

A study of availability of elementary education in relation to right to education in Rewa district

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Abstract

The right to education has been recognized as a human right in a number of international conventions, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights which recognises a right to free, compulsory primary education for all, an obligation to develop secondary education accessible to all, in particular by the progressive introduction of free secondary education, as well as an obligation to develop equitable access to higher education, ideally by the progressive introduction of free higher education. School Education plays a significant role in shaping the destiny of the children and makes them good citizens of the nations. Education is the right of every child in the country and through Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009, the quality elementary education has to be ensured for every child. A large number of elementary schools were opened under DPEP and SSA in all corners of the country. But, whether in reality the education is available and accessible to children? The study was conducted to explore the position of availability and accessibility of elementary education to children in relation to RTE (Right to Education) Act. The aggregate sample of 600 respondents was drawn from Rewa District. The study has brought out that there is no significant difference on availability of elementary education to male and female children in rural and urban areas but there is significant difference in the perception of availability of elementary education in rural and urban students, rural and urban teachers.

Keywords: Rewa district, availability, elementary and right to education

1. Introduction

In the era of liberalization, globalization and privatization, education plays a significant role in the multifaceted development of a nation and its people. Education is also seen as the most influential agent of modernization apart from industrialization and urbanization in India (Singh 1973). A number of programmes to achieve the goal of universalization of elementary education have been initiated by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India. Some of the important initiatives have been the Operation Blackboard (1986), Non-formal Education Scheme (1986), the Shiksha Karmi Project (1987), Mahila Samakhya (1989), Lok Jumbish (1992), the District Primary Education Programme (1994), the Mid-day Meal Scheme (2005) and the Sarva Siksha Abhiyaan (2001), which aimed at completion of eight years of schooling by all children between 6-14 years, by 2010. Then the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act or Right to Education (RTE) Act was passed by the Indian Parliament on 4th August 2009 and was enforced in India from April 1, 2010 which serves as a building block to ensure that every child has the right to be guaranteed with quality elementary education.

Right to Education (RTE) Act was heralded as a historic movement, as for the first time quality norms for a range of issues including infrastructure, teacher education and training, classroom transactions and assessments were laid down. Four years on, however, as the deadline of March 31, 2013 for meeting these norms has come and gone. The Act seems suspended in a vacuum, as policy and planning appear to operate in a world of their own, often parallel to the mandate of the Act. Therefore, there is need to examine the implementation of this Act and a study was conducted after the deadline of RTE Act and discussion were made with all concerned stakeholders to get their views and suggestions for improvements in Rewa district of Madhya Pradesh.

2. Objectives of study

- To study the position of availability of elementary education to children in relation to RTE.
- To study the access to elementary education to children in relation to RTE.
- To suggest measures for improvement of availability and accessibility of elementary education to all children.

3. Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is no significant interaction of gender and location on the perception of availability in the students of elementary education.
2. There is no significant difference in the perception of availability of elementary education between rural and urban Headmasters.
3. There is no significant difference in the perception of availability of elementary education between rural and urban Teachers

4. Methodology

In the present study descriptive survey method was employed.

Tools Used

Self-constructed and validated Questionnaires were used for assessment of Availability and Access to elementary education. Forty items were designed in affirmative form in three point attitudinal scale- Fully agree, Partially agree and Disagree on the two components of Right to education i.e. Availability and Accessibility of elementary education on the norms of RTE. The tools were developed for administration on headmasters, teachers, students and parents.

Sample

The sample of the study was drawn from the rural and urban

government elementary schools of Rewa district of Madhya Pradesh state. The distribution of sample is given in table no.1

Table 1: Distribution of the sample according to Area and Stakeholders

S. No.	Elementary Schools	Students		Teachers	Headmasters
		Boys	Girls		
1.	Rural	100	100	40	20
2.	Urban	100	100	40	20
Total		200	200	80	40

Statistical Technique Used

The data obtained through the administration of questionnaire and official information was classified amongst different pre-decided categories like gender, locale, group etc., and was put to statistical treatment by way of computing the statistical measures, like mean, standard deviation, t-value, t-test, level of

significance and ANOVA.

5. Analysis and interpretation of data

Ho1: There is no significant interaction of gender and location on the perception of availability in the students of elementary education.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Perception of Availability of Elementary Education in Rural and Urban Students

Source of Variance	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F-Ratio
Gender (A)	1.211	1	1.211	0.018
Location (B)	4747.211	1	4747.211	76.06*
Interaction (Axb)	62.211	1	62.211	1.934
Within-Error	12788.281	396		
Total	17598.91			

* Significance

Gender (A)

The interaction effect of gender on perception of availability of elementary education reveals the F-ratio for difference in mean gain scores of male and female is 0.018 against the table value 3.86 at 0.05 level of significance. So, the obtained value is less than the table value (0.018<3.86). Hence, the result indicates that male and female students do not differ significantly with regard to perception of availability of elementary education to them.

regard to perception of availability of elementary education.

Interaction Effect (A X B)

It was observed from the table no. 2 that the F-ratio for the interaction among gender and location is 1.934 against the table value 3.86 at 0.05 level of significance. So the obtained value is less than the table value (1.933<3.86). Hence, the result indicates that the gender and location do not interact significantly with each other regard to perception of availability of elementary education.

