

## IMPLEMENTATION OF RIGHT TO EDUCATION ACT-2009: AN EVALUATION

Dr. Kusum\* Dr. Anupam\*\*

### **Abstract**

*Every Child should get primary education. Right to Education Act -2009 was introduced in India to fulfill the said objective. Universalization of primary education has been the sole objective of every government working around the country. It has been about 15 years since the implementation of RTE-2009 but there has been a constant decline in the enrollment of students in government schools. This paper is an attempt to assess the perception of teachers on RTE-2009. Teachers play a key role in implementation of educational policies. This study reveals the awareness of rural area teachers in Punjab. The findings reveal that the teachers are well aware of provisions under RTE-2009.*

*Keywords: RTE-2009*

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- Associate Professor, Govt. College of Education Sector-20 D, Chandigarh
- Maths Mistress, Dept. of School Education, Punjab

## INTRODUCTION

Education is essential for every country for the socio-economic development of its society. Providing quality education to every citizen is a fundamental duty of every government. Only a good education system can bring the desired change in the society and enables the citizens of the country to grow into productive citizens. Quality education enhances the knowledge, abilities, progressive approach, mindfulness and sense of responsibility towards well-being of the society. So it has always been a matter of great concern for all the governments of the world to improve the education system in the state. Different methods and policies are being pursued to achieve the purpose. Fundamental literacy is critical for eliminating poverty, reducing child mortality, curbing population growth, achieving gender equality and ensuring sustainable development, peace and democracy.

In independent India education became a priority for the Government. The education system was discriminatory on the basis of caste and gender. Government took necessary steps to eliminate the caste and gender based discrimination and made some constitutional provisions. The 86th constitutional amendment has also made elementary education a fundamental right for the children between the age group- 6 to 14. RTE Act is the new feature of the Indian education policy. The RTE Act, 2009, was passed by the Government of India on August 26, 2009 with the objective to provide quality and compulsory education to every child of India in the age group of 6 to 14 years. The Right of children to free and compulsory education Act has come into effect on 1st April 2010.

Elementary education is also known as primary education and it is the foundation of the entire structure of education. Education is considered to be the third eye of a man. Elementary education is very important for a society and a country at large. Education is an important indicator of inclusive growth for an economy and an investment in human capital. It is certainly a fundamental right of every child to receive at least the basic education. After Independence, Punjab government has also taken many steps to improve educational status in the state, but in spite of these efforts, the educational standard of government elementary schools in Punjab is not improving as per expectations. Although the number of primary schools has increased in Punjab, yet the enrollment of primary government schools is decreasing day by day. The review of related research reflected that there was very little work on perception of teachers in rural areas of district Punjab. So there is a need to analyze the implementation of RTE Act, 2009 in the rural area of district Sangrur in Punjab. Whether this Act is properly implemented in Punjab state and whether this Act is beneficial to the children of Punjab and whether this Act uplift the standard of elementary education in the state, are questions of great discussion among the policy makers and educationists. Therefore, it is very important to study and assess the implementation of the RTE Act in Punjab. An evaluation of the implementation of RTE Act in Punjab is not only of great interest from an academic point of view, but has many policy ramifications also. It was inferred from the review of vast existing literature that most of the studies done related to the implementation of RTE Act, 2009 in various states of the country like Haryana, Gujarat, Maharashtra and U.T. of Chandigarh etc. Some studies took up the role of government and NGOs to uplift education in India. The present scenario of education in India as well as in Punjab has been undertaken in many studies theoretically.

## **RIGHT TO EDUCATION: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Since pre independence many steps have been taken and many educational plans were made to improve the condition of elementary education in India. Many Indians played a significant role in the educational planning by giving valuable suggestions.

