

Tribal Education and RTE Act. 2009: A study on Balangir district of Odisha

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Abstract

The main purpose of this paper was to explore the common issues and encounters that appeared, in deterring inclusion of tribal children in different parts of Balangir district of Odisha that were commonly attitudinal barriers of them, lack of awareness of the legal provisions and subsequent schemes, lack of necessary infrastructure in school, lack of and retention of trained staff adaptation of curriculum and materials and lack of control systems in elementary education. Though India has taken ownership for inclusive education by establishing legal provisions through the RTE Act. 2009 and Article 21 which made Right to Education a fundamental right. But we know in India acts are framed but they are not implemented with a true spirit because of ill motivated administrators. There are several issues and challenges which still need to explore and discuss for the successful implementation of Right to Education Act. in special reference to Balangir district of Odisha state. So according to the above matter three research questions and same number of objectives have been taken to justify the topic and highlight the current benefits, scenario and strategies of implementation of RTE Act. in the tribal areas. To gain an in-depth understanding of the topic, descriptive survey type of research design employed with 400 students of elementary school 200 male and 200 female and data analysed by using Mean, SD and 't' test. Results indicated that there is gender difference exist in relation to Right to Education. It was also found that there is ethnic difference exist in relation to Right to Education. At last the study made some suggestions like , the private school authorities may threaten the Tribal parents to expel their children in case of failure and there is a separate directorate for the welfare of the Scheduled Tribe along with different Ministries.

Key Words: RTE Act 2009, Tribal, Balangir District, Article 21, attitudinal barriers, elementary education, etc.

Introduction

India, as a country, includes persons with different background viz., cultural, social, economic, linguistic and therefore, once we have decided to address the issue of Education For All, we need to focus our attention on all children including those belonging to socially disadvantaged groups (Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes etc.). The diverse and complex structures of communities pose some serious challenges to India's education system. Adivasis, known officially as Scheduled Tribes (STs), are one of the officially recognised 'educationally backward' population groups.

Tribal communities have historically occupied more remote and inaccessible parts of the country which continues to remain a crucial challenge for ensuring inclusive development for these groups today. While distinct from one another, a key factor that differentiates STs from mainstream society is their distinct ways of life, which include differences in socio-cultural and political organisation, though these are undergoing rapid changes as a result of modernisation and development (Nambissan 2000). With above concerned details the Right of children to free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 (RTE Act, 2009) is a detailed and

comprehensive piece of legislation of Government of India which includes provision related to elementary schools, teachers, curriculum, evaluation, access and specific division of duties and responsibilities of different stakeholders and inclusion of exclusion childrens in the mainstream of education in special reference to tribal.

The Govt. of Odisha has taken various earnest steps towards implementation of RTE Act 2009 across the state with special attention to tribal areas. There are 62 tribes in Odisha with 22.21 % of the total population of the State (Sahu, 2014). The rate of literacy among the Scheduled Tribes is 52.24% against the overall literacy rate of 72.87% of the State as per 2011 census and its in a alarming condition in the Balangir district that total 43.64% and women literacy less than thirty 25.52%. In tribal areas of Balangir, the development with respect to economic, political and educational is lagging as compared to rest of the country and state. There is shortage of studies particularly, related to awareness of parents, teachers about RTE Act in tribal areas of Balangir in particular and in Odisha general.

Review of related studies

If we will analyse the following studies and publications, we can better understand that how and what the benefits of RTE Act in the process of inclusion of tribal children are in the tribal areas. **Sujatha (n.d.)** points out that the educational outcomes of tribal children are affected by social and locational factors, in addition to school-related variables. Access to basic education still remains a challenge for a large segment of this population across the country, especially in economically or/and educationally backward areas. **Rustogi et al., (2012)** the reasons for the poor educational status of tribal children are many. Studies have shown that deprivations faced by tribal children consist of a larger set than what is accounted by conventional measures of poverty. The dropout rates for tribal children between classes I-V have been particularly high in India (65 per cent, with the dropout rate for tribal girls being as high as 82 per cent). The sharpest drop in enrolment is seen to be between classes I and II (**NCERT 2006b**). **Mane** has pointed out that retention has been a crucial challenge when it comes to tribal

