

## Impact of Right to Education Act on Enrolment, Retention and Achievement of Students in Government Elementary Schools in Kalahandi District of Odisha

Jayanta Kumar Pati

Ph.D. Scholar, Sambalpur University, Jyoti Vihar, Burla, Odisha, India

### Abstract

Elementary education is the most significant ingredient for development of and prosperity of any nation. Right to education act is a major step towards providing quality elementary education to make human resources of India. It makes education as a fundamental right to the children of 6 to 14 years of age. RTE is recognised as a basic human right which empowers a person to exercise other human rights. RTE Act is implemented in India on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2010 all over India except Jammu and Kashmir and became one of the 135 countries to implement it. It ensures to provide quality elementary education. This study explores the impact of implementation of RTE Act on the enrolment, retention and achievement level of students reading in government elementary schools of Kalahandi district of Odisha. It is a descriptive study and researcher made questionnaire for Headmaster, school information schedule and interview schedule for SMC members were used for collection of data. Main objectives of this study is to find out the impact of RTE Act on enrolment, retention and achievement of children of unprivileged groups of society in government elementary schools. Analysis of the data for the study reflects that Kalahandi district has made some progress in improving enrolment and achievement of children but it is far away from its goal.

**KEYWORDS:** Right to Education, SMC members, enrolment, retention, achievement.

### I Introduction

Education is an important aspect for promoting the social and economic development of any country. Particularly elementary education is the foundation of formal education system in India. It is considered as the most important input to improve the quality of life of society. On 12<sup>th</sup> December 2002 by 86<sup>th</sup> Amendment Article 21 was amended in order to introduce right to education as a fundamental right. The new Article 21 (A) promises free and compulsory elementary education for 6 to 14 years of age group of children in such a manner as the state may be by law determine. Department of Law and Justice, Govt. of India provided “the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education, 2009” (RCE Act, 2009) received the assent of president of India on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2009.

India became one of the 135 countries to make education fundamental right of every child, when the right came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010. On 12<sup>th</sup> April 2012 Supreme Court of India has given verdict regarding constitutional status of the Right to Education Act 2009. RTE Act 2009 provides ripe platform to reach the unreached with specific provisions for disadvantaged groups such as migrant children, children

with special needs or disadvantage owing to social, cultural, economical, geographical, linguistic, gender or such other factors.

## 1.2. Objectives of the study

This study looks into the impact of RTE Act on promoting quality elementary education in Kalahandi district with the following objectives:-

- I. To study the impact of RTE Act on enrollment of children of unprivileged groups of society in Govt. Elementary Schools.
- II. To study the impact of RTE Act on retention of children of unprivileged groups of society in Govt. Elementary Schools.
- III. To study the impact of RTE Act on retention of children of unprivileged groups of society in Govt. Elementary Schools

## 1.3. Samples of the Study:-

The sample of the present study constitutes 05 Blocks and 02 urban areas of Kalahandi district. 03 Blocks and one urban area are selected as per higher female literacy rate and 02 Blocks and 01 urban area are selected on the basis of lower female literacy rate as per census – 2011. The study was conducted on 100 elementary schools and 200 SMC members of Government elementary schools The following table indicates the sample of the study.

**Table-1**

Block	Schools	SMC members
Bhawanipatna	20	40
Kesinga	15	30
Narla	15	30
Th. Rampur	15	30
Lanjigarh	15	30
Bhawanipatna (MPL)	10	20
Junagarh NAC	10	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>

## 1.5 Delimitation of the study:-

This study is delimited to the following aspects:-

- i) Present study is confined to Kalahandi district of Odisha.
- ii) It will cover only 100 Govt. elementary schools from five blocks and two urban areas of Kalahandi district.
- iii) Schools under the control of school and Mass Education Department were considered for the study. Schools under the control of Department of ST/SC Development were not coming under the purview of the study.