Location (B)

The interaction effect of location on perception of availability of elementary education reveals the F-ratio for difference in mean gain scores of urban and rural students is 76.06 against the table value 3.86 at 0.05 level of significance. So, the obtained value is more than the table value (76.06 > 3.86). Hence, the result indicates that urban and rural students differ significantly with

Thus the hypothesis, "There is no significant interaction of gender and location on the perception of availability in the students of elementary education." is accepted.

Ho 2: There is no significant difference in the perception of availability of elementary education between rural and urban headmasters.

Table 3: Comparison of Mean, SD, T-Value, Significance of Perception of Availability between Rural and Urban Headmasters.

Group	No. Of Cases	Mean	SD	Calculated T- Value
Urban Headmaster	20	50.81	7.14	0.332*
Rural Headmaster	20	50.12	5.57	

*Table t-value 2.02 and hence t value is not significant

Observation of table no. 4 indicates that the obtained t-value 0.332 is less than the Tabled t-value of 2.02 for the degree of freedom 38 at 0.05 level, therefore we can conclude that the urban Headmasters and rural Headmasters do not differ in perception of availability of elementary education. Thus the hypothesis "There is no significant difference in the perception

of availability of elementary education between rural and urban Headmasters" is accepted.

Ho 3: There is no significant difference in the perception of availability of elementary education between rural and urban teachers.

Table 4: Comparison of Mean, SD, T-Value, Significance of Perception of Availability between Rural and Urban Teachers.

Group	No. Of Cases	Mean	SD	Calculated T- Value
Urban Teachers	40	51.89	5.46	2.454*
Rural Teachers	40	48.82	5.59	

* Table t-value 1.99 and hence t value is significant

Observation of table no. 4 indicates that the obtained t-value 2.454 is greater than the Table t-value of 1.99 for the degree of freedom 78 at 0.05 level, therefore we can conclude that the urban teachers and rural teachers are different in perception of availability of elementary education. Thus the hypothesis, "There is no significant difference in the perception of availability of elementary education between rural and urban Teachers" is rejected.

6. Major Findings of the Study

The findings of the position of availability of elementary Education to children from the perception of Students, Headmasters, Parents and Teachers are:-

- 1) Perception of students: In perception of male and female students the availability of elementary education to them did not differ significantly. But at the same time a significant difference has been noted on availability of elementary education between rural and urban students. It may be due to a reason that DPEP/SSA had ensured the opening of primary and upper-primary schools within walking distance and admissions in these schools were done without any gender discrimination. But the children in rural areas may feel difficulty for availing elementary education in reaching school due to lack of transport facilities etc
- 2) Perception of headmasters: In perception of the Headmasters there was no significant difference on availability of elementary education to the children in rural and urban areas as the elementary schools are opened on the set norms of SSA/DPEP which try to remove regional disparities and the headmasters work for implementation of the state policies.
- 3) Perception of teachers: The teachers perceived that there was no significant difference on the availability of elementary education to the children in rural and urban areas. As the schools in rural areas are established by government agencies (like state government, tribal welfare department, SSA etc.) only and private agencies do not come forward while in urban areas elementary schools are established by private agencies also with better infrastructure (building, furniture etc.) which create some difference on availability.
- 4) Perception of parents: The parents also perceived a significant difference on availability of elementary education in rural and urban areas of Rewa district. A broader choice of elementary schools was found available in urban areas to the parents for their wards and transport facilities are also available to different schools at their door step.

Thus, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference on availability of elementary education to male and female children in views of the rural and urban headmasters but there is significant difference in availability of elementary education in the perception of rural and urban students, rural and urban teachers and rural and urban parents.

7. Suggestions Based on Research Findings

- 1) The provision of pre-school education should be regarded as a permanent feature of the school system and of the overall development strategy so that it could strengthen the process of universalization and could provide a firm base for elementary education.
- 2) Looking into specific existing situation of elementary education, disparity between male and female education may be further narrowed down. The government has been pursuing policy in favour of female education by giving

privilege to rural areas. A universal motivational campaign should be launched in rural areas to attract girl children to attend schools by providing amenities in the school and free or low cost transport facilities.

- 3) It is recommended that multi-pronged development strategy be evolved by bringing about qualitative improvement in the system. It is recommended that existing facilities in the government schools in urban as well as rural areas be upgraded in order to accommodate more children. The schools should be spacious, comfortable, well-equipped with child friendly study materials and well-staffed so that they could provide quality education and compete with private institutions.
- 4) It is recommended that dangerous unsafe buildings be demolished and replaced by new ones. All buildings be properly looked after and maintained in a planned manner. Even community may be involved in minor repair, mud plastering and white washing of the building.
- 5) It is recommended that at least comfortable and durable mats be provided to all primary schools in the province.

8. Conclusion

Government has enacted and implemented the Act in the right spirit towards providing quality elementary education to all. Most of the investigated schools are able to fulfill basic infrastructure except a few but with regard to curriculum, accessibility, teachers' training and other related issues they are lagging behind. The observation and findings from the interview and questionnaire show a wide gap between what was expected and what has so far been done. The findings show that the noble objective of the right of every child to education can be achieved by collective efforts of all the stakeholders. There is a need for coordination, with strong political will and commitment, between the central and state government agencies. Inaction a law alone cannot guarantee the right to education in the country. The stakeholders such as, teachers, head of the institutions, parents, non-government organizations, and key persons of society can collectively make quality education available and accessible to every child under the overall umbrella of the central and state governments.

9. References

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