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Participation of Non-State Players in Indian Education: A Rationale (with reference to Right to Education Act, 2009)

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ABSTRACT

In India, there is co-existence of both state and non-state players in the field of education but it lacks pure privatization. However public private participation (PPP) is recommended to mitigate the risk of being the education a profit making entity that's why non-state players are permitted only in form of NGOs, trusts and societies but PPP in education has not found wide acceptance and has always been a debatable issue. Being the study descriptive in nature, it went through primary data collection, its analysis using descriptive statistics i.e. Mean & Standard deviation and testing its validity with t-values. Study reveals that non-state players that have engaged with the education sector have a key role to play and their contribution is substantial. Thus, it is recommended that non-state players should pool their resources both financial as well as technical to support implementation of the RTE Act.

Key Words: Private, Education, Non- state, Participation, Right to Education

INTRODUCTION

The day 12th April, 2012 when Supreme Court verdicted- "All private schools other than unaided minority schools must reserve one in four seats for poor children have provoked dismay in private schools." Principal Basant Kumar Mohanty commented on this judgment "Pressure will tell on quality of education" and HRD Minister Kapil Sibbal was asked, the answer was "why burden us ask to private schools" "The government should take care of education for the poor. Why cannot the government open new schools? Why are they pushing the 25 per cent burden onto us?" several private institutions that had petitioned the apex court seeking relief from the 25 per cent rule. This kind of attitude of Non-state players in elementary education has questioned on achievement of aim of universalization of elementary education to the age group of 6-14 years through the provision of free and compulsory education in RTE Act, 2009. Such contradiction between non-state players and

government, initiated the researchers to make the study on this debatable and controversial issue to find the effectiveness of private participation in elementary education.

Over the years, there has been a resistance by civil society to globalization and handing over the education in hands of private sector. India's constitution states that education is a charitable act and not a business, but some private players think otherwise. However there is a provision for allowing "reasonable returns" on the investment the private sector entities to sustain their efforts but where will its reasonability stop?

4A FRAMEWORK OF RTE ACT, 2009

Enactment of RTE Act, 2009 gives the status of fundamental right to elementary education through provision of free and compulsory education to all children in age group of 6 – 14 years. Being the education, a part of concurrent list it was the sole responsibility of Govt of India synchronizing with State Govts and Public Administration Authorities.

RTE Act consists of 4A framework (availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability) that allows development of an enhanced understanding of its key features and their application s below:

1. **Availability**

   This metric of the 4A framework requires education to be free and funded by the Government. Moreover, it needs adequate infrastructure that is supplemented by trained teachers to enable education delivery.

   a) **Section 3(1), 3(2)):** This section enable to every child (age 6-14 years) to have the right to get the elementary education at free of cost and in neighborhood school. It emphasizes on making the elementary education compulsory to all children.

   b) **Standards for recognition of schools (Sections (18(1), 19(2)):** This section of RTE Act focuses on maintaining the quality of above mentioned elementary and compulsory education. Certain norms and parameters of quality of education such as teacher-pupil ratio, infrastructure building, required minimum number of working days, working hours, teachers' workload, library facility and recreational activities for students etc. have been specified Moreover, under this Section each school will have to take a certificate of recognition from a competent local authority, with the confirmation of Section 19 of the Act.

   c) **Establishment of additional schools (Sections 6,7(1), 7(2)):** This section states that schools will be established in the areas of neighborhood where such provision is not in existent.

   d) **Appointment of qualified teachers (Sections 23(1), 23(2)):** This section states that only qualified people with minimum eligibility set the regulatory authority will be appointed for a minimum tenure of five years.

2. **Accessibility**

Here accessibility means every child has equal opportunity to get the admission in the school. It consists of

a) Disallowing capitation fees and screening procedure (Section 13(1)): This section states that admission to child in school will be made on random basis. No procedure will be adopted to screen the students or parents. Further capitation feel will also not to be charged.

b) Special Training (Section 4): This section specifies that if child is nt able to be equal to others then special training will be provided to bring him/her equal to others. In some cases, disparity is required to equate the students.

a) Admission of students belonging to weaker and disadvantaged groups (Sections 12(1c), 12(2)): This section 12(1c) states that private unaided schools will also give the at least 25% reservation in each class to marginalized and weaker sections of the society. However Government will reimburse the loss caused by such reservation to the non-funded private school (Section **12(2))**

b) Balanced representation on the school management committee (Section 21(1)): A joint representation will be essential to run the school effectively. A School Management Committee (SMC) will be constituted consisting of equal number of parents, teachers and nominees of local authority.

3. Acceptability

The metric focuses on developing the content quality on equitable basis suitable to culture thereof without any discrimination. It is also required to ensure the safety and security of school and a strict professionalism must be followed there without any biasness. Acceptability consists of following elements

a) **Development of national curriculum (Sections (7(6a), 29(2)):** This section specifies that curriculum should be centrally designed at national level with the involvement of state government's representations.

b) **Prohibition of holding back and expulsion or physical punishment and mental harassment:** Every student will be promoted in upper class and will not be evicted till he/she completes his/her elementary education. Corporal punishment is forbidden and no student will be mentally harassed.

c) Duties of teachers (Sections 24): Section 24 specifies that all teachers should be punctual, regular and they are required to complete the whole syllabus within prescribed time. Further students' learning capability should also be assessed by the teacher and teaching method should be adopted accordingly.

