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# Participation of Beneficiaries of RTE Act, 2009 in Schools

## Abstract

Education as a right came into effect with the enactment of RTE Act, 2009 which guarantees Free and Compulsory Education for the children age from 6 to 14 years. Section 12 (1) (C) of the RTE Act, 2009 deals with the provision of admission of twenty-five percent children from weak and disadvantaged group in all private unaided schools. The article presents the research study showing the nature of participation of beneficiaries admitted under RTE Act, 2009 in schools of Vadodara, Gujarat. The researchers have used survey method and have conducted non-participant observation in the classroom. The data collected was qualitative in nature. All the observations were noted minutely. The data was analyzed using the process of coding. Coding was done and variables derived. Later, the variables were categorized using the rating scale- always, sometimes and never. The findings of the study reveals that majority of the beneficiaries are always paying attention in the class, focused on learning activity, bring needed material to the class, complete assigned work on time but very few beneficiaries express their views in the class because of language problem. It is however shown through the present study that the nature of participation of beneficiaries is the same as of students of schools where RTE Act is not implemented.

**Keywords** – Beneficiaries, Participation, Weaker and disadvantaged group, RTE Act, 2009

“Education is the most powerful weapon with which you can change the world.”

*(Nelson Mandela, South African Civil Rights Activist)<sup>[1]</sup>*

## Introduction

The passing of RTE Act, 2009 marks a historical moment for the children of India. The Act serves as a building block to ensure that every child ages from 6 to 14 years has the right to get free and compulsory elementary education in school<sup>[2]</sup>. The state, teachers, families and communities have to fulfill these entitlement together.

Spurred by the Unnikrishnana judgment and public demand to enforce the right to education, successive governments since 1993 onwards has worked towards bringing constitutional amendment to make education a fundamental right.<sup>[3]</sup>

The RTE act, 2009 provides a solid platform to reach the unreached with specific provisions for weaker and disadvantaged group through section 12<sup>(1)</sup> (c) of the Act. Children belonging to weaker section as defined in Section 2 (e) of the Act are the categories of children that appropriate government have to notify, based on parents/ guardians minimum annual income. Children belonging to disadvantaged group are defined in Section 2 (d) of the Act. These children include Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, and other socially backward categories based on cultural, economic, social, geographical, linguistic, gender and other parameters that the governments can separately notify.

## Implementation of RTE Act and Challenge of Section 12(1)(c) and the Private School

Section 12 (1) (c) of the act came when Right to Education shifted from a Directive Principle

of State Policy to a Fundamental Right. [5] The Section imposes a legal obligation upon private unaided schools to reserve 25 percent of the seats in the entry-level class for children from Economically Weaker Sections and disadvantaged categories<sup>[4]</sup>. It is a purposeful endeavor to make school system in India more equitable and inclusive. For this, the concept of enabling environment for learning suggested by National curriculum Framework (NCF), 2005 is significant.<sup>[6]</sup>

As per this the culture of the school must be such that it highlights the identify of each student as that of a learner. It should create an environment that enhances the potential and interest of the learner- the main beneficiary. RTE presents the ideal of equal educational opportunity enforced legally and binding on the government.

### RTE Act, 2009 in Gujarat

Gujarat was the third state in India to pass and implement RTE Act as an exercise of the powers conferred by the section 38 of the Act. The implementation came into force in Gujarat on Saturday, February 18, 2012 after 3 years of the enactment of the Act.<sup>[7][8]</sup>

### Implementation of Sec 12(1)(c) of RTE Act, 2009 in Gujarat

RTE Act, 2009 was implemented from the academic session 2013-14 in Gujarat. During the initial phase, the government linked eight Municipal Corporations and reserved 5,300 seats for children from EWS and disadvantaged groups. These Municipal Corporations were Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara, Rajkot, Bhavnagar, Jamnagar, Junagadh and Gandhinagar.<sup>[9][16]</sup>

Table 1 indicates the allotment of seats to students from weaker and disadvantaged sections under RTE in Gujarat 2013-14.

**Table 1**

Allotment of seats to students from weaker and disadvantaged sections under RTE in Gujarat 2013-14

Districts	Total number of seats allotted to beneficiaries 2013-14
Ahmedabad	2000
Surat	1000
Vadodara	800
Rajkot	500
Bhavnagar	250
Jamnagar	250
Junagadh	250
Gandhinagar	250
GUJARAT	5300

Source: Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD) 2013 <sup>[20]</sup>

In Gujarat, the first demand for free education was made by Sir Sayajirao Gaekwad.<sup>[15]</sup> It was first implemented in Amreli District. In this backdrop, implementation of RTE Act in Gujarat requires a closer look.

