



PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION OF RIGHT TO EDUCATION ACT-2009 IN TRIBAL AREAS OF ODISHA

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ABSTRACT

The present study examined the perception of teachers about implementation of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 in tribal areas of Odisha. The investigator used Convergent Parallel Design for the present study. The sample consisted of 220 teachers from 40 selected elementary schools of 4 blocks of Kandhamala District, Odisha. Purposive sampling technique was used for selection of Sample. The investigator had developed an interview schedule to know the perception of teachers towards implementation of RTE Act in tribal areas, capitation fees, admission provision, training of teachers, SMC, curriculum, monitoring and supervision, library facilities and mid-day-meal scheme. Data were analysed by using percentage and graphs. The results indicated that, overall perception of teachers towards RTE Act is positive and courageous. Most of the respondents viewed RTE Act is essential for achieving Universalisation of elementary education. Very rare schools collected capitation fee and 8.18% schools held back or expelled the children from schools till completion of elementary education and half of the teachers viewed that RTE Act, 2009 is difficult to implement in tribal areas of Odisha.

Keywords: Perception, Right to Education Act, Tribal Areas

INTRODUCTION

Odisha, the land of many tribes is still as underdeveloped so as to the tribal education is concerned. There are 62 tribes in Odisha with 22.21 % of the total population of the State. Out of 30 administrative districts of Odisha, 7 districts like Koraput, Rayagada, Kandhamal, Nabarangpur, Malkangiri, Mayurbhanj and Sundergarh are declared as fully Scheduled districts. The literacy rate of Kandhamal district is 65.12 % out of which male literacy is 78.41% and female literacy is 52.46%. In order to improve the education status, increase the enrolment rate and provide quality education, the Govt. has implemented RTE Act, 2009. We have already spent eleven years, but there is an apprehension, whether this Act is effectively implemented or will faces similar fate like many other acts the country enacted and implemented. RTE Act is a fundamental right but the research studies showed that, there lays some attitudinal resistance to implement it properly on the part of various stakeholders which is creating conflicts and confusion. The stakeholders, particularly teachers play a very important role in implementation of the Act. Teacher's knowledge, views and perceptions towards this Act will definitely affect the implementation status of the RTE Act.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

After the implementation of RTE Act 2009, Govt, both at centre and state have taken a number of initiatives through various activities like seminar, workshop, awareness programme, training programmes, community programmes, pamphlet distribution and other activities like natak, dance, radio and TV show for successful implementation of RTE Act and improve the literacy rate of the people. (NCERT, 2012). There are some research studies relating to the topic discussed in the following paragraph.

Kour (2020) reported that Perceptions of elementary school Heads and Teachers are neither Favorable nor Unfavorable i.e. Moderate towards the Right to Education Act, 2009. But on the other side, it is found that the elementary school teachers are possessed favorable perceptions towards implementation procedures of the Right to Education Act, 2009. Balmiki (2018) found that approximately 20 percent of the headmasters still believed that only minimum qualifications should be the essential criteria for the appointment of the teachers. Whereas 80 percent headmasters are of the view that only minimum qualification is not enough for the appointment of the teachers. Experience, attitude and performance also should be taken into account for appointment of the teachers. Subramonian & Suprabha (2015) found a significant difference among prospective teachers perception towards RTE Act (dimensions of Acceptability, Adaptability and Accessibility) with respect to gender, domicile, and medium of instruction. Barman (2014) found a significant difference between Headmasters and Teachers regarding their attitude towards the Right to Education Act, 2009. Secondary School Teachers have more favorable attitude than that of the Headmasters about the various aspects enshrined in the Right to Education Act, 2009, Government school teachers comprising of 39.37 per cent perceive that prohibiting physical punishment and mental harassment has increased cases of misbehaviour and indiscipline among the students and teachers are no more in a position to curb and check undesirable behaviour practices such as smoking, drinking, consumption of pan, tobacco products and other intoxicants Zorinsangi (2018).

Kunju & Vakkil (2015) found no significant difference between male and female teachers trainees' perception about the RTE act.

