

STATUS AND CHALLENGES OF RIGHT TO EDUCATION ACT IN DISTRICT HARIDWAR (UTTARAKHAND)

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ABSTRACT

To assess the achievement of RTE-Act in district Haridwar, 180 students of 18 schools were selected from 06 blocks of this district. The secondary data collected from the Directorate of SSA, Uttarakhand, has been used to examine the enrolment, retention, drop-out and different facilities available in the selected schools. The maximum number of schools with the good facility was reported in schools of blocks Bahadrabad and Roorkee, while in schools of Bhagwanpur block, the low facilities were reported. The number of total enrolled students for selected schools was 89 and 91 for boys and girls students respectively. The maximum enrolled students in boy's category were belonged to OBC category followed by general, SC and ST. For girl's category maximum enrolled students were again from OBC category followed by General, SC, and SC. The maximum achievement in Hindi subject for boy's category was reported in ST students, while minimum in OBC students. Similarly, for girl's category, it was maximum for general and minimum for ST students. The maximum per cent achievement in Mathematics subject for boy's category was reported in General students, followed by ST student, OBC and SC students. Similarly, for girl's category, it was maximum for general followed by OBC, ST and SC. In this study, it has been reported that the poor condition of education level in children may be due to the lack of facilities in most of the government schools, lack of awareness, and illiteracy of parents, social and financial conditions of parents of deprived communities.

KEYWORDS: Challenges, Right to Education, Haridwar

INTRODUCTION

Education is considered as the key to facilitate learning for the achievement of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and habits and overall development. It can be attained under the guidance of educators, but learners may also educate themselves (Dewey, John (1944)). Education may be formal or informal depending upon the situation, site and time etc.

The education has been recognized as a key formula for the attainment of equality of gender, community, and society at large. It is the special manifestation of man and considered the treasure, which can be preserved without the fear of loss. A man without education is equal to the animal (Sharma, 1993). It is fact that in ancient period education was not common for all peoples belonged to different categories and economically different groups. In this period the education is totally based on caste and religion system. Most of the educationally deprived children particularly belong to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, Muslim minorities, children with special needs, urban deprived children, working children and

children from displaced families.²(http://www.indg.in/primary-ducation/policiesandschemes/rte_ssa_final_report.pdf [Last accessed on October 23, 2013]). Besides the all above-mentioned categories the women was deprived socially and educationally (National Commission for Women (2016)).

Uttarakhand is a relatively new state of India, with special geographical and social conditions. Due to this distinctiveness, a number of hurdles have been evolved to check the children from raising their education level up and put the state's development clock back many years" (Sharma et al, 2013). To prevent dropping out of schools by children, quality education is necessary (Rajeshwari and Saxena, 2014). The state comprises of 13 districts and the rate of literacy of this state is 72 % (Census, 2001), which is higher than the all-India level of literacy rate and the literacy rate of female is 60 %. The district Dehradun has the highest literacy rate, while Haridwar has the lowest literacy rates.

There were several programs run by the government since 1980s to increase the enrolment and overall education level. The first draft of Right to Education was presented in Parliament by 2005, by the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE). The CABE proposed the provision of 25% reservation for disadvantaged children in private schools to reduce social inequality and to bridge the gap between public and private schools in terms of quality of education. The bill was strongly criticized and opposed by private school administrations and upper caste parents on the provision of 25% reservation.

Right to Education Act (RTE) or The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, is an Act enacted on 4 August 2009 by the Parliament of India. The importance of this Act is to provide free and compulsory education for children between the age group of 6 to 14 in India, has been described under Article 21a of the Indian Constitution, this Act came into force on 1st April 2010. The Act has been enacted for making education a fundamental right of every child between the ages in between 6 and 14 by the specification of norms in elementary schools. There is also a provision for special training of school drop-outs to bring them up to par with students of the same age. The World Bank education specialist for India, Sam Carlson, has observed: "The RTE Act is the first legislation in the world that puts the responsibility of ensuring enrolment, attendance, and completion on the Government. It is the parents' responsibility to send the children to schools in the US and other countries." In Indian constitution, the education is a concomitant issue and both center and states can legislate on the issue. This Act set a definite task for the center, state and local bodies for its implementation.