### Review of Related Literature

Various researchers have examined the challenges and initiatives taken by the school for creating a conducive environment for learners admitted under RTE Act, 2009. Studies conducted by Dhaatri Resource Centre (2009)<sup>[10]</sup>, Ojha (2013)<sup>[11]</sup>, Uma (2013)<sup>[12]</sup>, Soni (2013)<sup>[13]</sup>, Chaturvedi (2015)<sup>[14]</sup> showed lack of appropriate infrastructure, lack of quality education and absence of the forth in the system to work. There also the challenges of Hiring Qualified Teachers, monitoring, have awareness and also problems of violation of the rights of ST children, lack of materials for training of children, no grievance redressal mechanisms with respect to education services for parents, communities and the public.

## Need for the Study

Working toward the achievement of the RTE Act, 2009 indicated that schools and communities are to be not just child welcoming, but also child seeking. This requires not merely getting all the children in to the schools, but making sure that all schools work well in the best of the interest of the children. Of the approaches adopted for education, to what extent the rights approach is effective and what are the challenges faced by the RTE students in the classroom setting are important points for consideration.

## Research Question

- How have the students of RTE Act, 2009 responded to the and in the classroom settings?

## Methodology

Survey method was adopted for the present study. The objective of the study was to study participation of beneficiaries in school with respect to – academic aspect. For the present study, RTE Students are those students who took admission under RTE Act, 2009 in the academic year 2013-14. Population of the study comprised of all the students who had been admitted under RTE Act,

2009 in Vadodara city in the academic year 2013-14. As per record of District Education Officer, Vadodara 89 students were admitted under RTE Act in 44 Schools. The purposive sample includes 50 beneficiaries admitted under RTE Act in 30 schools. Participation in classroom means involvement of the beneficiaries academically meaning engagement in teaching learning process. To study the engagement of beneficiaries in teaching- learning process in classroom non- participant observation were conducted by the researcher.

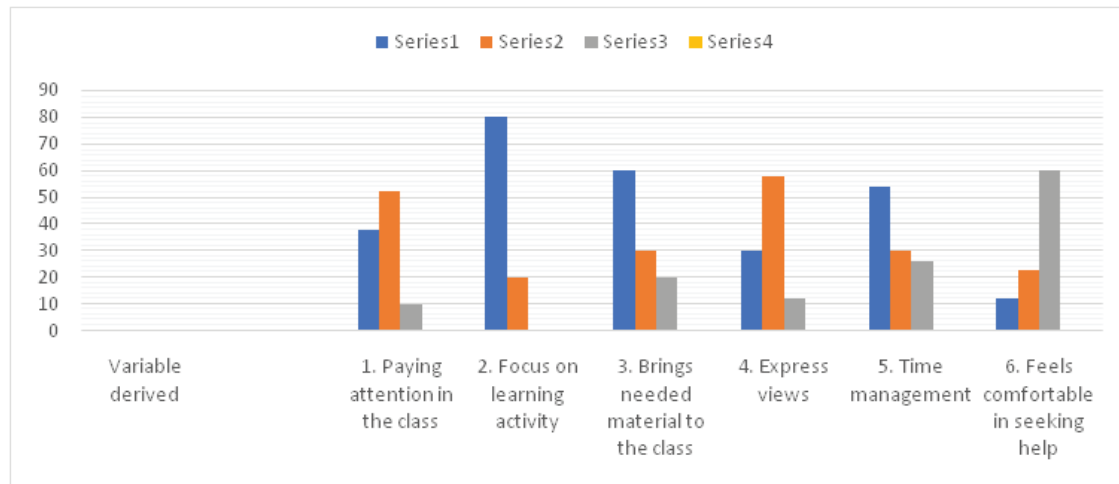
## Data Analysis

The data collected through non- participant observation was qualitative and was been transcribed on the same day. All the observations were noted minutely and the transcripts read again and again. These data were analysed by the process of coding and the variables were categorized using the rating scale- always, sometimes and never. The researcher categorized an observation as “always”, if it showed 70% to 100% participation occurrences. It was rated “sometimes”, if it showed 50% to 70% occurrences and the rating was “never/not at all”, if it showed less than 50% occurrences. The researcher used percentage method to analyse the data.