Most of the researchers focussed on different dimensions like, admission process (Mishra,2011), Pupil-teacher ratio (Sharma & Saini, 2012), Implementation of RTE Act by Private Schools (Das, 2011), Awareness of stakeholders (Sarvapalli, 2012, Lal, 2014, Manju, 2015, Mandal & Barman, 2014, Kumari & Alam, 2014), children with disabilities (Soni, 2013), effective monitoring and implementation (Abbas, 2014), Attitude towards RTE Act, (Mandal & Barman, 2014), need of teacher training program on right to education act. (Krishnarao & Mangesh, 2015). However, there is hardly any study conducted in tribal areas related to perception of teachers towards implementation of RTE Act-2009, particularly from the prospective of teachers. Hence the investigator was keened to undertake such a study to know the perception of teachers about implementation of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 in tribal areas of Odisha, where the researcher expected that the Overall perception of teachers about implementation of RTE Act, 2009 is positive.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher had used survey method to conduct the present study. Descriptive research design was used in the study. Population of the present study comprises of all the elementary schools of tribal areas of Odisha. Target population is restricted to all the elementary schools of Kandhamal district of Odisha and the accessible population is 04 blocks of Kandhamal district out of 12 blocks. Out of 12 blocks of Kandhamal district, 04 blocks were selected randomly for the present study. From each block 10 elementary schools were selected randomly. From each school interested teachers were selected purposively. This includes 220 numbers of teachers as shown in the Table-1

Table-1: Number of teachers drawn from sampled schools

Sl. No.	Block	No. of Teacher (Gender)		
		Male	female	Total
1	Phulbani	30	39	69
2	Khajuripada	24	29	53
3	Chakapada	22	31	53
4	Tikabali	19	26	45
Total	04	95	125	220

One interview schedule for teachers was used in this study. The tool was developed to know the perception of teachers related to some important provisions of RTE Act like implementation of RTE Act in tribal areas, capitation fees, admission provision, training of teachers, SMC, curriculum, monitory and supervision, library facilities, mid-day-meal scheme and valuable suggestions of teacher for effective implementation of RTE Act, 2009. This interview schedule has been divided into two sections. Section I requires general information name

of the teacher, designation, and school address. Section II contains specific items, which give detail information about the perception of the teachers. It contains 34 items which includes both open and close ended questions.

RESULTS

The objective of the present study is to know the perception of teachers about implementation of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 in tribal areas of Odisha. Investigator discussed and asked questions to teacher in order to know their perceptions towards RTE Act.

1. Improving learning achievement

RTE Act helps in improving learning achievement are analyzed using percentage as given in the following table-2.

Table 2: RTE Act helps in improving learning achievement

Aspect	Yes (%)	No (%)
RTE Act helps in improving learning achievement	142 (64.55)	78 (35.45)

From Table-2 it is found that out of 220 teachers, majority (64.55%) viewed that RTE Act helps in improving learning achievement. About one-third (35.45%) of them did not agree with the aforesaid statement. Those teachers who agreed, they give the following reasons for improving learning achievement of students.

Table-3: RTE Act towards improving learning achievement

Equal educational rights and opportunities	Students level wise education	Evaluation based on CCE	More importance to slow learners	Appointment of subject teachers
68 (48%)	16 (11%)	47 (33%)	7 (5%)	04 (3%)

When the investigator asked, “How does RTE Act helps students for academic growth in spite of their individual differences?”, almost half of the respondents (48%) viewed that after implementation of RTE Act, all categories of students got equal educational rights and opportunities in school which helped in their academic growth. Some of the teacher respondents (11%) said that children are provided education according to their level. One-third of the respondents (33%) pointed out that after RTE Act, student’s performance and progress were made through CCE. So, it helps the students in their academic growth. But few of the teacher respondents (5%) viewed that in class room poor achievers/slow learners are given more importance and extra time which helps them in their academic growth. Very few respondents (3%) said that it is possible due to appointment of subject teacher and quality development programme for children taken by school.

Box- A: Appointment of special trained teachers

Four-fifth of the respondents (80%) viewed that special trained teacher should be appointed in tribal areas and the local authority must provide special training to teachers.

