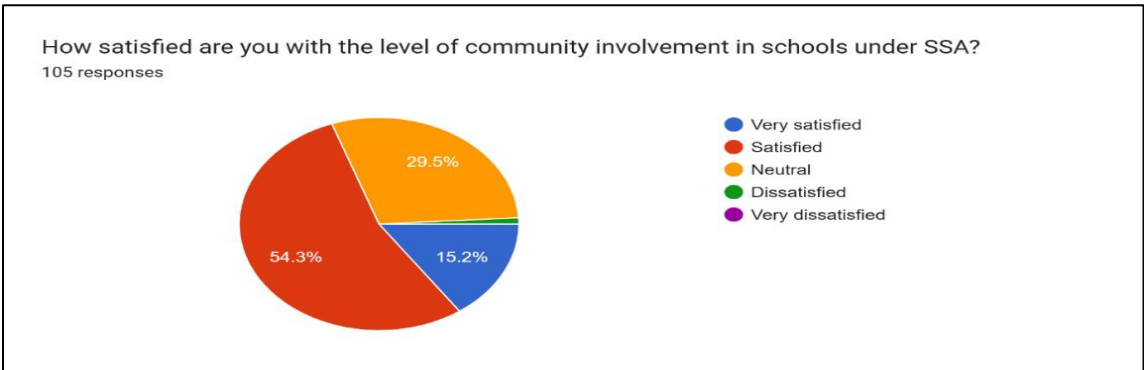


Chart No 17: Satisfaction with level of Community involvement

Interpretation: Majority respondents 54.3% are satisfied with the involvement, 15.2% are very satisfied where as 29.5% has responded neutral and 1% stated that they are dissatisfied.

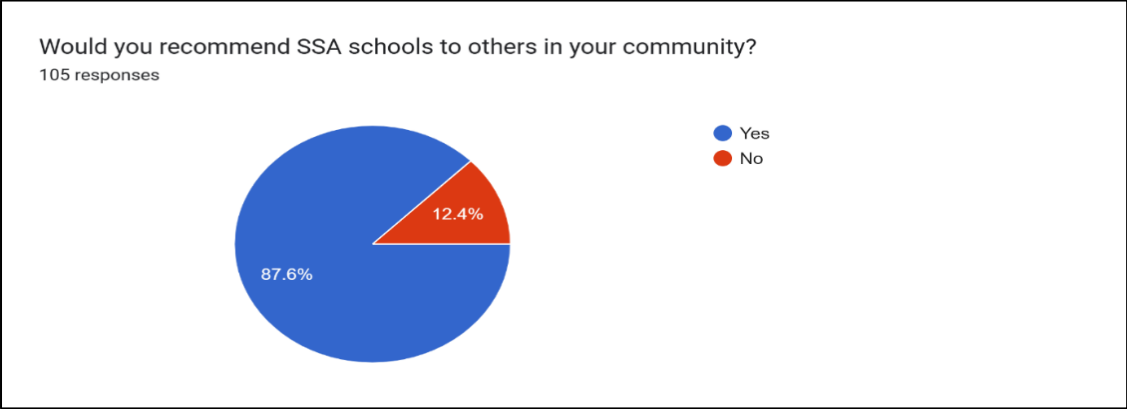


Chart No 18: Recommendation to Others

Interpretation: 87.6% of respondents responded they would recommend SSA Schools to community and 12.4% responded that they would not recommend.

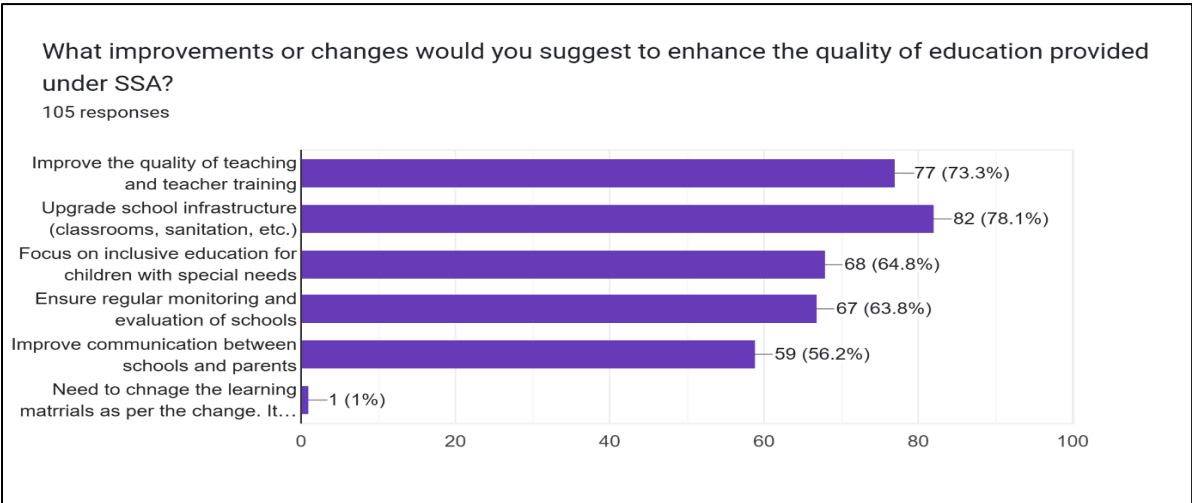


Chart No 19: Improvement or changes suggestions

Interpretation: Improvement suggested by most of the respondents are to improve the quality of teaching and teacher training which is around 73.3%, 78.1% respondents said to upgrade school infrastructure like classroom, sanitation, etc. 64.8% suggested to improve the inclusive education for children with special needs and 63.8% suggested to ensure regular monitoring and evaluation of schools, 56.2% said that to improve communication between schools and parents. Only 1% of the respondent suggested there is need to change the learning material as per the change which indicate that others are satisfied with the study materials.