4. Adaptability

Adaptability refers to fusion of marginalized groups. It consists of:

a) Children of socially disadvantaged groups should be brought into main streamline admission process.

b) Right to mutual transfer to any child pursuing elementary education in a government or government-aided school to another school.

LITERATURE REVIEW

T.J. Molial & V.K. Upadhyay (2012)[1] focused on necessity of elementary education and explore the pre-post analysis of 86th constitutional amendment act, 2002. Study states the silent features of RTE Act, 2002 that favors the primary education should be free and compulsory.

F. Menashy (2015)[2] concluded that now Global Partnership Education (GPE) has emerged as a collaboration of various organizations, foundations, self-help groups, NGOs, corporate to make a constructive contribution in policy framing to make the education universal**.**

Libert Steer & J. Gillard (2015)[3] found that difference between private and state players in education is ambiguous**,** so it is very difficult to identify that what amount of combination of both could be helpful and fruitful to the community.

M. Moschetti & Martínez Pons etal. (2019)[4] explored how private players have gained the dominance in policy making on education. In America how think tanks as well as civil society favors the different types of privatization and plays a big role in framing school's running and fixing accountability.

Abhay Kumar & SK Shukla (2019)[5] made the pre-post RTE Act analysis to measure the effectiveness of the act. On the basis of national survey sample it was found that per capita expenditure on elementary education is increasing and movement rate of students from government schools to private has been increased.

R. Rose, J. Narayan, S. Matam etal. (2021)[6] explored that in response to global standards Indian education system needs to be inclusive. Study finds the significant difference between urban and rural areas regarding education system and social development. This disparity can be bridged by some new national legislation on educational reforms in both locations and professional development.

Adishree Singh & Richa Dwivedi (2021)[7] analyzed the question whether constitution provides the equal rights to all in the field of elementary education and found no satisfactory answer which authenticate the requirement of the Right to Education Act, 2002. It also confirms that constitutional literacy rate is very low in rural areas.

Pieter Serneels & Stefan Dercon (2021)[8] examines the relationship between mother's aspirations and child's achievements in terms of academic grading and found this relationship significant, however other factors like regional setting, family income, caste etc also play its role therein.

On the basis of literature available on this topic it can said that few studies have been made across the world but in India its scarcity exists that initiates the researcher to work on it.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Present study aims at knowing the effectiveness of the Non- state players in universalization of elementary education. Being the study descriptive in nature, it went through data collection of both types i.e. primary as well as secondary, its analysis using descriptive statistics i.e. mean and standard deviation and testing its validity with t-values.

Key Variables & their Parameters

The various features of the Act and their effectiveness have been analyzed using four variables i.e. 4A Framework - Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Adaptability. Effectiveness of 4As has been measured with following specified parameters:

S.No	Variables	Metric
1	Availability	• Free Education funded by Govt • Teacher-pupil ratio • Qualified Teachers • Establishment of additional schools
2	Accessibility	• Non-discriminatory admission in schools • Balanced representation in management committee
3	Acceptability	• Pre-service teacher training • Pedagogy or physical infrastructure • Incentive to teachers • Non-involvement of teachers in non-teaching fields
4	Adaptability	• Reservation • Re-imbursement of reservation in private schools

Hypothesized Variables

This metric of the 4A framework measures education to be free and funded by the Government with adequate infrastructure & trained teachers.

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

S No.	Hypothesized Variables	State Player's Scores		Non- State Players Scores		t-values
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
1	Availability	30.97	4.11	22.58	5.83	13.79
2	Accessibility	26.58	5.79	16.39	3.48	10.84
3	Acceptability	15.91	2.05	17.04	2.98	5.88
4	Adaptability	22.61	2.05	12.89	1.56	8.98

All t-values are significant at 5% level of confidence, so difference between state players and non-state players is significant in all selected variables. Results clearly state that government schools are covering more children to provide the elementary education. In rural and backward areas, government schools have been set up in comparison of private schools. Secondly, accessibility has also been found more in government schools as government seems committed to bring the parity between all income groups of the society. Acceptability has been found a bit more in case of non-state players. Adaptability is found more in case of state players as core of the RTE Act is to bring the marginalized groups' children in main streamline.

CONCLUSION

Present study finds that state plays an eminent role in ensuring the elementary education to a child of 6-14 years compulsorily. No doubt non-state players also contribute in providing basic education but Right to Education Act, 2009 has compelled them to rethink upon their priorities, as to compliance of the elementary educational norms regarding to have the right to free and compulsory education to all children. Results of the study concede the worldwide conventions and vows to offer the legitimate legal basis to proclaim the state as the eventual guarantor for the right to education and non-state players in uplifting the quality of education. However there is a contradiction in educational objectives in state and non-state players but both play a significant role in field of basic education primarily.

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