



ROLE OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION/NGO's TOWARDS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RTE ACT-2009

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Abstract

The idea of a common school system is an old as Kothari Commission (1964-66) emphasized as the expansion of educational institutions broadly with an accent on equalization of educational opportunities. The committee had recommended education to people of all straits of society and envisaged a common school system of public education. In the light of recent passage of Right to Education Act as a fundamental right to all children between 6-14 years of age. There is a critical need to find ways in which this can be realized. 21st is also now widely acknowledged that without community as a primary stakeholder in the process, this right would not meet its intent. The act provides for various entry points for such a purpose, most critical of them being school management committees. Oxfam and many other civil society organizational have been working through various models for quite some time in which community of parents, teachers, local institutions and civil society have been working together provide a vision in which this right can be realized. In this study we are discussing about the role of community/ NGO's in implementing free and compulsory education and what measures we have to adopt to solve the problems of dropouts.

Keywords: Emphasized, Equalization, Envisaged, Stakeholder, Organizational.

Introduction:

The Right to Education has been universally recognized since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 (though referred to by the ILO as early as 1920) and has since been enshrined in various International Conventions, National Constitutions and Development Plans. However, while the vast majority of the countries have signed up to and ratifies International Conventions (such as UN Convention on the Rights of the Child). India as a signatory to the above conventions, passed the Bill for implementation of Free and Compulsory Education for Children between the age of 6 and 14 years through its

Constitutional Amendment that included the Article 21-A in the Indian constitution making Primary Education a Fundamental Right.

For education to be a meaningful right it must be AVAILABLE, ACCESSIBLE, ACCEPTABLE and ADAPTABLE. The concept of these 4 A's was developed by the former UN special reporter on the Right to Education, Katarina Tomasevski and it is one of the best ways to assess and act upon the situation. These 4-A's are to be respected, protected and fulfilled by the Govt as the prescribed in constitution.

WHY FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION?

Education creates the voice through which rights can be claimed and protected and without education people lack the capacity to achieve valuable functioning's as part of the living. If people have access to education they can develop the skills, capacity and confidence to secure other rights. Education gives people the ability to access information detailing the range of rights that they hold and Governments obligations. It supports people to develop the communication skills to demand these rights, the confidence to speak in a variety of forums and ability to negotiate with a wide range of government officials and power holders.

IMPORTANCE OF PEOPLES INVOLVEMENT IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RTE ACT-2009:-



Merely passing an act by the parliament do not fulfil its objectives unless it is implemented or enforced in its letter and spirit. It is pertinent to mention that the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act came in to operation in 1986. However, the government through its machinery has failed to implement the act in total. Therefore, even today we see in every nook and corner that children are still working in some shops, hotels, garages, domestic houses etc.

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People's involvement, participation and support is utmost important particularly in the field of education. Community involvement/ participation through clubs, societies, mahila mandals, self-help groups, electronic media, press etc. play a great role by way of bringing awareness.

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ROLE OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT/ NGO's IN IMPLEMENTING THE RIGHT TO FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION ACT-2009:-

Therefore, the role of community involvement/ NGO's in implementing the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act-2009 becomes very vital in the following areas:-



here the parents are unwilling or unlikely to send their children for schooling even when the facilities for free education are available in the neighbourhood.

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orphans and destitute who normally become prey to the gangs who engage them for begging, rag picking, shoe polishing etc.

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here the parents think that the children's education is not the priority but their support to the family income in the form of working in farmland, grazing cattle in the fields, domestic works is necessary.

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here the parents of girl child is discriminated by not sending her to school when the sons are enrolled in schools. This is because of well known reasons like social taboos, sibling care, domestic works, fuel wood gathering, water fetching, cooking, early marriage etc.

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y assisting/providing skill development techniques and aids to the children who are persons with disabilities as because the schools in the neighbourhood lack such facilities/infrastructure.

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s there is a huge gap of teachers requirement in comparison to the number of children who are supposed to get free and compulsory education the government is not fully equipped in filling this gap within a time frame therefore, the importance of community institutions/ NGO's play a very vital role in implementing the act.

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s the act has been named as Free and Compulsory Education Act for children in the age group of 6 to 14 years there is no system evolved in it to enforce the provisions through a machinery for compulsorily enrolling the children in the age group of 6 to

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14 years in schools of neighbourhood. Therefore, there is a very much need to voice for this institutional arrangement through community involvement/ NGO's.



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pecial problems require special solutions. Schooling may be provided when the children are free from domestic duties or paid or unpaid work through night schools, mobile schools and the like. This will involve no cultural break and no cost to the family. Involvement of NGO's and teacher entrepreneurs would be necessary in such conditions.



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he task to provide universal education to the girl child is even more complicated. The primary school enrolment of girls is far below that of boys even in the urban areas, the gap is much wider in the rural areas. The gulf widens as we move to the final year of elementary education. This implies that even those parents who send their sons to school do not send their daughters and in any case, they withdraw them from schools much before the completion of elementary education.



