



Key Role of Teachers: in Implementing RTE Act-2009

Dr. Mahesh Kumar Muchhal

Associate Professor, Department of Education, Digamber Jain. College , Baraut Baghpat

Chhotu Ram

Research Scholar, Department of Education Digamber Jain. College , Baraut Baghpat

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”

-Nelson mandela

For an illiterate person, things which are right sometimes may go wrong, just because he is lack of the powerful weapon –Education For today’s world, the one who earns is the one with power. And even if a person do lot of things, he/she will not be said to be accountable till the time it brings profit. As of now, I wish, all the citizen of my country to be educated so that they could contribute the nation’s wealth and economy and can be confident persons indeed. Because education just don’t bring knowledge to you but it also blesses you with self confidence which makes you realize about your own self importance. Thus, it can be said that education is the integral part of growth and development of every individual as well as nation. The role of education in facilitating social and economic progress is well recognized. Education is both a human right in itself and a means for realizing and promoting other human rights. The children have the Right to Education because education is the only key to open the lock of all hidden potential, sharpens their innate abilities and converts them into responsible citizens. It is therefore, there is need to put emphasis on education aspect to build the capacity of the nation to its fullest The recently enacted Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 in India is an important step and defining event in that direction.

India is a largest democratic country with 1.21 crores people (Census Report of India, 2011). But 42.1% of people are still suffering from inequality in education here (United Nations Development Programme - UNDP, 2014). It brings a major fall in the position of India (India’s HDI Rank-135) than the other developed countries in respect to Human Development Index (HDI) (UNDP, 2010). After 69 years of independence, India is still unable to provide satisfactory level of education to its all citizens. According to the Indian Census Report (2011), only 74.04 % people are literate in India. It means that almost 25.96% people are illiterate in our country. In this background, the Right to Education Act (2009) has taken by the Indian Government is a historical and significant initiative.

Historical Background

Right to Education Act (RTE), is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted on 4 August 2009, which states “free and compulsory education for children between 6 and 14 in India under Article 21A of the Indian constitution. India became one of 135 countries to make education a fundamental right of every child, when the act came into force on 1 April 2010. This Act has its history in the drafting of the Indian constitution at the time of Independence in Article 45, which

stated that the state shall endeavour to provide free and compulsory education to all children until they complete the age of fourteen years within a period of ten years. The 86th Constitutional amendment making education a fundamental right in article 21 was inserted in constitution and passed by Parliament in 2002. But this act needed a legislation to describe the mode of its implementation. For it a rough draft of the bill was made in 2005. After so many oppositions and discussions this bill was revised

and became an Act in August, 2009. It came into force from April 1, 2010. This day has become important and historic for India as from that day the Right to education received the legal status. It serves as a building block to ensure that every child has his or her right to get quality education irrespective of race, gender, religion, age or disability.

Fundamental Provisions under the RTE Act -2009

The Right to Education Act is a piece of legislation which includes provisions related to schools, teachers, curriculum, evaluation, access and specific division of duties and responsibilities of all concerned.

- Every child from 6 to 14 years of age shall have the right to free and compulsory education in a neighborhood school till completion of elementary education.
- All Private schools shall provide 25 percent reservation for children of weaker sections and economically disadvantaged groups.
- It also prohibits all unrecognized schools from practice, and makes provisions for no donation or capitation fees and no interview of the child or parent for admission.
- The Act also provides that no child shall be held back, expelled, or required to pass a board examination until the completion of elementary education. There is also a provision for special training of school drop-outs to bring them up to par with students of the same age.
- Right of child to seek transfer to any other school
- Prohibition of holding back and expulsion of child
- No child is denied admission because of lack of proof of age

- Formulating standards and norms for school management committees
- All schools except government schools are required to meet all specified norms and standards within three years to avoid cancellation of their recognition.
- The Act calls for a fixed pupil-teacher ratio, i.e., 30:1.
- The Act mandates improvement in quality of education.
- Financial burden will be shared between Central and State Governments

Education in the Indian constitution is a concurrent issue and both centre and states can legislate on the issue. The Act lays down specific responsibilities for the centre, state and local bodies for its implementation.

‘4A’ Framework of RTE Act-2009

The various aspects of the Act have been analyzed using the 4A framework (availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability) developed by former UN Special Reporters on the Right to Education Act 6, Katarina Tomasevski. This framework allows development of an enhanced understanding of its key features and their application.

Availability: This metric of the 4A framework requires education to be free and funded by the Government. Government is responsible to make available the adequate infrastructure and other requirements for achieving the goal of this act.

Accessibility: This metric of the 4A framework requires development of a non-discriminatory system with measures to include the most marginalized.

Acceptability: The metric requires development of quality content, which is non-discriminatory, relevant and culturally appropriate in nature. It also requires that a school is safe and teachers are professional.

Adaptability: The metric requires that the education system is able to adapt to the changing needs of society and fight social inequalities such



as gender discrimination as well as local issues and contexts. This implies that education should be flexible and respond to the needs and abilities of its students, meet their best interests and adapt to different contexts.