Table 4: Reduce Anxiety and Fear

Aspect	Yes (%)	No (%)
Reduce anxiety and fear of students towards study	174 (79.09)	46 (20.91)

From the above Table-4 it is found that majority of the respondents (79.09%) viewed that RTE Act reduces anxiety and fear of students towards study. One fifth of the respondents are not agreed with the opinion that RTE Act reduces anxiety and fear of students towards study. Those teachers who agreed, they give the following reasons

Table 5: Reduce Anxiety and Fear of the students

No Physical Punishment	Child centric Education	Reduce Fear and Anxiety	Not Appear any Board Exam before completion of EE
167(95.91%)	93 (53.18%)	61 (35%)	19 (11.12%)

When the investigator tried to know the views of teachers that how RTE Act reduce anxiety and fear of students towards study, it is found that most of the respondents (95.91 %) viewed that after RTE Act students are not provided any kind of physical punishment or mental harassment which reduce the fear of students towards study. More than half of the respondents (53.18%) said that they follow the child centric approach where the students can ask questions to the teacher without any fear. One third of the respondents (35%) viewed that RTE Act reduced fear and anxiety towards study because teacher teaches the students according to the needs and interests of the child.

Table 6: Difficult in Implementing RTE Act, 2009 in Tribal Areas

Aspect	Yes (%)	No (%)
Difficult to implement RTE Act, 2009 in Tribal Areas	122 (55.45)	98 (44.55)

The Table-6 shows that out of 220 teachers, about half of the respondents (55.45%) viewed that RTE Act, 2009 is difficult to implement in tribal areas of Odisha. Almost most half of the respondents said that RTE Act can be implemented in tribal areas of Odisha. Those teachers, who said it is difficult to implement in tribal areas of Odisha suggested the following reasons.

Table 7: Difficult in Implementing RTE Act, 2009 in Tribal Areas

Poor and Illiterate Parents	Lack of Awareness of Parents	Local language are not available in book	Communicational problem with children	Blind belief of parents
110(90.45%)	100 (81.82%)	41 (33.63%)	31 (25%)	13 (10.90%)

When the teachers were asked, why RTE Act is difficult to implement in elementary stage in tribal areas of Odisha majority of the respondents (90.45%) viewed that tribal parents are very poor, illiterate and four-fifth of the respondents (81.82%) told that parents are not aware about education where as one third of the teachers viewed that parents are used local language which are not available in books or written. So, language is the main barrier for successful implementation of RTE Act in tribal areas of Odisha. Similarly, one-fourth (25%) of the respondents teachers said that we face a lot of problems at the time of communication with children and

parents. At the time of discussion almost one-tenth of the respondents (11%) viewed that parents are not sending their children to school due to blind believes.

Box-B: Problems related to RTE Act.

13% teachers from the sampled school viewed that they have not faced any problems to implement the RTE Act, 2009 in their respective schools. They conducted all the activities and follow all the rules and regulations of said Act.

Table 8: Inevitable of Dress code for Teachers

Aspect	Yes (%)	No (%)
Dress code for teacher is inevitable	140 (63.64)	80 (36.36)

From Table-8 it is found that out of 220 teachers, majority (63.64%) viewed that Dress code for teacher is inevitable. About one-third (36.36%) of them did not agree with the aforesaid statement. Those teachers who agreed, they give the following reasons for frequency of dress code for teachers.

Table 9: Frequency of Dress code for Teachers

Dress code is Essential for self-respect	Feelings of Equality	Good impact on students	Maintain discipline inside and outside class
132 (94.55%)	111 (79.55%)	83 (59.54%)	47 (33.18%)

At the time of interview with teachers, investigator asked the questions related to dress code of the teachers and it is found that most of the respondents (94.55%) viewed that dress code is essential for teachers because it increase the self- respect of teachers. Four-fifth of the respondents (79.55%) said that it creates equal feelings among all teachers. Whereas majority of the respondents (59.54%) said that it positively impact on students in their curricular and co-curricular activities. One-third (33.18%) of the teachers said that dress code will help to maintain discipline inside and outside the classroom.

