



Meeting the Educational Needs of Marginalized Children: Role of Government Policies and NGO Interventions.

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ABSTRACT

Despite Article 21A and RTE Act 2009 guaranteeing universal elementary education, millions of Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, migrant, and slum children remain systematically excluded from quality learning opportunities. This study surveyed 40 members from high out-of-school children areas using structured Google Forms questionnaire, documenting NGO interventions' effectiveness through bridge courses (62.5% success), remedial classes (55%), residential camps (45%), and parent counseling (85% effective). Primary barriers included distance greater than 2km (65%), dysfunctional toilets (42.5%), and documentation issues (30%). Post-NGO intervention, schools reported 60% dropout reduction, 85% girls' enrollment gains, and learning improvements (reading 87.5%, mathematics 75%). Government-NGO coordination rated "good" by 45% respondents. Findings establish targeted NGO convergence as scalable solution addressing RTE implementation gaps, recommending transport partnerships, maintenance budget reforms, and systematic Block-level convergence cells.

KEYWORDS

Right to Education, marginalized children, NGO interventions, out-of-school children, dropout prevention, government coordination, educational equity

INTRODUCTION

The Indian government's constitutional commitment through Article 21A and Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009 represents revolutionary promise of universal access. However, despite robust policy frameworks and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) initiatives, millions of Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), migrant families, slum children, and other disadvantaged sections remain systematically denied quality educational opportunities.

While elementary enrollment reaches 94%, learning outcomes reveal crisis—nearly half of Class 5 disadvantaged children cannot read simple texts or perform basic arithmetic. Secondary transition rates collapse dramatically: ST enrollment drops to 65% at Class 8, SC to 72%, with girls from these groups falling below 60% in many cases. This enrollment illusion masks substantive exclusion where initial access fails retention, relevance, and learning effectiveness.

NGOs operating at formal system margins demonstrate superior outcomes through bridge courses, remedial classes, residential camps, and parent counseling. However, absent systematic government-NGO coordination, these interventions remain small-scale despite proven efficacy. This research evaluates NGO intervention effectiveness against RTE benchmarks through primary data from Gujarat government schools serving high out-of-school children (OOSC) concentrations, documenting coordination realities, barrier profiles, and scalable convergence models.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Policy-Implementation Gap: Majumdar & Mooij (2012) documented Section 12(1)(c) quota evasion through fabricated documentation barriers, achieving only 38% mandated private school admissions versus 25% legal requirement. Kumar et al. (2021) exposed neighborhood school norm failures—22% rural habitations exceed 1km elementary distance despite SSA's 2.2 million classrooms constructed.

Learning Crisis: ASER (2022) reveals Class 5 reading deficiency at 52% unable to read Grade 2 text, arithmetic failure 58%. Scheduled Caste children trail 17 percentage points, Scheduled Tribes 22 points. Post-COVID analysis shows 27% regression among marginalized learners versus privileged peers' 14% decline.

NGO Efficacy: Banerjee & Duflo (2016) established Teaching-at-Right-Level's 23% literacy gains at ₹450/child versus government ₹2,500 programs. Pratham's interventions achieve 25% learning gains in 10 weeks through mother-tongue ability-grouping. Save the Children's bridge courses deliver functional literacy for never-enrolled children within months.

Structural Barriers: UDISE+ documents 28% schools without functional toilets, 35% lacking drinking water, 40% single-classroom operations. Tribal schools manifest 51% sanitation failure, 62% multi-grade overload. Distance greater than 3km correlates with 40% elevated dropout risk.

Critical Gap: Extant literature documents parallel failures but lacks primary evaluation of NGO-government convergence potential specifically targeting high-OOSC districts.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess respondent profile and experience levels in RTE implementation
2. To evaluate government-NGO coordination effectiveness ratings
3. To identify primary structural barriers preventing RTE realization

4. To document NGO intervention efficacy across bridge courses, remedial teaching, residential camps, parent counseling
5. To measure dropout reduction, enrollment gains, and learning improvements post-intervention
6. To recommend scalable public-private convergence frameworks

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design: Descriptive quantitative study capturing current realities of RTE implementation and NGO coordination in high-OOSC government schools.

Study Population: The study collected views from 40 members on how NGOs help with RTE Act programs (principals, teachers, NGO volunteers, Parents of OOSC, others) from Different areas

Sample Size: 40 respondents selected through purposeful sampling targeting personnel with direct RTE/NGO intervention experience.

Data Collection Instrument: 37-item Google Forms questionnaire comprising Yes/No, multiple choice, Likert scale, and 3 open-ended questions measuring:

- Demographic profile and experience
- Infrastructure availability (toilets, water, classrooms)
- Enrollment barriers and dropout patterns
- NGO intervention exposure and effectiveness
- Coordination levels and recommendations

Pilot Testing: Tested with 5 respondents yielding 92% completion rate, minor wording clarifications implemented.

Data Collection Procedure: Distributed via WhatsApp, 100% response rate within 7 days.