Teachers Role in Success of RTE act

The successful implementation of RTE Act majorly depends on teachers. According to RTE rules, children have the right to at least one qualified and trained teacher for 30 students. After five years of its implementation still the ratio is not appropriate. Currently, there is about one teacher for every 34 students. Around 1.2 million additional teachers need to be recruited to fill this gap. Furthermore, today, around one out of five primary school teachers do not have the required minimum qualification to ensure children's right to quality learning. Section 23(2) of the Act provides a time frame of five years to ensure that all the teachers in elementary schools are professionally trained. The Ministry of Human Resource Development has estimated that currently there are 0.67 million untrained teachers in India. The National Council for Technical Education has laid down the minimum qualifications for teachers in schools in 2001 on the basis of the National Council for Teacher Education Act and the RTE Act, according to which teachers appointed by the government or employing authority should be trained and have minimum qualifications for different levels of school education. Within the five-year period, all teachers need to acquire the academic and professional qualifications prescribed by the academic authority under the RTE Act. Along with the emphasis on qualification there is also need to focus on Teachers attitude as it also play a very crucial role in making the purpose of RTE Act successful. Awareness among teachers about the Act is also one of the key aspects for its successful implementation. Unfortunately, at present, awareness among teachers and other personnel related to education domain is yet very

low. Teachers have the key role in creating this awareness in the society to operationalize the Act..

Discussions on the basis of reviews related to RTE Act

Studies on RTE Act cover a wide range of topics exploring different issues. Most of the researches focus on different factors which are responsible for not fulfilling the objective of RTE Act are: lack of adequate facilities, less attractive schools, infrastructural related things canteen, play grounds, library and laboratory facilities, awareness of parents, society and teachers etc.

There are number of reviews and meta analysis that consistently report that the current arrangements or settings are not adequate to meet the goal of RTE Act. Researches reveal that teachers role influence the successful implementation of the act. Teachers awareness, motivation, punctuality, teacher-students ratio, Qualification of teachers, their attitude towards the act and children, their experience, their efficiency their efficacy have tremendous affect on success of RTE Act 2009.. Indian Institute of Education (2006), investigated that teachers punctuality, their motivation and their absenteeism are the main factors of not achieving the aim of universalization of elementary education. There is still lack of awareness in teachers about RTE Act even after five years of its enforcing. This is also supported by the finding of Vyas (2011), who explored the awareness on RTE Act, 2009 among elementary school teachers in the national capital region and reached at the conclusion that the level of awareness among teachers is not up to the mark. He also identified that Government teachers are more aware as compared to non- Government teachers. The similar study was done by Sarika Malik & et al. in 2013, they also found that the teachers are not adequately aware about the act. They suggested that there is necessity to develop the awareness towards RTE, which in turn helps



them to develop the same among their students. Contradictory to the this research, Dinesh Kumar & Sarita Sharma (2011) have done a study on Parents and Teachers Awareness towards Right to Education Act 2009 and wrapped up the study with the findings that the teachers are more significantly aware than that of parents.

Teachers experience also matters and have positive and significant impact on their awareness regarding RTE act 2009 and its direct effect on its successful implementation. Similar study was done by Ajay. M. Gadam in 2013 he also found out that there is a significant impact of teachers working experience on their awareness of the responsibility under RTE Act, 2009. The experience of teachers was positively correlated with their awareness of responsibility under RTE Act. Teachers, whose working experience is high, their awareness of the responsibility under RTE Act is high and those working experience is low, their awareness of the responsibility under the RTE Act is low. It is also found that educational qualification has direct positive impact on the awareness of teachers. This was also supported by Ajay, M. Gadam (2013), who identified that there is significant impact of the educational qualification of the teacher on their awareness of the responsibility under RTE Act, 2009. Male awareness is also found higher than the female awareness. This statement is also supported by the research conducted by Fathima Jaseena (2011), who found out that male students possess higher awareness than female students about the Right to Education Act, 2009. There is need to focus on filling vacancies of teachers in schools for improving enrolment and retention of children. Mehta, 2006 also focussed on filling vacancies of teachers in schools for improving enrolment and retention of children. Jha, Ghatak, Mahendiran and Bakshi (2013) also felt the requirement of thousands of professionally trained teachers in their study. Tejaswini (2001) also identified the gaps in the

existing services and needs of students and teachers in the context of quality education. He recommended that there is a need to strengthen teachers on aspects of motivation, pro-children attitudes and creative teaching learning process. Appointment of suitable staff is also recommended in order to lessen the burden on teachers. Singh, Joshi, and Garia (2003) also suggested that the quality of school can be improved by giving training to teachers, providing learning and teaching materials, filling the vacant posts of teachers, and paying teachers a good salary.

Conclusions

The Right to Education Act (RTE Act) passed by The Indian Government in 2009, is undoubtedly an important step in the history of Indian Education System. This Act made revolutionary changes in the traditional system by making the education free and compulsory for every child up to 14 years of age as a fundamental right in India. After five years of the enforcement of this act, the goal of it is still unachieved. There are so many reasons of not fulfilling the aim of it. This Act has imposed responsibilities upon the Government both Central and State, parents, teachers and principals. The role of the teachers and principals is very crucial and wide in every field like, admission, retention, examination. As a result, there are several good initiatives, but these are insufficient to make a difference to the existing education system. As from the reviews of researches related to RTE Act 2009, it has been cleared that teachers attitude and their motivation are the core factors towards achieving the norms of RTE Act. Teachers satisfaction with respect to salary, respect and other perks are essential, so that they could have the positive attitude towards the RTE act and could make best possible efforts with full motivation. Practically there is need to put all the endeavours in a realistic way. It is not possible for any one organization to address all the concerns related to



the implementation of the RTE Act, but it is possible to work with teachers, principals, parents, community and government through collaborative efforts.

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