Table 10: Problems in seeking cooperation from parents

Aspect	Yes (%)	No (%)
Problems in seeking cooperation from parents	157 (71.36)	63 (28.64)

The above Table-10 summarized the teachers' views against problems in seeking cooperation from parents. Third fourth of the respondents 157 (71.36%) viewed that parents are not cooperating teachers whereas one fourth respondents (28.64%) teachers said that they did not face any problems in seeking cooperation from parents.

Table 11: Frequency of Problems in seeking cooperation from parents

Lack of cooperation from parents	Lack of consciousness of parents about learning and schooling	Providing insufficient learning material to their child	Children involved in house hold activities
142 (90.91%)	122 (78.18%)	50 (32.27%)	12 (8.18%)

From Table-11 it is clear that, when the investigator asked the teachers about the difficulties and problems face in seeking cooperation from the parents. All most all the respondents (90.91%) told that parents are not fully cooperating with schools and teachers. Whereas 78.18% teachers told that they are not aware about their child's learning and not conscious about their child's schooling. All most one third of the respondents (32.27%) viewed that students get the books, uniforms and tray in free of cost but parents are not providing writing materials to their children. At the time of discussion few respondents (8.18%) said that parents are involving their children in the house hold activities and also they take care of their small brothers and sisters as their parents go outside for daily wages.

2. Teachers Perception about the role of SMCs

When the teachers were asked about the role of SMC members in school related activities, all teachers agree that SMCs helps in preparing school development plans and other activities done by the SMCs which are mentioned in Table-12

Table 12: Perception of Teachers about the role of SMCs

Sl. No.	Activities	SMC helps	%
1	Process of admission	58	26.36
2	Regularity of teachers and students	192	87.27
3	Quality education	112	50.91
4	Monitoring MDM programme	210	95.45
5	Proper utilization of School grant	185	84.09
6	Participation in the function	103	46.81
7	Create awareness among community members and parents	157	71.36
8	Discuss the school related problems	142	64.55
9	Take care of dropout children	23	10.45

From the above Table12 it is found that. High majority of the respondents (87.27%) opined that parents observed and discussed the regularity of the teachers as well as students. Whereas as most of the respondents (95.45%) viewed that SMCs members discussed proper utilisation of school grant in maintaining infrastructure, classroom, teaching learning materials, MDM and co-curricular activities. Majority (71.36%) of the respondent teachers opined that parents play the vital role in creating awareness among community members and parents and the same majority of the respondents (64.55%) viewed that during the SMC meeting they discussed the problem related to school like teachers appointment, mid-day meal programme, evaluation procedure and infrastructural facilities. An one tenth of the respondents (10.45%) viewed that at the time of SMCs parents suggested to take care of the dropout children in the nearest feeding villages.

Box-C: Teacher's View

One teacher told that, Bonda tribal people are far away from educated and modern society. They are in the path of blind beliefs and not aware about education. So, in order to make the Act successful govt. should take care of these tribal people and other tribal community.

MAJOR FINDINGS

- Most of the respondents (94.09%) viewed that RTE Act is essential for achieving Universalisation of elementary education.
- Most of the respondents (79.09%) viewed that it reduces anxiety and fear of students towards study.
- Very rare schools (4.55%) collected capitation fee and 8.18% schools held back or expelled the children from schools till completion of elementary education.
- High Majority (90%) of teachers viewed, RTE Act needs regular monitoring and supervision, Local authority must maintain the record of children from 6 to 14 years, school provide information to local authority & Govt.
- About Two-third of the respondents (64.55%) viewed that RTE Act help in improving learning achievement.
- Most of the respondents (79.09%) viewed that RTE Act reduce anxiety and fear of students towards study.
- Some of the teacher respondents (11.12%) said that RTE Act banned the board exam before completion of elementary education, so it reduces the anxiety and fear towards study.
- About half (55.45%) of the teachers viewed that RTE Act, 2009 is difficult to implement in tribal areas of Odisha.
- When the teacher were asked why RTE Act is difficult to implement in elementary stage in tribal areas of Odisha majority (90.45%) teachers in Kandhamal District told that tribal parents are very poor, illiterate and four-fifth (81.82%) teachers told that parents are not aware about education.
- High Majority (94.55%) of the teachers viewed that dress code is essential for teachers because it increase the self- respect of teachers and help in maintaining uniformity among the teachers.
- 71.36% teacher respondents viewed that parents are not cooperating the teachers.
- Most of the respondents (95.45%) told that SMCs members discussed proper utilisation of school grant in maintaining infrastructure, classroom, teaching learning materials, MDM and co-curricular activities.
- Most of the respondents (94%) viewed that Subject and class wise lack of teaching faculties is the main problem in implementing RTE Act. third-fourth (77%) of the teachers said that lack of infrastructure is another barrier in the way of implementing RTE Act.