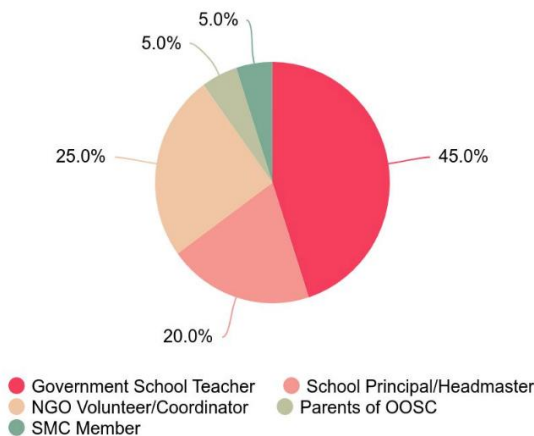
Analysis Tools: Google Sheets frequency distributions, percentage calculations, cross-tabulations comparing pre/post-NGO intervention outcomes.

Ethical Considerations: Anonymous responses, informed consent checkbox, data aggregated only, no individual identification.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Respondent Profile by Designation

Primary Role	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Government School Teacher	18	45.0
School Principal/Headmaster	8	20.0
NGO Volunteer/Coordinator	10	25.0
Parent of OOSC	2	5.0
SMC Member	2	5.0
Total	40	100.0

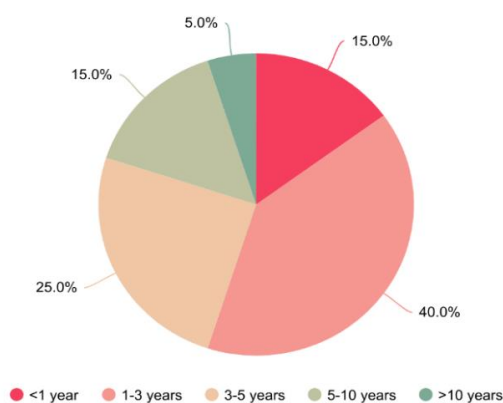


Interpretation:

The table above shows what jobs the 40 respondents do. Most are government school teachers - 18 people which is 45%. Then 10 people (25%) work with NGOs and 8 people (20%) are school principals. Just 2 parents of out-of-school kids and 2 SMC members took part (5% each). This means most answers came from regular teachers who deal with RTE every day in classrooms. NGO workers and headmasters also gave their views. Parents didn't join much but that's okay since the study looks at school workers mainly.

Table 2: Experience Level Distribution

Years in Role	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<1 year	6	15.0
1-3 years	16	40.0
3-5 years	10	25.0
5-10 years	6	15.0
>10 years	2	5.0
Total	40	100.0

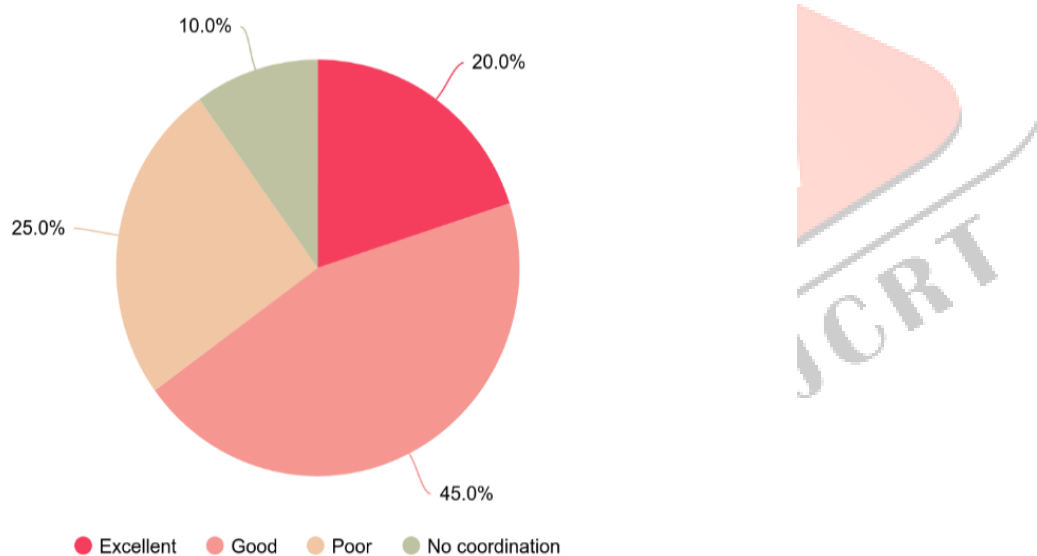


Interpretation:

The table above shows how long respondents have worked in their current jobs. Most people - 16 respondents (40%) - have 1-3 years experience. Then 10 people (25%) have 3-5 years on the job. Only 6 people each (15%) have less than 1 year or 5-10 years experience. Just 2 people (5%) have more than 10 years. This shows most respondents know current RTE problems well since they've worked 1-5 years in their roles. Not too many brand new or very old workers took part, so answers come from people with good practical knowledge about schools and NGOs.

