



IMPLEMENTATION OF RIGHT TO EDUCATION ACT AND RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

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ABSTRACT

Education is globally recognized as a fundamental human right. Education plays key role in skill development and capacity building. It also gives confidence to secure other human rights.

‘The Right of children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009’ was passed by the parliament of India in August 2009. Later it was notified into force in April 2010. Present paper focuses on importance of 4A framework, its use in monitoring of implementation of RTE Act and to suggest research areas accordingly.

Keywords: RTE Act, 4A framework.

INTRODUCTION

Education is globally recognized as a fundamental human right. Education plays key role in skill development and capacity building. It also gives confidence to secure other human rights. Globally, right to education derives its legal basis from Article 26(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) 4, which states that “Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory (Singh J., 2014).

‘The Right of children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009’ was passed by the parliament of India in August 2009. Later it was notified into force in April 2010.

As per the act, education is a fundamental right of every child who is between 6 and 14 years old. The act also states that until the completion of elementary education, no child shall be held back, expelled or required to pass a board examination. There is also a provision for special training of school drop-outs to bring them up to par with students of the same age. Based on this Act, a subordinate legislation, the Model Rules was framed by the Centre to provide guidelines to states for implementing the Act (Ojha S, 2013).

The RTE Act is a Central Act in the domain of Education with following key features:

- i) It is in the domain of elementary education.
- ii) It guarantees admission for elementary education in neighbourhood school.
- iii) Increased community participation i.e. School Management Committees (SMC) including parents, teachers and elected representatives.
- iv) Minimum norms and standards for schools are defined.

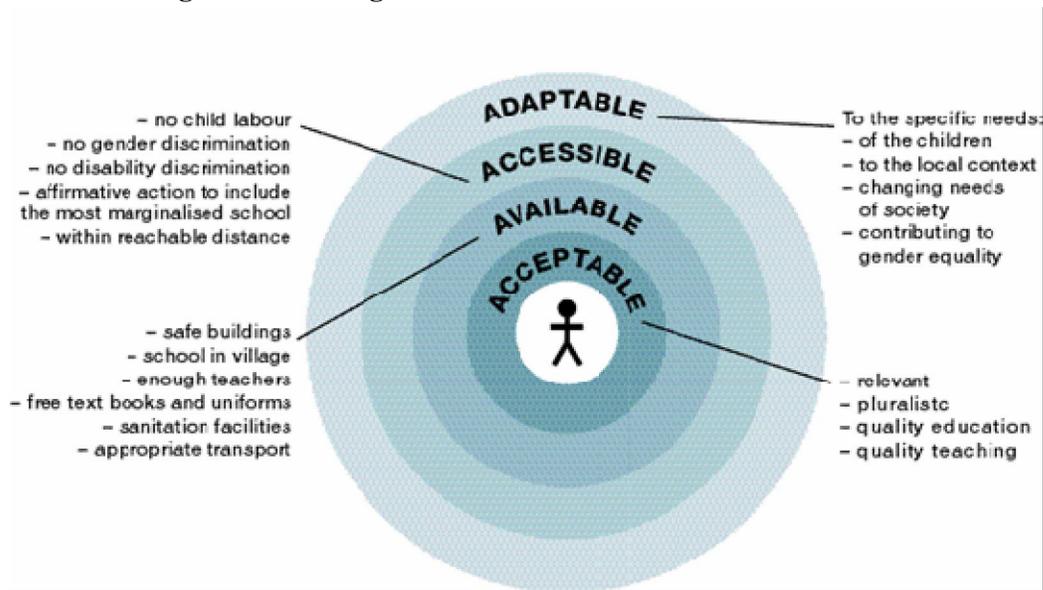
The features of this Act have been analyzed by using 4A framework. Katarina Tomasevski, the former UN special Rapporteur on the Right to Education has developed the

concept of 4A's i.e. Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Adaptability of Education. These 4 A's are pillars for education to be a meaningful right. Following is a description of these 4 A's.

1. **Availability:** That education is free and Government funded and that there is adequate infrastructure and trained teachers able to support education delivery.
2. **Accessibility:** That the system is non-discriminatory and accessible to all, and that positive steps are taken to include the most marginalised.
3. **Acceptability:** That the content of education is relevant, non-discriminatory and culturally appropriate and of quality; that the school itself is safe and teachers are professional.
4. **Adaptability:** That the education can evolve with the changing needs of society and contribute to challenging inequalities, such as gender discrimination and that it can be adapted locally to suit specific contexts.

This framework is explained in the following diagram:

Education Rights Circle Diagram



Source: http://r2e.gn.apc.org/sites/r2e.gn.apc.org/files/images/4%20As%20diagram.bmp_.png

The inner circle shows issues that will make education acceptable to the individual or group. The second circle enlists the components which would make education available. The third circle explains the frame of context i.e. what would make education accessible. The outer circle tells how adaptable education is?

The RTE Act is a Revolutionary Act in the history of Indian Education. This is aimed to provide quality elementary education to all. It got enforced on April 1st 2010. During these five years it has been implemented in the country. Now there is a need to identify loopholes in the process of implementation and also to study the fulfilment of the aim with which it was passed by the parliament. Following are some research areas:

1. Status of implementation of RTE Act in Rural Government schools.
2. Status of implementation of RTE Act in Urban Government schools.

3. A study of awareness of the provisions of RTE Act amongst teachers.
4. A study of awareness of the provisions of RTE Act amongst parents.
5. A study of awareness of the provisions of RTE Act amongst students.
6. Provision and Status of ‘reserve 25 percent seats’ in private schools
7. Development of Awareness programmes and its effectiveness
8. Awareness and provisions of ‘age appropriate classrooms’
9. Understanding of teachers regarding CCE
10. Above 4A framework can be used as a tool for evaluation studies of implementation of RTE Act. Following are some research topics related to important provisions in the Act:

COMPONENT OF 4A (Provisions in RTE Act)	POINTS TO BE CONSIDERED
1. Physical Infrastructure	All weather structure, Office cum store for head teacher, Separate toilets for boys and girls, Kitchen for cooking, safe drinking water, library, play ground, electricity, age appropriate furniture, classroom cleaning etc.
2. Access to Education	Year round admission, No screening and documents, No capitation fees, Easy transfer certificate
3. Teachers	Comfortable Teacher: Student ratio, Awareness of curriculum reform, understanding of evaluation methods (CCE) (since teachers are using as they understand it – the gap between policy interventions and actual perception and implementation in the field), use of profile books for student records, Teacher profile and their effectiveness, in-service programmes, Awareness of teachers regarding corrective actions as RTE Act prescribes. True meaning of ‘No detention policy’,
4. Age Appropriate classrooms	Provision of special training to students admitted in ‘Age Appropriate classrooms’, Awareness of head teachers/teachers
5. School Management Committees(SMC)	Role of SMC’s in monitoring use of grants, school planning, Improvement programmes etc
6. Teaching-Learning Process	Use of teaching aids (Audio, Video & A/V), regular class tests, feedback to parents, laboratory facility, use of computers, regular classes, field visits, quizzes, interaction sessions, homework etc.

Conducting these and similar researches may help in evaluation of adequacy and effectiveness of the steps taken by the Government. This may result in development of effective monitoring system. It may also turn into development of quantitative and qualitative indicators. The findings of these researches will reflect the status of implementation of RTE Act.



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