The government implemented enormous programs to achieve quality education but did not succeed. A large number of disadvantaged children out of school are due to a poor quality of education, the rapid growth of private schools, and caste discrimination in the education system (Choudhary, 2014 and Chauhan and Sati, 2016).

The upper-class elites started to withdraw their children from public schools to private when the government recognized education as a fundamental right of all children in 2002 (Majumdar and Mooij 2012).

According to Kingdon, the poor performance of public elementary schools caused rapid growth of private schools in India. Public schools are poor because these are suffering from lack of resources, teacher's absenteeism, poor implementation of education programs and policies. Whereas private schools are well known for good quality education in Indian society and mostly economically privileged class get access. Caste discrimination and social inequality are thus visible in the school education system and disadvantaged children are left with little choice but to attend poor quality public schools.

According to the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO, 2007-08) Public School dropout rate is also very high; most of the children abandon at the elementary level. At the national level, by class V, every third child leaves school and by class VIII every second child abandons classes. Scholar Sikdar wrote an article which shows that 43% of children from rural areas and 34% from urban zones leave at secondary school in India. This information demonstrates that the public school dropout is high. The act ensures compulsory admission, attendance and completion of elementary education to every child in the age group of 6-14 years in a neighborhood school with no detention and expulsion policy, reasonable quality with equity and non-discrimination. RTE act laid down the norms of Pupil-Teacher Ratios (PTRs), buildings and infrastructure, school working days and teacher working hours. Appointment of appropriately trained teachers, i.e. teachers with the requisite training and academic qualifications. The act prohibits corporal punishment and mental harassment, screening procedures for admission, capitation fees, private tuition by teachers, running of schools without recognition. Act ensure all-round development of the child and system of child-friendly and child centered learning with free from fear, stress, and anxiety.

MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY

To assess the achievement and challenges of Right to Education in terms of enrolment, retention, drop-out and learning achievements of the students of some selected schools of Haridwar district, three schools were selected from each block, and ten students of class III from each school, around 18 schools, and 180 students were finally selected from all 6 blocks of Haridwar. To examine the enrolment, retention, drop- out and different facilities available in the schools, secondary data have been collected from Directorate of SSA, Uttarakhand.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

**Table 1: Block Wise Distribution of Habitation with School Facility
(Data from Directorate of SSA Uttarakhand)**

Blocks/Urban area	Total Habitation	Habitation Covered by		Habitation without Primary School/ EGS	% of Habitation without Primary School/ EGS
		Primary School	EGS		
Bahadrabad	165	141	23	12	7.27
Roorkee	93	90	3	3	3.23
Bhagwanpur	112	108	9	3	2.68
Narsan	94	84	2	3	3.19
Laksar	113	109	1	3	2.65
Khanpur	59	53	2	4	6.78
Total (Rural)	636	568	40	28	4.40
Haridwar MB	450	44	9	50	11.11
Roorkee MB	50	19	11	5	10.00
Mangalore MB	22	13	10	8	36.36
Total (Urban)	522	76	30	63	12.07
Total District	1158	663	70	91	7.86