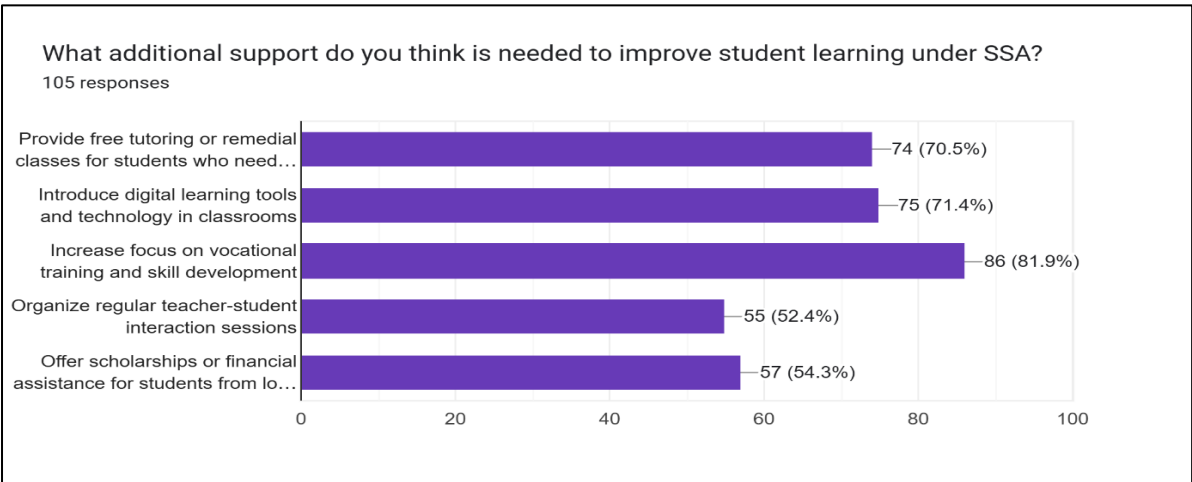


Chart No 20: Additional Support

Interpretation: Most of respondents around 70.5% suggested to Provide free tutoring or remedial classes for students who

need extra help around 71.4% suggested to Introduce digital learning tools and technology in classrooms for the students. 81.9% respondents suggested to Increase focus on vocational training and skill development for students for the active participation of the students. 52.4% suggested to Organize regular teacher-student interaction sessions and 54.3% suggested to Offer scholarships or financial assistance for students from low-income families.

HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis Testing 1

H₀(Null Hypothesis): There is no association between SSA has improved the overall quality of education and rating of the overall quality of education provided in schools under SSA in the community.

H₁(Alternative Hypothesis): There is an association between SSA has improved the overall quality of education and rating of the overall quality of education provided in schools under SSA in the community.

| Observed frequency | | | | | |
|---|---------------|-----------|------|------|-------------|
| Count of How would you rate the overall quality of education provided in schools under SSA in your community? | Column Labels | | | | |
| | Average | Excellent | Good | Poor | Grand Total |
| Agree | 4 | 3 | 53 | 1 | 61 |
| Disagree | 3 | | | 1 | 4 |
| Neutral | 12 | | 11 | | 23 |
| Strongly agree | | 10 | 7 | | 17 |
| Strongly disagree | | | | | 0 |
| Grand Total | 19 | 13 | 71 | 2 | 105 |

Table No 01: Hypothesis 1 Observed frequency

| Expected frequency | | | | | |
|---|---------------|-----------|------|------|-------------|
| Count of How would you rate the overall quality of education provided in schools under SSA in your community? | Column Labels | | | | |
| | Average | Excellent | Good | Poor | Grand Total |
| Agree | 11 | 8 | 41 | 1 | 61 |
| Disagree | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 4 |
| Neutral | 4 | 3 | 16 | 0 | 23 |
| Strongly agree | 3 | 2 | 11 | 0 | 17 |
| Strongly disagree | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Grand Total | 19 | 13 | 71 | 2 | 105 |

Table No 02: Hypothesis 1 Expected frequency

Test Applied: Chi-Square Test

Significance Level (Alpha): 0.05

P-Value: 0.000000000197016

Analysis: Since P value is less than the alpha value, so we reject the null hypothesis. This indicate that there is an association between SSA has improved the overall quality of education and rating of the overall quality of education provided in schools under SSA in the community.