education, compounded by problems of high absenteeism and large-scale failure in year-end assessments (**Mane 2010a**). However, high dropout rates between classes I and II could also imply that class I enrolment is exaggerated. Nevertheless, a number of studies have shown that tribal children have lower achievement levels when compared with non-tribal children (**Sujatha, 2004**). **Jha and Jhingran (2005)** also identified that the incidence of family migration for piece-rate wage-work, where wages are paid on the basis of volume of work and not on working hours, was the highest among ST families among all disadvantaged groups. **Bagai and Nundy (2009)** One of the much demanded/recommended provisions for tribal education has been the use of tribal language, at least during the early years of schooling. It has been recommended that tribal languages should form the primary medium of instruction for the child, as a means to gain knowledge of tribal culture, ethnicity, literature and arts, as well as to allow for the acquisition of the state/mainstream educational language later. It has been argued that gradual introduction of the state language can enhance the tribal child's linguistic capital as well as educational outcomes in relation to mainstream education.

Rationale of the Study

Education in India is now under heavy strain. The national scenario is characterized by the growing illiteracy, unabated dropout rates in elementary education and high absenteeism. The government chose the public-private partnership as it could not cater to the large population of the country by itself. This suddenly became a burden of private schools. They had to undertake this responsibility upon them as the government could not handle the situation all by themselves.

The free education in private schools is only from 6 to 14 years of age. After 14 years, which will be 8th grade, the children either have to pay fees, dropout of school or join in a government school. This puts pressure on children who want to continue studying but their parents cannot afford it. The RTE children join in the school in the 1st standard and go on till the 8th standard. They may not have the same background as the other children in the classroom which will be a drawback or a barrier for their learning.

In exercise of the power conferred by section 38 of the RTE Act, 2009, the Government of Odisha formulated and implemented “The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Rule, 2010”. It came into force from 27th September, 2010. The spirit of the Government of Odisha rule as regards to free elementary education is same like that of the RTE Act, 2009. It includes issues in relation to implementation of rules in local conditions. It also provides a provision to analyse status of implementation of RTE, awareness and understanding of the provisions of RTE amongst management, teachers and parents of children studying private schools and the challenges each stakeholder is facing in Balangir district.

Issues in Hand

Following are the questions raised by the researcher and tried to solve it with in the study

1. To find out gender difference in relation to Right to Education Act. in the process of inclusion at Balangir district.
2. To find out impact of parents literacy in relation to their social inclusion in Right to Education Act. 2009 in the district
3. To find out some everlasting innovative suggestions towards inclusion of the tribal students in to educational systems.

Research questions

The present paper tried to highlight the following issues like

1. Whether there is any gender difference in relation to Right to Education Act. in the process of inclusion?
2. Whether there is any impact on parents’ literacy in relation to Right to Education Act. in the process of inclusion?
3. What are the innovative suggestions for their inclusion in the educational system?

Methodology of the study

Methodology

Descriptive survey method used in the study as the investigators tried to get information about more than one variable also with better

understanding of perceptions of stakeholders (Hittleman and Simon, 1997). Through this method information about conditions, situations and events that occur in the present can be obtained (UNESCO, 2005). Therefore, in the present study the investigator used this method to explore all possibilities to measure the impact and effectiveness of RTE Act. and issues with regarding to the tribal inclusion and its problem, their exclusion from the educational institution and education and their inclusion, Also the problems and its eradication from the root.

Sample

Keeping in view the nature of the population and variety of cliental group, the study was conducted elementary schools of Balangir district with taking 400 elementary school students of government schools and 50 parents. The sample was selected from each school of three subdivisions with 50 elementary school students were selected randomly. While selecting the sample care was taken that equal number of male and female students.

Tool for the present study

The present study employed self-standardised questionnaire to elicit their perception regarding RTE Act. and its merits and demerits for them in the process of inclusion. The researcher was interviewed more than 50 parents to know their perception regarding current education and technology and its impact on their current living condition with special reference to RTE Act.