- Gopal Krishan Gokhle took the first step in 1910 by moving a resolution in the Imperial Legislative council stating that a beginning should be made in the direction of making elementary education free and compulsory throughout the country. The Elementary Bill also known as Gokhle's Bill. Gokhle introduced a private Bill "to provide for the gradual introduction of the principle of compulsion into the elementary educational system of the country" on 16 March 1911.
- In 1917, Vithalbhai Patel was responsible for getting the first law on Compulsory Primary Education in India passed by the Bombay Legislative Council. By 1930, every province of British India had a law on primary education.
- After the passing of Govt. of India Act, 1919, the control of Elementary Education was transferred to Indian ministers. This ushered in an era of rapid expansion of elementary education.
- Mahatma Gandhi was also against the system of education propagated by the British. He suggested a scheme of universal compulsory education for all children in the age group of 6-13 through the medium of mother tongue which would be self-supporting, leading to all-round development of the pupil.

- Afterward in October 1937, an all India National Educational Conference was summoned at Wardha under the president ship of Mahatma Gandhi and adopted four resolutions that Free and compulsory education is provided for seven years on the nationwide scale, medium of instruction be the mother tongue.
- Operation Blackboard was started with a specific aim .Operation Blackboard is a centrally sponsored program which was started in 1987 immediately after the Rajiv Gandhi National Policy on Education (NPE) of 1986 was released to supply the bare minimum crucial facilities to all primary schools in the country. The objective of the scheme is providing students studying in primary settings with the necessary institutional equipment and instructional material to facilitate their education.
- District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) 1993 emphasized decentralized planning and management, improved teaching and learning material and also suggested improving the effectiveness of schools.
- The National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education commonly known as the Mid-day Meal programme was launched in 1995 In 2001 MDMS became a cooked Mid-Day Meal Scheme under which every child in every Government and Government aided primary school was to be served a prepared Mid-Day Meal with a minimum content of 300 calories of energy and 8-12 gram protein per day for a minimum of 200 days. The Scheme was further extended in 2002 to cover not only children studying in Government, Government aided and local body schools, but also children studying in Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative & Innovative Education (AIE) centers.
- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is Government of India's flagship programme for achievement of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner.
- Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) was launched by the state Government in March 1997 to provide primary schooling facilities to accessles habitations. Through this scheme the Government gave a guarantee for providing education facilities through a trained teacher within 90 days of a demand being raised by the parents of at least the prescribed minimum number of children not having any primary education facility within a distance of one kilometer from their home.

The year 2009 is a landmark year in the development history of elementary education, when the Government finally managed to pass the 86<sup>th</sup> amendment to the constitution that made Right to Education (RTE).

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To study the history of RTE and examine the provisions of the RTE Act, 2009.
2. To find out the awareness among government school teachers regarding RTE Act, 2009.
3. To find out the perception of School Management Committees regarding RTE Act, 2009.

## **HYPOTHESES**

H<sub>0</sub>1: Awareness among teachers of schools in rural areas was significantly low.

H<sub>1</sub>1: Awareness among teachers of schools in rural areas was significantly high.

H<sub>0</sub>2: School Management Committees were not satisfied with the implementation of RTE-2009.

H<sub>1</sub>2: School Management Committees were satisfied with the implementation of RTE-2009.

## **DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The Study is delimited to implementation of RTE-2009 in rural areas of Sangrur-1 educational block in district Sangrur.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study is exploratory in nature, therefore a descriptive survey method has been adopted. Data was collected using a survey method. Focus group discussion was conducted with the School Management Committee regarding the Right to Education Act-2009.

## **SAMPLE OF THE STUDY**

The population of study was teachers employed in government schools and School Management Committee members of schools in rural areas of Sangrur. Lottery method was used to select the educational block from six educational blocks. The Sangrur-1 block was selected. A sample of 100 teachers and 100 SMC members were selected for the study.

## **TOOLS**

The Interview Schedule on RTE-2009 for teachers was developed by the investigator.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

This section deals with the research problem whether there is an awareness of the provisions of RTE Act, 2009 among teachers? For the proper implementation of this Act, Government of India makes many provisions under RTE Act, 2009. The present study is an attempt in this direction to know about the awareness of the RTE Act among the teachers. To judge the awareness of the RTE Act among the teachers, a primary survey was conducted by the investigator. A number of 100 teachers were selected among which 40 were male and 60 were female. A well prepared Interview Schedule (Appendix-1) was used to collect the data. The data was collected through an interview schedule and a stratified random sampling method was used.