**Table 2**  
Variables showing beneficiaries' participation in teaching learning process

Variable derived	Always (in Percentage)	Sometimes (in Percentage)	Never (in Percentage)
1. Paying attention in the class	38	52	10
2. Focus on learning activity	80	20	
3. Brings needed material to the class	60	30	20
4. Expressing views	30	12	58
5. Time management (in terms of completing assigned task on time)	54	30	26
6. Feels comfortable in seeking help	12	23	60

n=50 (Number of beneficiaries)



**Figure 1:** Variables showing beneficiaries' participation in teaching learning process

Table 2 and Figure 1 shows that out of 50 beneficiaries - 38 percent, 52 percent and 10 percent are showing attention at the level of always, sometimes and never, respectively. It can be inferred from Table 2 and Figure 1 that most of the beneficiaries i.e. 52 percent are “sometimes” paying attention in the class. It can similarly be inferred from Table 2 and Figure 1 that 80 percent of the beneficiaries “always” focus on learning activities and 20 percent “sometimes” focus on the learning activities. Table 2 also indicates that 60 percent of the beneficiaries “always” bring needed material to the class, 30 percent “sometimes” bring needed material to the class and 20 percent “never” bring needed material to the class. In addition 30 percent of the beneficiaries are “always” expressing their views, 12 percent are “sometimes” expressing their views and most of the beneficiaries i.e. 58 percent “never” express their views. This interviews revel is because of a lack of fluency in English language. This the 54 percent of the beneficiaries “always” manage time, 30 percent “sometimes” manage time and 26 percent “never” manage time.

### Findings of the Study

The finding of the study reveals the following:

- Most of the beneficiaries are paying attention in the class. Their level of

attention was based on observation of body postures, eye to eye contact with the teacher, sitting straight not sprawling, focusing on the instruction through active listening, note taking, attentive expression and demonstration (through nodding, raising hand, standing while answering, “be in the class” etc.)

- Most of the beneficiaries are generally focussing on learning activities. It can be inferred from observations like completes work on time, asks question to both teacher and peer in case of doubts on, follows teachers’ reading, highlights important points with highlighter or pencil, is involved in group discussions, participates in group activity- Projects given in Science, English, Hindi and Gujarati.
- Most of the beneficiaries bring needed material to the class. materials like-Chart papers, Compasses, Drawing books, Materials needed for Science project like sprouted moong, saplings, grains, etc., Map, Graph paper, Newspaper, Images of content taught in the class like earthquakes, famous historical monuments etc.
- Most of the beneficiaries do not freely approach teachers in case of doubts on content taught. One of the main factor is lack of fluency in English language.

- Most of the beneficiaries use time effectively like complete work assigned on time, complete homework, complete project on time and submit assignment on time.
- Very few beneficiaries feel comfortable in seeking help in case of- incomplete notes and doubts related to content taught in the class.

## Discussion

The RTE Act, 2009 is a modest effort to bring about social integration. Education has been given the responsibility of social cohesion by policy; inclusion of 25% children from disadvantaged groups and weaker sections is a moderate step to remedy the situation. The rights approach to education in India, adopted through the RTE necessitates a discussion of the contemporary scenario in primary education. Understanding RTE students' participation in school will inform the extent of effectiveness of RTE Act, 2009. The findings are derived from the observation of some RTE students in classroom teaching learning. Most of the RTE Students did not approach teachers to solve academic problems. The act however, provides for much more than what has been said so far. It requires not just getting all the children into the school, but making sure that all the school works well in the best interest of the

RTE students entrusted to them by providing safe and protective environment. This would require staff, with trained and responsible teachers equipped with adequate resources and conditions for learning who can promote children's ability to think and reason. Educational stakeholders (parents, teachers, educational administrators and others) have the obligation to safeguards the rights given to the children aged from 6- 14 years by the RTE Act, 2009.

## Implications

This study has the following implications:

1. The teachers of the schools should be able to understand the problems faced by the RTE Students in the school and help them with academics and develop strategies to help them cope with any situation.
2. The principal of the school and other supervising bodies should be able to provide necessary help to the RTE students.
3. Awareness can be created for the parents of the RTE students, to try to provide more time to their wards, to know the challenges faces by them and provide them support that the child needs at home.

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