Statistical Technique

Keeping in view of objectives of the study the data so collected was statistically analyzed by using simple statistics like percentage, Mean, Standard Deviation and ‘t’ – test were used for analysis and interpretation of data in the present study.

Analysis and Interpretation

Gender difference in relation to Right to Education Act. in the process of inclusion

	Male			Female			t
	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	
Right to Education	9.02	1.74	200	8.11	1.50	200	5.58**

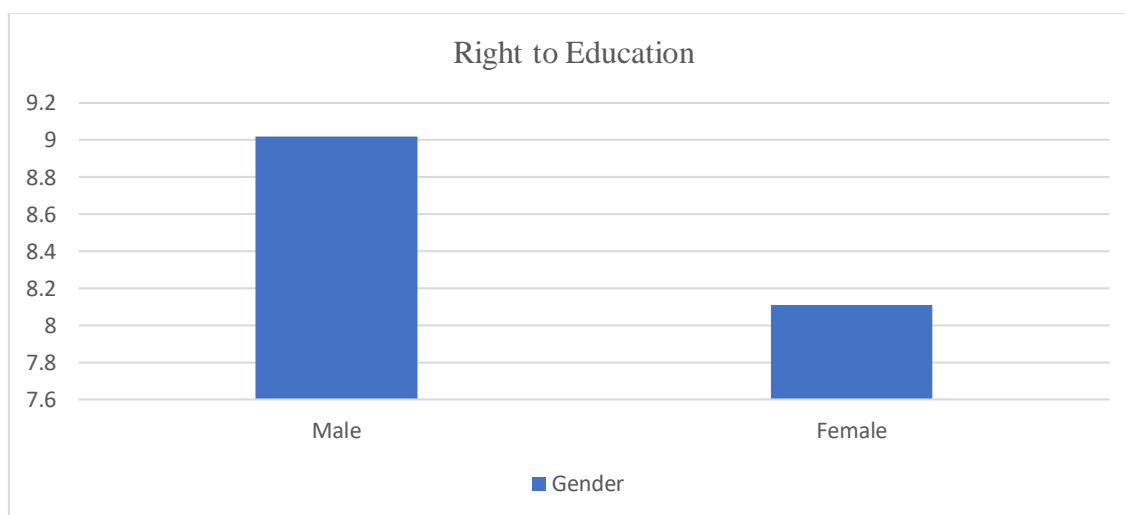
Note:(**P<.01.)

Mean and standard deviations of two groups of student participants (male & female) are presented in the table. To find out gender difference between the two groups (male and female) in relation to Right to Education *t test* was applied. The *t* value of Right to Education was presented in the Table. In Right to Education the mean and standard deviation found for male were (*M*= 9.02, *SD*=1.74)

respectively which was higher than the mean of female (*M*=8.11, *SD*=1.50).

In the analysis of *t test* it was found that the *t* value for Right to Education was (5.58) which was significant at .005 level (*p* < .01) .This indicated that there is gender difference exist in relation to Right to Education.

Figure: Represents the pictorial representation of the mean difference exists among the two groups.



Level of Education difference of parents and its impact on their children’s social inclusion in Right to Education Act. 2009