**Table 1: Profile of the Sampled Teachers in Rural Area of District Sangrur**

Attributes	Percentage	Attributes	Percentage
1. Age		2. Category	

a) 21-30 years	05 %	a) General	36%
b) 31-40 years	48%	b) SC/BC	64%
c) 41-50 years	20%	c) Others	0%
d) 51-58 years	17%	<b>4. Designation</b>	
<b>3. Gender</b>		a) Teacher	86%
a) Male	40%	b) Head Teacher	5%
b) Female	60%	c) Principal	2%
<b>5. Teaching Level</b>		d) Center Head Teacher	7%
a) Primary	67%		
b) Upper Primary	33%		
<b>6. Education Qualification</b>		<b>7. Teaching Experience</b>	
a) E.T.T.	25%	a) Less than 5 years	10%
b) M.T.T.	5%	b) 5-10 years	55%
c) B.Ed.	45%	c) 11-15 years	13%
d) M.Ed.	25%	d) 16-20 years	17%
		e) More than 20 years	5%

**Table-2 Perception on Infrastructural Facilities in schools.**

Attributes	Very Good	Good	Sufficient	Insufficient
1. Infrastructure/ building arrangements	77%	16%	7%	0%
2. Boundary walls or fencing	70%	16%	11%	3%
3. Mats	68%	18%	9%	5%
4. Furniture/chairs	72%	14%	14%	0%
5. Safe & Adequate Drinking water	70%	23%	7%	0%
6. Toilets	65%	33%	2%	0%
7. Separate toilets for girls	62%	35%	2%	1%
8. Lighting	70%	26%	4%	0%
9. Ventilation	77%	19%	14%	0%
10. Sports / Games	63%	10%	21%	6%
11. Extra-Curricular Activities	11%	23%	61%	5%
12. Provisions for incentives for SC's and weaker sections	40%	26%	22%	6%
13. Kitchen	6%	24%	56%	14%
14. Barrier-Free Access	66%	32%	0%	2%

**Table-3: Level of Awareness on RTE-2009 of Teachers**

Attributes	Percentage
1. Yes, definitely	75%
2. To a large extent	15%
3. To some extent	10%
4. No	0%

**Table-4: The most benefited stakeholder by RTE-2009 in teacher's perception**

Attributes	Percentage
Teacher	0%
Society	18%
Students	78%
School Authority	4%
All of the above	0%

**Table-5: Awareness among teacher's regarding age group covered under RTE-2009**

Attributes	Percentage
0-6 years	0%
0-14 years	2%
6-14 years	96%
Don't know	2%
0-6 years	0%

**Table-6: Awareness among teacher's pupil teacher ratio recommended in RTE-2009**

Attributes	Percentage
1:20	1%
1:30	98%
1:50	1%
Don't know	0%

**Table-7: Awareness among teacher's regarding number of instructional days recommended in RTE-2009**

Attributes	Percentage
100-150	0%
150-200	6%
200-250	85%
250-300	3%
Don't Know	6%

**Table-8: Awareness regarding the minimum working hours per week for teachers recommended in RTE-2009**

Attributes	Percentage
45 teaching hours including preparations hours	72%
45 teaching hours excluding preparations hours	20%
30 teaching hours including preparations hours	3%
Don't know	5%

**Table-9: Teacher's perception on implementation of rules of RTE-2009, free and compulsory education from 6-14 years of children in their school.**

Attributes	Percentage
Yes, definitely	100%
To a large extent	0%
To some extent	0%
No	0%

**Table-10: Increase in status of admission of dropout students after implementation of RTE-2009**

Attributes	Percentage
Yes	93%
No	4%
Don't Know	3%

**Table-11: Whether all teachers are trained and experienced in school after implementation of RTE-2009**

Attributes	Percentage
Yes, definitely	100%
To a large extent	0%
To some extent	0%
No	0%