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he Right to Education Act is to be implemented through PPP (Public Private Partnership). PPP here implies that the private sector will be encouraged to start primary and middle schools in non-served areas and they will have to admit wards of the weaker section up to at least 25 percent of their total intake in each class in the case of unaided schools and up to the percentage of annual recurring grant-in-aid to their annual recurring expenditure in the case of aided schools. The special category and unaided schools will be reimbursed the fee of such students to the extent of actual per child expenditure incurred by the state or the actual amount of fee charged whichever is less. Thus the voucher system is to be implemented.



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n the urban areas, elite schools are already there, and to be sure, there are usually many juggi-jopdis near these localities. In theory, students from poor families can be admitted to these schools and fee can be reimbursed by the state. However, the first generation students from below-poverty-line families will have to face all the problems enumerated above. Thus, these schools do not provide a feasible solution to the problem of providing universal elementary education. They hire predominantly local, female and moderately educated teachers who have alternative opportunities

outside the village. Hiring these teachers at low cost allows the saving to be passed on to parents through low fees. This mechanism- the need to hire teachers with a certain demographic profile so that salary costs are minimised defines the possibility of private schools-where they arise. It also defines their limits. Private schools are horizontally constrained in that they arise in villages where there is a pool of secondary educated women. They are also vertically constrained in that they are unlikely to cater to the secondary level in rural areas, at least until there is an increase in the supply of potential teachers with the required skills and educational skills.



If the private sector is to be made partner in the task of universal elementary education, only these small scale private entrepreneurs will be of any help. They will gladly accept the vouchers. Since the scale of operation in villages has to be small and prospects of high profits would be limited and the student intake would also not be to their liking, no elite institution will offer its services.



Domestic NGO's should be encouraged to take the lead in providing educational services in under-served areas and segment of population. Studies comparing the performance of NGO schools and other educational providers show that non-profit NGO schools are more successful in encouraging literacy and imparting elementary education especially to girls.

REMEDIAL MEASURES ARE REQUIRED TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEMS OF SCHOOL DROP OUTS:-



For the reasons, even though universal or very high enrolment in primary education may be attained, class repetitions and school drop-outs and push-outs are common. In addition, because of the inefficiency in the country's schooling system, actual school attendance is much lower than enrolment and the rates of grade repetition are very high. Recent findings reveal that although about 93 percent of Indian children in the age-group of 6-14 years are in a school a very large percentage either drop out or repeaters and their learning achievement is very low. About 26 percent of the students in the primary education system were bound to repeat in the first year itself and retention rate at the primary level as a whole is only 70 percent. As a result, many

children abandon school with relatively low levels of completed education. The gap between age and grade is large. The problem is particularly acute in poorer and SC and ST neighbourhoods retaining a student is not merely a function of the quality of teaching.

TACKLE THE PROBLEMS IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS:-



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Major burden of providing education to the unnerfed and mostly unmotivated sections, especially in the rural areas, will have to be borne by the Govt. though, no doubt, presently the Govt. School system is in a very bad shape. Absenteeism of teachers and lack of serious teaching activity even when present is a major problem, specifically in the rural and remote areas. Moreover, the quality of their services in terms of impact on schooling outcomes is quite weak. Motivation and accountability are two major factors determining the outcomes. There is no pressure on the teachers to perform, innovate and experiment. There is no effective incentive/disincentive system. Thus, better results if motivation to perform and accountability are lacking. In the State Govt. Schools, on the other hand, political interference in appointments and transfers has gained epidemic proportions in several states. There are annual transfer meals for the reasons best known to the bosses. Therefore, there is a very much need to voice for institutional arrangement through community involvement/NGO's to tackle these problems in Govt. schools.



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Mostly wards of Central Govt. employees of all ranks seek admission to schools run by the Central Govt. The parents are highly competitive conscious and motivated, so are their wards. They are highly demanding of the teachers and the schools. Moreover, there is practically no political interference in appointments, postings, transfers and evaluation of teachers. The political centre is too far away from the widely distributed network of schools to indulge in political and bureaucratic interference. There are well thought-out rules and regulations for promotion and evaluation based on results. The oversee committees are also effective. Therefore the teachers are motivated to perform. If the non-served children are admitted to these schools then they will also perform well and the problem of drop-outs will be minimised.

RECOMMENDATIONS:-

For implementation of Free and Compulsory Education for children from the age of 6 to 14 years the Govt. must have a 'VISION' must provide a 'MISSION' and then carry out its 'EXECUTION' as it has been done in the sphere of Right to Information Act-2005 that too with the involvement of people at all levels.

CONCLUSION:-

Establishment of the neighbourhood school system wherein parents from all educational, social and economic background are required to send their wards to a school in their neighbourhood, whether it is private or Govt. school and the school cannot refuse admission is the best solution. As development actors NGO's have become main service providers in the country where the Government is unable to fulfil the traditional role. In the education sector, many NGO's have moved beyond gap-filling initiatives in to capacity building activities. They wish first and foremost to remain important stakeholders in development and to impart their extensive knowledge in the education sector.

Remember "Parenthood of success is claimed by many, but the failure left an orphan". Let us make with the involvement of the community/NGO's in the process of the implementation of the Free and Compulsory Education for children between the age of 6 and 14 years so that no one is deprived of elementary education.

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