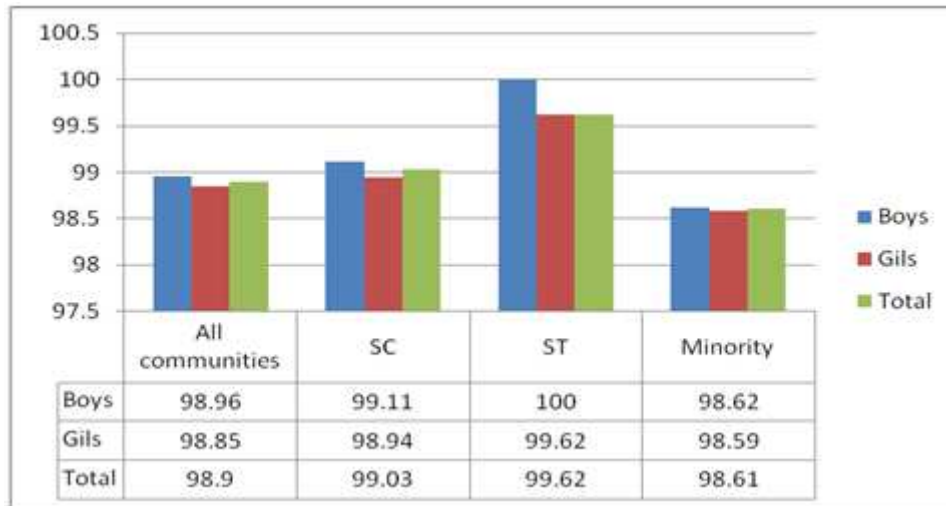


Figure 1: Enrollment of Children 6-11 Age Group Across Religious Communities (Data from Directorate of SSA Uttarakhand 2016)

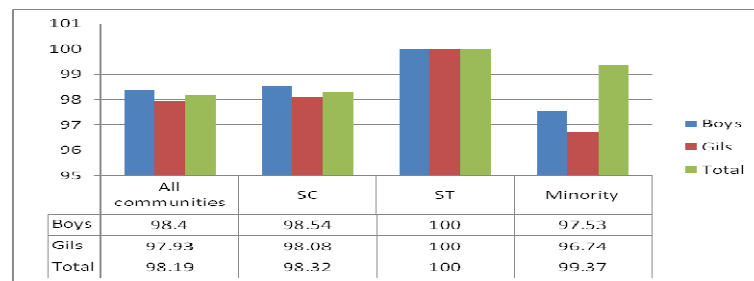


Figure 2: Enrollment of Children 11-14 Age Group across Religious Communities (Data from Directorate of SSA Uttarakhand 2016)

Table 2: Block Wise Existing School Infrastructure (2016) (Data from Directorate of SSA Uttarakhand)

Blocks	Total Primary Schools	No. of school with D/water facility	No. of school with Toilet Facility	No. of school with Girls Toilet Facility	No. of school with Boundary Wall	No. of school with playground Facility	No. of school with Kitchen for mid day meal
Bahadrabad	141	124 (87.94)	134 (95.04)	67 (47.52)	119 (84.40)	137 (97.16)	129 (91.49)
Rookee	90	76 (84.44)	81 (90.00)	81 (90.00)	82 (91.11)	79 (87.78)	89 (98.89)
Bhagwanpur	108	93 (86.11)	105 (97.22)	99 (91.67)	86 (79.63)	104 (96.30)	103 (95.37)
Narsan	97	84 (86.60)	91 (93.81)	20 (20.62)	89 (91.75)	67 (69.07)	91 (93.81)
Laksar	103	78 (75.73)	89 (86.41)	89 (86.41)	98 (95.15)	100 (97.09)	98 (95.15)
Khanpur	48	44 (91.67)	45 (93.75)	45 (93.75)	48 (100.00)	48 (100.00)	47 (97.92)
Total	663	551 (83.11)	604 (91.10)	443 (66.81)	562 (84.76)	569 (85.82)	626 (94.410)

Table 3: Existing School Infrastructure in Sample Schools (2016)

Blocks	Total Sampled Primary Schools	No. of school with D/waterfacility	No. of school with Toiletfacility	No. of school with Girls Toilet Facility	No. of school with BoundaryWall	No. of school with playground Facility	No. of school with Kitchen for mid-day meal
Bahadrabad	03	03 (100)	02 (66.66)	01 (33.33)	03 (100)	03 (100)	03 (100)
Rookee	03	03 (100)	02 (66.66)	01 (33.33)	03 (100)	03 (100)	03 (100)
Bhagwanpur	03	02 (100)	02 (66.66)	01 (33.33)	03 (100)	03 (100)	03 (100)
Narsan	03	03 (100)	02 (66.66)	01 (33.33)	02 (66.66)	02 (66.66)	03 (100)
Laksar	03	03 (100)	002 (66.66)	01 (33.33)	02 (66.66)	03 (100)	03 (100)
Khanpur	03	03 (100)	02 (66.66)	01 (33.33)	03 (100)	02 (66.67)	03 (100)
Total	18	18 (100)	12 (66.66)	06 (33.33)	16 (88.88)	16 (88.88)	18 (100)

