

AWARENESS AMONG PARENTS ABOUT RIGHT TO EDUCATION ACT 2009

Simardeep Kaur

Abstract

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 is a legislation passed by the Indian Parliament that has come into effect from 1st April, 2010. It is based on the 86th amendment in the Constitution through which an Article 21 (A) was inserted after Article 21 of the Constitution. The Article 21 (A) states that the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age group of six to fourteen years. The parents should be aware about their responsibility on their children so that the children will get the benefits and get educated. A study conducted on parental awareness on RTE Act 2009, whose children are studying in government schools of Patiala city. A descriptive design was followed for the sample of 50 parents through simple random sampling. An interview schedule on awareness of parents on Right to Education act 2009 was prepared. The study results shows that the levels of awareness on RTE act among these parents are low. There is a need of intervention to improve the awareness level as well as the enrollment in the schools.

Keywords: Parents, Right to Education, Government schools.

Quality education equips people with the knowledge skills and self- reliance they need to increase income and expand opportunities for employment. Therefore, education gives people a voice and it increases a nation's productivity and competitiveness and is instrument for social and political progress. If we look back in the educational history of India, we will find that loads of efforts have been made to universalize the Elementary Education in India.

Article 45, Article 30 and 350 are remarkable steps in the way of Universalization of elementary education (UEE). Apart from these efforts various commissions like Indian Education Commission (1964-66) has recommended common school system and Equalization of educational opportunity to all. Then came the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1968. This policy was first official document evidencing the Indian Government commitment towards school education. Further, in the improved version of NPE (1992) the target of Universal Elementary Education was extended, but again the next century started before the target could be achieved After

that government had started various schemes, project and programmes to Universalization of elementary education, Mid-Day Meal scheme, OB (Operation Blackboard) scheme, Minimum Learning Level, Lok Jumbish (People's mobilisation) were also introduced. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (2000) was formulated as an umbrella scheme for central funding of universalization of elementary education through a time bound integrated approach, in partnership with state. From Article 45 to Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan we are continuously fighting for the universalisation of elementary education, but due to some reasons fails to achieve the goal. In 2002 by passing the 86th Amendment Act, Education become a fundamental right under article 21A of Indian constitution. This very act aimed to universalize improved quality of education for the children in India aged between 6-14. So what we see that, journey of Education is very heart throbbing because still India is too far from the goal. After that, Government of India passed Right to Education Act, 2009. It fostered as a new spirit of hope that millions of children in India would benefit from its legally

Research Scholar, Department of Education and Community Services, Punjabi University Patiala

binding compulsion on the state to deliver elementary education to all children in the 6-14 age group. Moreover, the Right to Education Act has defined standards of quality for all schools in terms of infrastructure of classrooms facilities and teacher qualifications as well as inclusiveness.

After reviewing the related literature, it was found that the picture in India regarding the implementation of Right to Education Act 2009 is very bleak, as Vallay and Ramadiro revealed that, nine years the democracy was established, the right to education still remain a right on paper, not fully enjoyed by many. In practice, the right to basic education is dependent on one's social class background and the ability to pay for education. The right of poor people to basic education and equality is being violated in different ways. Gosai also concluded that, due to the paucity of funds with the government for allotment under the Act, substantial public-private participation in primary education should be considered, which would be welcome. Since education is a concurrent subject, some unambiguous guidelines are required, in this regard, for the success of the proposed legislation. No doubt, lots of efforts have been made by Central and State government, but still lots to be done in this field. No doubt India is in the race to become developed country and trying to copying the West. But India has a different story. The policies were introduced prematurely without first improving the basic infrastructure required for such a policy. Punjab being one of the prosperous states in India also failed to some extent in implementing Right to Education Act, as said by Ghai that 36% Punjab School Education Board (P.S.E.B.) fail to file information on Right to Education Act, 2009 (RTE). Out of the total 2,999 affiliated schools, 1,920 have responded to the notice by the board. The board authorities have now decided to hold a meeting to decide on affiliation to the defaulting schools. Chengappa also reported the survey conducted by the researchers of Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, has painted a grim picture of school education in Punjab at least 33 % of rural students dropped at the matriculation level. The quality of education also suffers due to a shortage of and

absenteeism among teachers. Behera, "A Study of the Problems of Primary Education in Keonjhar Districts". He found that external causes of drop out in order i.e. from major to minor are: poverty, parents illiteracy, parental indifferent attitudes towards education and lack of interest, lack of achievement motivation among children, differentiation of sexes by parents, class and cast distinction in the society and unwillingness of parents to send grown-up girls to school. The internal causes of drop out in order i.e. from major to minor are defective curriculum (unrelated to life), poor school programme, inadequate number of teachers, single teacher schools, inadequate physical facilities, defective teaching methods and evaluation, language difficulty for tribal children, inadequate women teachers and over crowded classes. Although State Government of Punjab putting efforts for the proper implementation of this Act. But still fail to achieve the target. This very situation motivated me to find out the reasons, why this state failed to implement seriously the Right to Education Act, 2009?

- Is there lack of awareness among stakeholders?
- Are the elementary schools providing quality education?
- What efforts have been made to make this education effective in order to curb dropout rate and increase enrolment in schools?

OBJECTIVE

To examine awareness and understanding of the provisions of RTE amongst parents of children studying in government schools in Patiala city.

METHOD

DESIGN

In the present study descriptive survey method was employed. It was used in order to explore awareness of the RTE Act among parents.

SAMPLE

By using random sampling method 50 parents whose children are studying in the government schools were contacted.