DISCUSSION

This section discusses the findings as per the research question. The research question stated as what is the overall perception of teachers towards RTE ACT, 2009 in tribal Areas of Odisha? The findings revealed that the overall perception of teachers towards RTE Act is positive and courageous. This findings is in similar with the findings of Zorinsangi (2018), but the research conducted by Kour, 2020 reported that Perceptions of elementary school Heads and Teachers are neither Favorable nor Unfavorable i.e. Moderate towards the Right to Education Act, 2009. Another study conducted by Mandal & Barman (2014) found that attitude of Teachers was more favorable than that of the Headmasters. Most of the respondents viewed RTE Act is essential for Universalisation of elementary education. 60% of the respondents said that there is lack of understanding of RTE Act by the school authorities which affects the implementation of RTE Act, 2009. High Majority of the respondents (90%) viewed that RTE Act needs regular monitoring and supervision. Very rare schools (4.55%) collected capitation fee and 8.18% schools held back or expelled the children from schools till completion of elementary education. Study conducted by Balmiki, 2018 suggested that nominal fees should be charged from the students with underprivileged students and full fees should be charged to the students with better economic capability. Most of the respondents (95.91 %) viewed that after RTE Act students are not provided any kind of physical punishment or mental harassment which reduce the fear of students towards study but the findings of Balmiki, 2018 revealed that 70 percent of headmasters perceived that disciplinary punishment and actions are needed to maintain discipline in the class which is contradictory to the policy of Right to Education. Majority (71.36%) of the respondent teachers opined that parents play the vital role in creating awareness among community members and parents and the same majority of the respondents (64.55%) viewed that during the SMC meeting they discussed the problem related to school like teachers appointment, mid-day meal programme, evaluation procedure and infrastructural facilities. The same result found from the study conducted by Balmiki, 2018 majority of the headmasters of secondary schools perceived that the school management committee (SMC) members take active part in the meeting and discuss the problems of the school. From the above discussion it is clear that, teachers perception for effective implementation of RTE Act is positive but somehow it is contradictory with the findings of study conducted by few researchers.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

All the outcomes of the study related to perception of teachers towards implementation of RTE Act, 2009 have immense implications for the teachers, parents, govt. authority and policy makers/ administrators. The finding based Educational Implications of the present study are:

- a) It seems that most of the teachers are not serious about effective implementations of RTE Act in tribal areas of Odisha. So all teachers should be involved and participate under various training programme, conferences, and workshop to improve their knowledge regarding RTE Act.

- b) It seems that one third teachers have not possessed minimum qualification for appointment as teacher. So they must acquire the minimum qualification through difference in-service training programmes.
- c) It will help both state and central Government to know the perception of teachers towards RTE Act.

CONCLUSIONS

Education is the most powerful and key to tribal development. The educational status of tribal people can be judged by the analysis of literacy rate. The Literacy rates for tribals are much lower than those recorded for other groups. Moreover, a significantly large proportion of tribal children drop out of school at the primary level. Poor quality of education too is an issue as reflected in poorer learning outcomes. The Right to Education (RTE) Act can be a huge opportunity for pushing the agenda of tribal education across the state. Teachers play a very vital role in effective implementation of RTE Act in tribal areas of Odisha. Teachers' positive attitude regarding the provisions of RTE Act is essential for successful and effective implementation of the Act. Govt. will take the initiatives through different programmes and training to develop the RTE Act related Knowledge and positive perception of teachers about said historical Act. One fifth of the respondents are not agreed with the opinion that RTE Act reduces anxiety and fear of students towards study.

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