## 2.0 Method of the Study:-

This study, which is designed to investigate the impact of Right to Education Act on promoting quality elementary education in Kalahandi district of Odisha, is an impact study of descriptive nature. So the method followed in this study is descriptive survey method.

### 2.1 Development of Research Tools.

The following data gathering instruments were developed by the researcher with the co-operation of experts in accordance with the specific need of the study and content validity, reliability and usability of the tools have been established.

- i) School information schedule for Govt. elementary school.
- ii) Structure interview schedule for the SMC members in Odia.

### 3.0 Major findings:

Major findings of the study are presented in the nutshell.

**(To study the impact of Right to Education Act-2009 on enrolment, retention and achievement of children of unprivileged groups of society in government elementary schools)**

It is found that, there is gradual decrease in enrollment of students in class I to VIII during last 3 years. There is overall 86.88% decrease in enrollment of students in classes I to VIII from the year 2014-15 to 2016-17. It is found that, there is increasing trend in enrollment at students in upper primary classes i.e. Class VI to VII. About 9.46% increases in enrollment of students from 2014-15 to 2016-17. It shows that the retention of students from primary to upper primary level is good.

Gender parity Index (GPS) in elementary level was 1.01 in the year 2014-15 and it is increased to 1.02 in the year 2016-17. GPI of SC Students in primary level in last 3 years is 0.99 but GPI of other categories students in last 3 years is more than 1. The enrolment of SC children to total enrolment at elementary level (from class I to VIII) is 25.78% in the year 2014-15 which comes down to 24.63% in the year 2016-17. It clearly indicates that there is 1.15% decrease in the enrollment of SC children during last 3 years.

The enrolment of ST children to total enrollment at elementary level (Class I to VIII) in the year 2014-15 was 33.1% where as it raises to 35.4% in the year 2016-17. There is 2.3% raise in enrolment of ST children during 3 years. The average attendance of students in the year 2014-15 was 10,288, in the year 9,683. Percentage of student attendance in 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 are 77.32%, 77.80% and 77.84% respectively.

There is gradual increase in percentage of student attendance in the school i.e. 0.52% growth in the average attendance of students during last three years. Although the necessarily of elementary of students has been decreasing in the schools during these years. After implementation of RTE Act, there is gradual declining of dropout rates of students at elementary level. The average dropout during last 3 years is 86.33 which is

0.67% of total average enrollment at elementary level. Dropout rate of student at elementary level has been dropped from at elementary level has been dropped from 0.8% in the year 2014-15 to 0.48% in the year 2016-17. It shows that there has been significant impact of RTE Act on the dropout of students from the school.

### **Impact of RTE Act on dropout of children of disadvantage groups**

#### **SC Students**

Percentage of dropout of SC students to total dropout students at primary level in the year 2014-15 was 35% which further increases to 36.36% in the year 2016-17. It shows that, although overall declining of dropout rates prevail at primary level, but dropout of SC Communities is not satisfactory. There is 1.36% increased in the dropout of SC students at primary level.

At upper primary level, the percentage of dropout of SC students to total dropout students has been increased by 13.43% during the year 2014-15 to 2016-17.

At primary level, percentage of dropout of SC student to total enrolled SC student in the year 2014-15 was 0.97% which comes down to 0.45% in the year 2016-17. There has been marginal improvement of dropout rate of SC students to total enrolled SC students at Primary level.

At upper primary level, the percentage of dropout of SC students to total enrolled SC students in the year 2014-15 was 0.69% which further raises to 0.84% in the year 2016-17. It shows that there is gradual increase in dropout rate of SC students to total enrolled SC students. There is no impact of RET Act. On curbing the dropout rate among SC students at elementary level.

#### **Impact on ST student's dropout**

It is found that, the rate of dropout percentage of ST students to total dropout students at primary level is gradually decreasing. It was 23.33% in the year 2014-15 which drops to 22.72% in the year 2016-17. There is 0.61% reduction in dropout at primary level in these years. Similarly, at upper primary level, the dropout rate of ST student to total dropout student has been cores down to 26.31% from 37.93% during the year 2014-15 to 2016-17. There is significant 11.62% decrease of dropout rate during these years.