Hypothesis Testing 2

H₀ (Null Hypothesis): There is no association between education provided under SSA prepares students well for the future and recommending SSA schools to others in community.

H₁ (Alternative Hypothesis): There is an association between education provided under SSA prepares students well for the future and recommending SSA schools to others in community.

| Observed frequency | | | |
|--|---------------|-----|-------------|
| Count of Do you believe that the education provided under SSA prepares students well for the future and Would you recommend SSA schools to others in your community? | Column Labels | | |
| Row Labels | No | Yes | Grand Total |
| Not at all | | | 0 |
| Not really | 2 | | 2 |
| Yes, somewhat | 11 | 70 | 81 |
| Yes, very well | | 22 | 22 |
| Grand Total | 13 | 92 | 105 |

Table No 03: Hypothesis 2 Observed frequency

| Expected frequency | | | |
|--|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| Count of Do you believe that the education provided under SSA prepares students well for the future and Would you recommend SSA schools to others in your community? | Column Labels | | |
| Row Labels | No | Yes | Grand Total |
| Not at all | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Not really | 0.247619048 | 1.752380952 | 2 |
| Yes, somewhat | 10.02857143 | 70.97142857 | 81 |
| Yes, very well | 2.723809524 | 19.27619048 | 22 |
| Grand Total | 13 | 92 | 105 |

Table No 04: Hypothesis 2 Expected frequency

Test Applied: Chi-Square Test

Significance Level (Alpha): 0.05

P-Value: 0.00487211

Analysis: Since P value is less than the alpha value, so we reject the null hypothesis. This indicate that there is an association between education provided under SSA prepares students well for the future and recommending SSA schools to others in community.

FINDINGS

- SSA has significantly increased enrolment, particularly among girls and minority groups. While infrastructure improvements have been made, challenges remain in service distribution, absenteeism, and teacher quality, especially in rural areas. Despite progress, further work is needed to enhance program relevance, teacher quality, and equitable access to quality education.
- The study found that 81% of respondents were aware of the SSA program. The main sources of awareness were word of mouth (42.9%) and media (30.5%), which were key in spreading information about SSA.
- There is a generally positive perception of the educational quality provided by SSA, with 58.1% of respondents agreeing that SSA has enhanced educational standards. Additionally, 67.6% rated the quality of education as good or excellent, although certain areas needing improvement.
- Satisfaction levels indicate that 55.2% of respondents feel they have benefitted from SSA initiatives, especially in terms of free education

access and improved learning resources. This suggests that the community appreciates SSA's efforts, though they also see room for targeted improvements.

- Respondents recommended enhancing SSA by introducing digital tools, vocational training, and improving teacher-student interactions to maximize its impact. These additions will make SSA more adaptable to evolving educational needs and increasing its effectiveness.

SUGGESTIONS

- Few people are still unaware of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, using various awareness modes such as digital platforms, social media, and local events can help to spread awareness.
- 73.3% of the respondents suggested to improve the quality of teaching and providing training to the teachers, this can be improved by providing workshops, digital education tools and modern teaching methods to the teachers
- The majority of respondents 78.1% believe that classrooms, technology, and sanitation need to be

improved. collaborating with businesses or non-governmental organizations could help pay for these improvements.

- SSA should provide more inclusive resources to help kids with special needs. improving inclusion in schools can be achieved through individualized education plans, specialized teacher training, and easily accessible materials for learning.
- Particularly for students from low-income families, free tutoring or remedial classes could help to reduce learning gaps by supporting students who are having difficulty in particular areas of study.

LIMITATIONS

- The study is conducted on responses collected i.e., primary data which only included 105 respondents who represent the whole population depending on a small number of populations for the research is won't give a correct picture of the entire population.
- The research outcomes depend on the responses given by the respondents which can be biased as per individual's perceptions towards the service.
- The respondents selected only belong to the Mumbai region geographical area is limited to represent the whole Indian population.
- Responses given can be given as per the knowledge of the respondents and respondents may lack the knowledge of the product.

FUTURE SCOPE

- Future studies can investigate the long-term effects of SSA by looking at community educational levels and student performance over a period of time.
- Future research could also assess how the program affects economically disadvantaged and backward class people as well as how well different awareness campaigns raise public awareness of SSA.
- Expanding the study to include a larger and more diverse population would give a clearer view of SSA's strengths and areas for improvement.
- It will also be helpful to conduct research on how teachers' roles are changing and how better training affects student outcomes.
- Lastly, researching collaborations between the public and private sectors will suggest opportunities to increase SSA's resources, particularly in the areas of infrastructure and digital education, which will encourage its expansion and sustainability.

CONCLUSION

The impact of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) on access and quality of education is positively received, according to the survey. Many respondents believe that SSA has made significant progress in providing high-quality education,

encouraging equal opportunities and preparing students for the future. Those who are familiar with SSA recognize its advantages in promoting equality in education. Improvements in school facilities, learning materials, and participation in school activities were mentioned by respondents. They also highlight issues such as insufficient training for teachers, poor facilities, and the requirement for improved parent-teacher communication. Although SSA has generally improved education in India, specific advancements in these areas might increase its effects and make it a more durable and effective scheme.

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