Educated Parents			Non-Educated Parents			t
M	SD	N	M	SD	N	

Right to Education	9.92	2.12	25	8.56	1.04	25	2.87**
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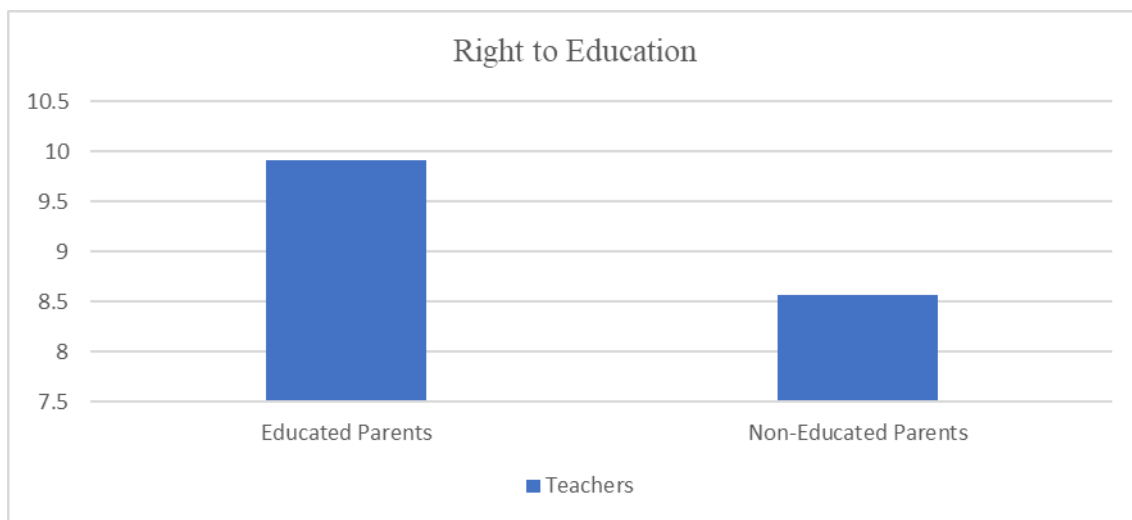
Note: (**P<.01.)

Mean and standard deviations of two groups of Parents participant (Educated & Non-Educated) are presented in the table. To find out level of education difference between the two groups (Educated & Non-Educated) in relation to Right to Education *t test* was applied. The *t* value of Right to Education was presented in the Table. In Right to Education the mean and standard deviation found for Educated Parents were ($M=$

9.92, $SD=2.12$) respectively which was higher than the mean of Non-Educated Parents ($M=8.56$, $SD=1.04$).

In the analysis of *t test* it was found that the *t* value for Right to Education was (2.87**) which was significant at .006 level ($p < .01$). This indicated that there is level of education difference exist in relation to Right to Education.

Figure: Represents the pictorial representation of the mean difference exists among the two groups.



Innovative suggestions towards inclusion of the tribal students in these areas under RTE. Act.

For quality education to truly reach every child in the country in general Balangir district in particular, it is necessary that the following steps are may be taken in to consideration:

- There is a conflict between the child labour law and the Right to Education Act, although both deal with related issues and promote the overall development of children. It is important to bring them in step, to avoid confusion.
- Immediate attention to improving infrastructure in ashram schools and other less infrastructure schools
- Develop aptitude of teachers during training to address both pedagogical concerns as

well in order to develop sensitivity towards tribal students

- There is a need to re-organize of both, the budgets spent on studentships as well as the process for availing these to make it more effective, especially in the light of tribal remote pocket expenditures on education at Balangir district.

- There is a separate directorate for the welfare of the Scheduled Tribe along with different Ministries. It should be properly oriented and organized in such a manner so that under the leadership of the Director and Minister, a group of social workers can study and can make spot enquiries to remove grievances of the Scheduled Tribe people in the way of social inclusion.

➤ The social and physical environment in which the Scheduled tribe population has been living has to be changed and improved not only by the Govt. But also, local stake holder should take responsibilities with better programmes in this regard for their social and educational inclusion.

➤ Roads and communications in the Scheduled tribe hilly areas must be improved. Emphasis must be laid on establishment of health centres, schools etc.

➤ Decent and non-corrupt officers should be appointed for proper implementation of the government welfare plans and subsequent economic and educational development of the Scheduled Tribe in these areas meant for inclusion. For that regular monitoring must be done by the better agencies.

Conclusion

For such historically deprived communities, providing access to education is simply not enough, the government has to take a proactive role in creating overall conditions and opportunities that will facilitate their transition and breaking of the intergenerational cycle of poverty and illiteracy. So, the government must make every effort to become self-sufficient by using the education cess and other taxes to effectively implement the RTE Act. Hence, the Government not only provide teacher training in a restructured way to implement the beliefs of RTE Act in better tribal oriented ways but also improve the quality of elementary education instead of focusing on creating awareness about RTE Act. at last creating awareness about RTE Act among parents and other members in tribal areas of Odisha and Balangir definitely help better for a real inclusion.

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