Total percentage of dropout of ST student to total dropout student at elementary level is also decreasing from 30.5% in the year 2014-15 to 25% in the year 2016-17. Similarly, percentage of ST student dropout to total enrolled ST student at elementary level comes down to 0.34% in the year 2016-17 from 0.81% in the year 2014-15. It shows that, there has been positive impact of RTE Act on dropout of ST students in the district of Kalahandi.

#### **Dropout of Girls students**

Percentage of dropout of girl students to total dropout student has been decreased at primary level (Class I to V) during the year 2014-15 to 2016-17, but it is amazingly increased at upper primary level (Class VI to VIII) during these years. At primary level it goes up by 2.81%.

At elementary level, the percentage of dropout at girl student in the year 2014-15 is 60.16 where as it comes down to 60 in the year 2016-17. There is only 0.16 decrease of dropout of girl student out of total dropout students during three years.

The percentage of girls dropout to total girls enrollment at primary level is 0.80% in the year 2014-15 and it comes down to 0.31% in the year 2016-17. During these years, it shows 0.49% decrease of dropout of girls. At upper primary level also, there has been graduated decreased of girls dropout during these years. There is 0.59% drops in the girls dropout at upper primary level.

At elementary levels (Class I to VIII), the dropout of girls to total enrolled girls was 1.05% in the year 2014-15, which comes down to 0.57% in the year 2016-17. It is found that, there is sharp declining of 0.48% in dropout of girl student during these years at elementary level. Hence, there is positive impact of RTE Act on dropout of girl students at elementary level in Kalahandi district.

### **Impact on Repeaters of students**

Average repeaters of students at elementary level during the year 2014-15 to 2016-17 are 17.33 which is 0.14% of total enrolled students in the schools. Percentage of repeater of student to total student in the year 2014-15 is 0.13; it goes up to 0.16 in 2015-16 and in the year 2016-17 is 0.12. RTE Act mandates there should be no repeaters of students at elementary level. But in Kalahandi district, still there are repeaters of students at elementary level. It school there is no students affect on repeaters of students in the district.

### **Impact on achievement of students of Class-V in elementary schools**

Summative assessment (S.A.) is one of the major component of CCE which measures the learning outcomes of students enrolled in Class-V in the year 2014-15 was 1870 and out of which 1838 students appeared S.A II 98.2% students appeared SA II out of total enrolled students. In the year 2015-16, it raises to 98.4% and in the year 2016-17 it goes up to 99.3%. it reveals that 0.7% students of total enrolled students are not appearing the summative assessment II.

In the year 2014-15, 71.78% of total students appeared in SA II got more than 60% of total marks maximum students secured 'C' grade which is 34% of total students 7.56% got grade A and 29.92% students secured 'B' grade. In the year 2015-16, 76.64% of total students appeared SA II secured more than 60% marks in aggregate. In the year 2016-17 maximum 76.13% students got 'C' grade and above. During these three years the percentage of students getting more than 60% of marks or securing 'C' grade and above has been shown positive trend. There is significant impact on the achievement of students of Class V in SA II of govt. elementary schools of Kalahandi district.

It is fund that, in the SA II of the year 2014-15, 71.26% of boys get above 'D' grade and 72.33% of girls secured above grade 'D'. It shows that girls performed better than boys in SA II of Class V. In the year 2016-17, maximum 79.63% boys and 75.49% of girls secured above 'D' grade. There is gradual increase in the percentage of both the boys & girls who secured above grade 'D' or above 60% of total marks.

### **Achievement of students in SA II of Class VII / VIII**

Average percentage of students appears in SA II of Class-VII/VIII during the year 2014-15 to 2016-17 is 98.71%. There is 1.29% students who are either taken transfer certificates or dropout from the School.

