



ROLE OF TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN RIGHT TO EDUCATION

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The RTE Act is a path breaking Act in the history of Indian Education towards providing quality elementary education to all, it is not without loopholes. This study is very significant as this provides an insight into challenges raised in the schools while implementing RTE for children with hearing impairment. Hence the study will help all the stakeholders to become aware of their rights, take an active role in the enforcement of these rights and implement this Act more effectively and fruitfully to have a better quality education for the students for whom this act is meant.

Challenges in implementing the RTE Act

(A) Out-of-school children

1. According to the 2001 census, 8.5 crore children are out of school in India. However, latest figures from the Human Resource Development Ministry put the number at 80 lakh. This disparity is because the government has been trying to divide the children into two sections.
2. According to the National Crime Records Bureau, every year around 65,000 children fall victim to trafficking. Only 10% of such cases are registered with the police. Officially, therefore, only 6,500 children are trafficking victims. Besides this, around 1.20 crore children are involved in child labour (2001 census), keeping them out of school.
3. One of the sections into which the government has tried to divide out-of-school children is those who have never enrolled in school. But here the question arises: if these children have never been enrolled in school how have they been counted? By which agency? And what was the methodology adopted?
4. The second section includes children who have dropped out of school. Children who do not attend school for three months are considered to have dropped out. In some states the period is 15 days; in others it's one month.
5. Taking these two sections together, the total number of out-of-school children is around 80 lakh. Nevertheless, the disparity between the figures of the two departments -- a drop from around 8 crore to 80 lakh -- is nothing short of magic! And even if the 80 lakh figure is correct, it's still a huge number and the children are not out of school because of choice. To believe that the RTE Act will magically put all such kids into classrooms would be naïve.
6. Some states have claimed that there has been a jump of 120% in school admissions. This has to be taken with a pinch of salt. The 2011 census will make the picture clearer.



7. A recent survey under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme in Rajasthan found that 12 lakh children were out of school. Of these, 7.13 lakh children were girls and the rest were boys. Other states must carry out similar studies.

(B)Coordination between various implementing agencies

Every other day we see children working at roadside restaurants, in people's homes, on the roads and in tea stalls. To pick these children up and put them in school is hardly as easy as it sounds. To begin with, rescue of child labourers and punishing the employer is the work of the Labour Ministry and the police. The responsibility of bringing children to schools and providing them quality education is the work of the Human Resource Development Ministry. Then again, monitoring implementation of the RTE Act is the responsibility of the child rights commissions in each state, which are under the Women and Child Development Department. As of now, not all states have even notified the RTE rules. It is crucial therefore that the efforts of all these agencies are coordinated for the larger goal of providing education to all children to become a reality.

(C)Various kinds of schools

It's a strange irony that while on the one hand the government wants to provide quality education to all children, across all barriers, on the other hand it recognizes four kinds of schools under the Right to Education Act.

- i) Government schools:
- ii) Government-aided schools.
- iii) Special schools recognised by the government such as kendriya vidyalayas, navodaya vidyalaya and sainik schools. There are others at the state level too.
- iv) Private schools

With such a variety of schools, it is only natural that quality of education varies. Once again it boils down to the rich being able to afford better quality education and the poor having to compromise with something inferior.

(D)Physical infrastructure and other resources

The Act⁸ says that school building should be an 'all weather' structure, and should include an office cum store for the head teacher, separate toilets for boys and for girls, a kitchen for cooking the free mid day meal that children are provided, have access to safe drinking water, a library, a playground, and barrier free access.

(E)Teacher training

The Act⁸ demands for qualified teachers and also makes way for teachers to receive in service training to enable them to acquire the requisite certifications within a period of 5 years. Research^{22, 23} shows that teacher qualification, decision-making the ACT makes provision⁸ for schools to form a School Management Committee (SMC) with at least 75% of parents of children in the school of which fifty percent are to be mothers.