Table 4: Learning Achievements of Students of Class III, Sample Schools (2016)

Gender wise and Category wise Learning Achievement in Hindi Language					
Category	Boys		Girls		t Value
	N	Percent Mean Achievement	N	Percent Mean Achievement	
SC	18	49.21	20	49.20	1
ST	10	54.21	12	48.29	2.59**
OBC	34	48.61	36	49.95	1.84
General	27	53.78	23	53.43	0.69
Total	89	51.01	91	51.32	0.92

The maximum number of schools with the facility was reported in Bahadrabad and Roorkee, while schools with minimum facility were reported in Bhagwanpur.

The number of total enrolled students for Hindi subject in selected schools was 89 and 91 for boys and girls students respectively. The maximum enrolled students in boys category were belonged to OBC category (34) followed by general (27), SC (18) and ST (10). For girls category maximum enrolled students were again from OBC category (36) followed by General (23), SC (20) and SC(12)

The maximum (54.21) percent achievement in Hindi subject for boys category was reported in ST students, while minimum (48.61%) in OBC students. Similarly, for girl’s category it was maximum (53.43) for general and minimum (48.29) for ST students (Tables 1-5 and Figs. 1-5).

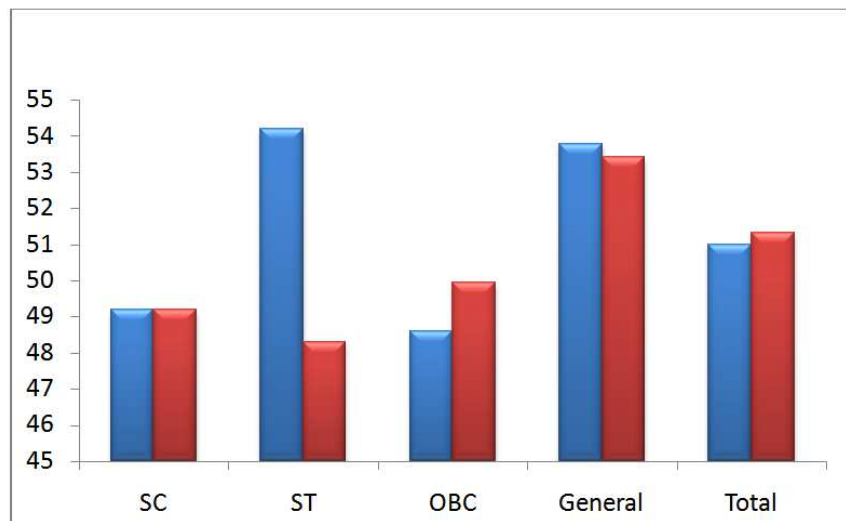


Figure 4: Learning Achievement of students of Class III, Sample School Gender Wise and Category wise Achievement in Hindi

Table 5: Learning Levels of Students of Class iii Sample School (2016)

Gender Wise and Category Wise Achievement in Mathematics					
Category	Boys		Girls		t value
	N	Percent Mean achievement	N	Percent Mean achievement	
SC	18	40.81	20	29.49	2.30*
ST	10	52.56	12	48.31	1.77
OBC	34	49.53	36	49.91	0.52
General	27	54.44	23	53.93	0.97
Total	89	52.03	91	51.41	1.82