Overall percentage of students secured above 'D' grade i.e. secured more than 60% of marks in SA II in the year 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 are 65.44%, 66.79% and 71.14% respectively. There is gradual increase in the percentage of achievement of students in SA II at Class VII/VIII. It shows that there is positive impact of RTE Act on achievement of students of Class VII/ VIII in Kalahandi district.

It is found that, there is marginal improvement in some of boys in SA II during the year 2014-15 to 2016-17; however there is 9.28 percentage improvement in percentage to girl students securing more than 60% of marks in SA II of Class VII/VIII in govt. elementary schools of Kalahandi district. It is also found that, percentage of girl students securing more that 60% marks in SA II of Class VII/VIII is more than that of boys. During the year 2014-15 of 2016-17, 64.52% of boys secured more than 60% of Class VII/VIII. There is an increase of 5.91% by the girls than the boys.

### **Opinion of SMC members regarding impact of RTE Act on enrollment, retention and achievement of children in elementary schools**

Maximum 96% of SMC members think that due to implementation of RTE Act, enrollment of children in the school increased. According to 94% of SMC members RTE Act improves retention of children in the school and 98% SMC members think that it reduces the dropout of children from the school.

RTE Act stressed upon for improvement of learning outcomes of students. Maximum 59% of SMC members think that RTE Act does not help in enhancing the quality of them think that it improves learning outcomes of students. According to 89% of SMC members, parents do not face any problems in admission of their children in schools.

### **Suggest remedial measures for better implementation of RTE Act, 2009 for development of quality elementary education**

Maximum 86% of SMC members feel that major concern for providing quality elementary education in government elementary schools is the unsatisfactory learning outcomes of students.66% of them think that insufficient of teachers in the government elementary schools are the main problem of the schools. About 73.5% of SMC members point out that lack of proportionate classrooms in the schools is one of the major problems of the schools. Act.43% of SMC members thinks that the apathetic attitude of teachers and higher officers of the district is one of the major problems for better implementation of RTE Act, 2009.

Maximum 84% of SMC embers suggest that pass fail system should be adopted in elementary education. Further 68% of SMC members suggested for provision of trained teachers as per one teacher one class. RTE Act should include pre-primary and secondary education in its ambit is another suggestion given by 68.5% of SMC members. 72.5% of SMC members demand more funds should be provided to schools for quality improvement.

#### **4. Educational Implication:**

For significant and sustainable improvement of elementary education it is drastically required to implement the RTE Act in an effective manner. One of the important aspects of this research study is to provide some input in the shape of innovative ideas or ways for the effective implementation of RTE Act. Some of the educational implications of this study are discussed as follows:-

By knowing the impact of RTE Act on enrolment, retention and achievement of students, the implementation authority can develop suitable strategies to meet the challenges in implementation RTE Act, 2009. The outcome of this study will be utilized to resolve various problems and will help to formulate different activities for promoting quality elementary education in Kalahandi district. This study will motivate to all field functionaries especially DEO, BEOs, ABEOs and CRCCs to focus more on continuous and systematic academic monitoring of elementary schools for effective implementation of RTE Act. The results of this study may be consider as a base record and further research can be undertaken with extending sample area.

#### **5. Conclusions**

It is clear from the findings of the present research study, it is concluded that RTE Act, 2009 has marginal impact on promoting quality elementary education in Govt. elementary Schools of Kalahandi district. After the seven years of its implementation, several aspects of RTE Act has not been achieved so far in the district.

Although Kalahandi district has achieved some progress in terms of enrolment, reducing dropout and basis infrastructure but it is lagging behind in quality learning outcomes of students. A lot of works need to be done for effective implementation of RET Act by various stakeholders of Kalahandi district of Odisha, it includes more awareness programme as a mission mode provision of sufficient funds by government and proper monitoring system at all levels. It must involves parent, community members, students, teachers and NGOs collectively for effective implementation of RTE Act in the district to promote quality elementary education.

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