**Table: 12: Level of awareness regarding prohibitions implemented by RTE-2009**

Attributes	Percentage
Corporal punishment to the students	1%
Failing the students till 8th class	0%
Assigning the teachers non- education duty	0%
Capitation fees	0%
Mental harassment	0%
Screening procedure for admission of children	0%
Administration proof for the age for admin of the child	0%

All of the above	99%
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**Table-13: Awareness regarding statutory body behind the implementation of RTE-2009**

Attributes	Percentage
MHRD	60%
NCPCR	13%
Parliament	1%
DGSE	13%
Don't know	3%

**Table-14: Awareness regarding the role played by National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) for the implementation of RTE Act, 2009**

Attributes	Percentage
To spread awareness about child rights	12%
To inquire about child abuse cases	13%
To protect the child rights	1%
All of the above	74%

## Testing of Hypothesis-1

The results presented in from table-1 to table-14 shows that the awareness about Right to Education-2009 displayed that the level of awareness among teachers in rural areas of district Sangrur are very high. Therefore the null hypothesis states “Awareness among teachers of schools in rural areas was significantly low” stands rejected and the alternate hypothesis states “Awareness among teachers of schools in rural areas was significantly high” stands accepted.

## Focus Group Discussion

A focus group discussion was done with the school management committee members regarding their perception on the implementation of RTE-2009. The school management committee members were those people whose wards are studying in schools and who themselves have studied in the same school. The focus discussion was concluded with the following findings.

- ❖ RTE-2009 improved the infrastructure of the schools.



- ❖ RTE-2009 increased enrollment in schools.
- ❖ RTE-2009 improved teaching and learning process at schools.
- ❖ Students are provided free food and uniforms up to elementary education.
- ❖ RTE-2009 has been implemented successfully in schools in rural areas of Punjab.

## Testing of Hypothesis-2

The observations from the focus group discussion demonstrated that the school management committee members were significantly satisfied with the implementation on Right to Education Act-2009. Therefore the null hypothesis states “School Management Committees were not satisfied with the implementation of RTE-2009” stands rejected and the alternate hypothesis states “School Management Committees were satisfied with the implementation of RTE-2009” stands accepted.

## MAJOR FINDINGS

- ❖ The teachers rated infrastructural arrangements like building, mats, lightening, kitchen, ventilation etc. from very good to sufficient range. Majority of the teachers rated very good. The range of very good rated from 60% to 77%.
- ❖ 75% of teachers are aware about the Right to Education act-2009.
- ❖ 78% teachers believed that students are benefited from Right to Education Act-2009
- ❖ 96% teachers know that Right to Education Act-2009 covers the children from 6 to 14 years of age.
- ❖ 98% teachers know that pupil teacher ratio is 1:30 under Right to Education Act-2009
- ❖ 85% teachers are well aware that number of instruction days recommended under Right to Education Act-2009 ranges from 200-250 days in an academic session.
- ❖ 72% of the teachers know that Right to Education Act-2009 recommended 45 teaching hours including preparation hours.
- ❖ Right to Education Act-2009 is implemented in all the government schools in rural areas of district Sangrur.

- ❖ 93% agreed that there is an increase in admissions of dropouts in rural area schools after the implementation of Right to Education Act-2009.
- ❖ 99% teachers are aware regarding the prohibitions imposed in teaching learning process by Right to Education Act-2009.

## CONCLUSION

This sums up the views of government school teachers about various aspects of RTE Act on the basis of field work conducted in rural areas of district Sangrur. All the teachers gave whole-hearted cooperation to the researcher and replied to all the survey questions. An assessment of the teachers regarding the awareness of RTE Act, 2009 indicates that a majority of teachers in the selected district Sangrur are aware about RTE Act and the provisions of this Act. While analyzing the infrastructure facilities in the schools such as sufficient building, boundary walls, mats, furniture, safe and adequate drinking water, toilets facilities, lighting, ventilation, sports, facilities, kitchen etc. The teachers observed that this Act is very useful to the students between the age group of 6 to 14 years and this Act increased the number of students in the schools. School Management Committees also agreed to the fact that the Right to Education Act-2009 has elevated the level of elementary education in Punjab.

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