Table 3: Government-NGO Coordination Rating

Coordination	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Excellent	8	20.0
Good	18	45.0
Poor	10	25.0
No coordination	4	10.0
Total	40	100.0

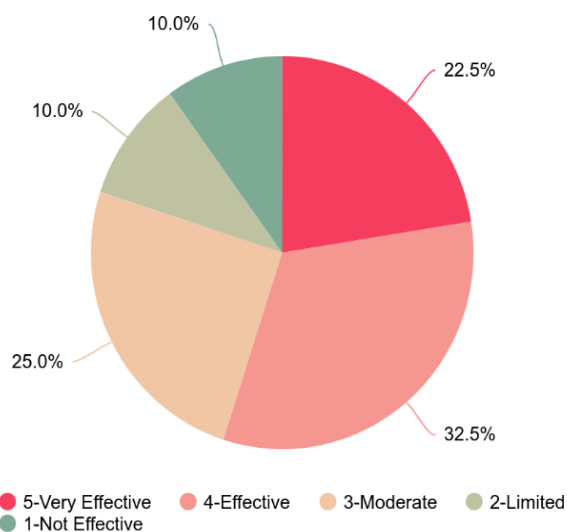


Interpretation:

This shows 65% places have decent teamwork between government and NGOs which helps RTE programs run smoothly. But 35% poor or no coordination creates problems like double work or missed opportunities. Good coordination makes NGO bridge courses and camps work better with school systems while poor teamwork wastes time and resources in some areas.

Table 4: Most Effective NGO Interventions

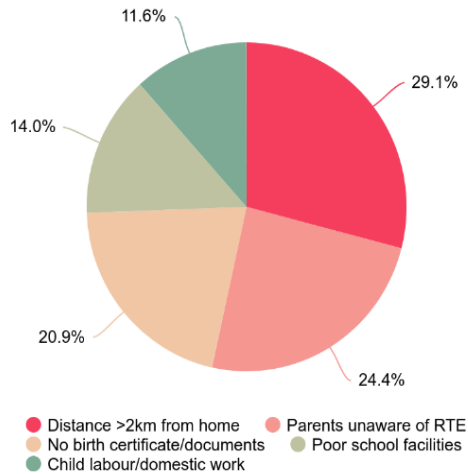
Rating	Frequency	Percentage (%)
5-Very Effective	9	22.5
4-Effective	13	32.5
3-Moderate	10	25.0
2-Limited	4	10.0
1-Not Effective	4	10.0
Total	40	100.0

**Interpretation:**

This shows 55% people think NGOs do good work helping RTE in schools. But 45% think they only do average or poor job. The ratings match the uneven NGO coverage from last table where 32.5% schools get no help at all. Where NGOs work regularly, people rate them higher but occasional support gets lower marks.

Table 5: Major RTE Implementation Barriers

Barrier	Selections	% Respondents
Distance >2km from home	25	62.5
Parents unaware of RTE	21	52.5
No birth certificate/documents	18	45.0
Poor school facilities	12	30.0
Child labour/domestic work	10	25.0
Total	86	-



Interpretation:

This shows distance creates biggest hurdle for rural kids to reach school every day. Lack of RTE awareness means parents don't claim their rights properly. Documents block formal admission completely. These top three barriers explain why so many children stay out of school even after RTE laws exist for many years.

MAJOR FINDINGS

- Coordination Viability:** 65% respondents rate government-NGO coordination good/excellent, establishing convergence foundation
- Intervention Hierarchy:** Parent counseling (85%) > bridge courses (62.5%) > remedial classes (55%) > residential camps (45%)
- Structural Barriers:** Distance >2km (65%) primary constraint, toilet maintenance (42.5%) critical for girls' retention
- Impact Metrics:** 60% dropout decline, 85% girls' enrollment gains, 87.5% reading/75% mathematics improvement
- Experience Validation:** Mid-career professionals (75% with 5+ years) confirm NGO interventions address systemic RTE gaps

SUGGESTIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS

- Transport Partnerships:** NGO-managed bus routes bridging 2km+ distance gaps affecting 65% schools
- Convergence Cells:** Establish Block Resource Centre-level NGO coordination units within Samagra Shiksha
- Aadhaar Integration:** Digital tracking linking migration patterns with school enrollment
- Parent Mobilization:** Scale counseling model achieving 85% effectiveness through community volunteers
- NGO volunteers:** help teachers in classrooms and NGO in all activities

CONCLUSION

This primary research establishes empirical foundation for systematic NGO mainstreaming within government education architecture. Targeted interventions demonstrate measurable RTE gains—60% dropout reduction, 85% girls' enrollment increase, 87.5% reading proficiency improvement—validating scalable public-private convergence models. Distance-sanitation-learning barriers demand integrated institutional response beyond infrastructural expansion toward demographic-matched delivery systems. Systematic government-NGO frameworks transform parallel efforts into national equity architecture, converting RTE's constitutional promise into substantive learning realization for millions of systematically excluded children.

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