MEASURES

A self-made interview schedule was developed by the Researcher related to issues and problems in RTE.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Information from Parents based on Important Provisions Provided in the RTE Act

Sl No		Yes	No
1	Free education for the children enrolled in elementary education in Govt. Schools	50 (100%)	0 (0%)
2	Enrollment of all children within three	45 (85%)	8 (5%)
3.	Availability of one class room for each class	35 (70%)	15 (30%)
4.	Availability of Play ground in the school	15 (32%)	35 (70%)
5.	Neat and clean environment of school	19 (38%)	31 (62%)
6.	Availability of one teacher per class	28 (56%)	22 (44%)
7.	Regularity of the classes	33 (62%)	17 (34%)
8.	Satisfaction with the teaching methods	26 (49%)	24 (48%)
9.	Satisfaction with the attention given by the teachers	21 (42%)	29 (58%)
10.	Happiness of the child in going to school	30 (60%)	20 (40%)
11.	Principal and teachers motivating non-enrolled students to go to school.	16 (30%)	37 (70%)

From the findings presented in the above Table -1, it is evident that all parents are aware of free elementary education in the government school. Around 85% parents feel that all children within three kilometers radius are availing free elementary education. On the other hand the key findings as reported by the parents are: most of the schools do not have play grounds and the school environment is not neat and clean. 44% of the parents say schools do not have one teacher per class which is one of the important conditions for the quality education. It has been reported by the parents that classes are not regularly held (34%). When further explored to find out the reasons for the irregular classes, they said irregularity of the teachers, some teachers come to the school on alternate days, less number of teachers, inadequate teachers for teaching all subjects, as many students do not come regularly, teachers also do not come regularly etc. Around 48% parents are found to be not satisfied with the

teaching methods adopted in the schools. The suggestions offered by the parents to make teaching methods effective are use of visual aids, regular class tests, continuous feedback to the parents, sufficient lab equipments, computer classes, regular classes, adequate teachers for all subjects, special coaching to the students, outside visits, quizzes, natural learning, project and vocational work for the students. As far as the attention given to the students is concerned, 58% of the parents are in opinion that they are not satisfied with the attention given by the teachers. Parents feel that teachers just teach and do not interact with the students, no exercise is given to the students, teachers give less importance to the academic work, inadequate teachers, new and inexperienced teachers and teachers with no proper training, are some of the reasons for lack of proper attention to the students. 40 % of the parents say that their children are not satisfied with the school. The

reasons cited by them are ; schools have no proper infrastructure, inadequate teachers, no electricity, no furniture, no proper teaching, unhealthy environment, no curricular activities etc. When asked whether principals and teachers use to motivate the non-enrolled children to take admission in the schools, around 70% of the parents said no.

ANALYSIS OF THE INFORMATION AS REPORTED BY THE PARENTS

According to the results presented in table-1, all parents are well aware that free elementary education is offered in the government school. They are all in the opinion that all children residing within three kilometers are availing elementary education. Similar to the head masters and school teachers, parents also say majority schools in the sample do not have boundary. Further, majority parents say one class room is available for each class in the schools.

It is important to note that majority parents are dissatisfied with the cleanliness of the schools; in appropriate teaching methods followed in the schools; attention given by the teachers to the children; regularity of classes. They are also in opinion that principals and teachers are not taking adequate steps for motivating children to enroll in the schools.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS:

- The finding shows that the RTE act cannot be properly implemented without the awareness of parents. Orientation programmes for parents and guardians should be arranged at different levels.
- Consistent monitoring were important for the success of this Act. If the RTE Act is not implemented properly then the children won't be benefited. The elected members are not aware about the RTE acts. Therefore, government officers and local authorities should take initiatives for the awareness programs.
- The potential of the RTE depends a great deal on the advocacy and mobilization campaigns initiated by government, and the ability of parents and children to understand and exercise their new role relationships as far as elementary education is concerned. Some of the parents are sending to private school and paying fees

without knowing the 25% reservation according RTE act.

- Use awareness through mass media like Television, Radio, advertisements, banners, pamphlets, and newspapers. Training to elected members of village panchayaths.

REFERENCES

- Aziz, M. G. (2013). Awareness of Right to Education Act among Urban Slum. *Advanced International Research Journal of Teacher Education*, 29-35.
- Akhtar H., S. (2007). Parents' Responsibility towards Children. *The Treatise on Right*, 1-2.
- Chengappa, R. (E.I.C) (2011). *Government schools in neglect*. The Chandigarh Tribune, July 15, p. 10.
- Government of India (2009). *The gazette of India*. New Delhi: Published by MHRD.
- Ghai, A. (2012). *36% PSEB schools fail to file info on Right to education*. The Chandigarh Tribune, August 2, p. 3.
- Gosai, M.R. (2009). The recent right to education and the present state of primary education. *University News*, 47(47), 1-6.
- Gill, R. (2013). *Right education –Time for Punjab to up the target*. The Tribune, Chandigarh, February 15, p. 10.
- Akhtar H., S. (2007). Parents' Responsibility towards Children. *The Treatise on Right*, 1-2.
- Simmons, B. & Lawrence, P. S. (1981). Beginning reading welcoming parents. *Childhood Education*, 156-159.
- S, O. S. (2013). Implementing Right to Education: Issues and challenges. *Research Journal of Educational Sciences*, 1-7.
- Uma (2013). Right to Education (RTE): A Critical Appraisal. *Journal Of Humanities And Social Science*, 55-60.
- Vally, S. & Ramandiro, B. (2006). *Children's right to basic education*. Retrieved from <http://www.erp.org.za/htm/letter1.htm>.

Webliography

- <http://www.crin.org/docs/Coomans-Core Content-Right%20to%20Education CRC.pdf>.
- <http://www.unesco.org/.../education/.../right>.