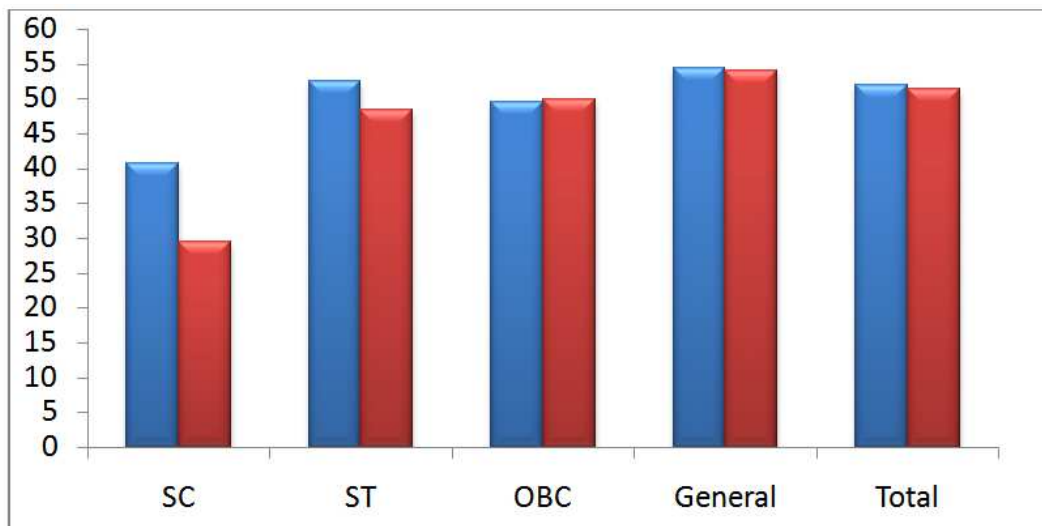


Figure 5: Learning Levels of Students of Class III Uttarakhand Gender Wise and Category Wise Achievement in Mathematics

The number of total enrolled students for Mathematics subject in selected schools was 89 and 91 for boys and girls students respectively. The maximum enrolled students in boys category were belonged to OBC category (34)

followed by general (27), SC (18) and ST (10). For girls category maximum enrolled students were again from OBC category (36) followed by General (23), SC (20) and ST (12). The maximum(54.44) per cent achievement in Mathematics subject for boys category was reported in General students, followed by ST student(52.56), OBC (49.53) and SC students(40.81). Similarly, for girls category, it was maximum (53.93) for general followed by 49.91(OBC), ST (48.31) and SC (29.49).

In the light of above facts and discussions thereon it was evident RTE Act is unique to bring drastic changes in elementary education, but the poor implementation is responsible for its failure. This study revealed that the high dropout rate, low level of learning in students of rural areas, lack of interest toward the education in particular communities are due to inferior infrastructure in government schools, lack of interest in teachers for children in rural areas, social discrimination and feeling of insecurity after this low-quality education among parents.

Ojha(2013) studies on the status of outcomes of implementation this Act in schools of rural area and revealed that the growth of public schools is marked only in terms of enrolment and basic structure but the maintenance and quality of teaching not satisfactory. This is due to poor implementation of this Act in India. It has been reported that low rates of enrolment and alarming dropout and failure rates in primary schools of Uttarakhand and other states of India is due to low teaching and infrastructure of these schools. Most of the primary schools in Uttarakhand have been closed or going to be closed due to zero or low enrolment (Kumar, 2014, Barthwal, 2014 and Bora, 2014).

CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A high rate of absenteeism was recorded among marginal community students. Low level of learning achievement in mathematics and even Hindi language is a big challenge in the quality of education. There were no provisions of additional academic support to poor students. There was also lack academic help for the children of the marginal community at home. After such a long time of implementation of RTE Act, there were no necessary steps were taken to improve the infrastructure of schools and teaching-learning process, which may be the reason for such poor condition in school-level achievement.

Early identification of weak students and provision of remedial teaching for such students should be on the priority basis. Freedom should be given to children in non –academic activities so that they may express themselves without being hesitate to their teacher, it will be very beneficial for their personality development. Proper and regular monitoring of students attendance by teachers can be a successful strategy to reduce the dropout rate. Parents of marginal community students should be nominated in the school management and decision-making process. By regular interaction between parents and teachers, dropout can be reduced by motivating parents as well as students.

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