

Need for Creating Awareness on Right to Education Act (RTE) in Slum Areas- A Social Work Perspective

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Abstract:

Education being one of the most important tools in the modern world has been provided a lot of importance. People need education to prepare them for work and for living fulfilling lives. It provides a broad base of knowledge that teaches people about the world around them. With increasing urbanization, urban migration has led to a serious problem of increase in urban slums. Many studies have shown that educational level of slum dwellers in India is very low and there is an urgent need to improve the educational attainment level of urban poor for better social and economic growth. In this regard, both state and central Governments have introduced many programmes one of which is the amendment of The Right to Education Act in 2009 which describes the modalities of the importance of free and compulsory education for children between 6 and 14 years in India under Article 21A of the Indian Constitution. In this view, a study was conducted in the slums of Mysore city to know the awareness about RTE and the education status of the children dwelling in the slums. Five slums were selected for the study and the respondents were children going to primary schools and their parents. The sample size for the study was 100 i.e., 100 children and 100 parents. A Self-structured Interview Schedule prepared by the researcher was administered and simple descriptive statistics was adopted. The results show that there is nearly no awareness about RTE and there is a critical need for intervention for the same. The study also highlights the methods and models of Social Work intervention in addressing the issue, aiding individuals, groups, and organizations to meet this challenge.

Keywords : RTE Act, Slums, Education, Intervention

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Introduction :

Education is a self-enlightening process. It is crucial to the overall development of an individual and the society at large. Schools are the institutions that lay the foundation of a child's development. They play a key role in developing children into responsible citizens and good human beings. A well-educated man is a more dependable worker, a better citizen, a centre of wholesome influence, pride to his community and honour to his country.

Seven million Children under the age of 14 years in India do not have access to education and approximately 50% of these children drop out before they complete their elementary education. To meet this need, the Govt. has committed to ensure universal elementary education (primary and upper primary) education for all children aged 6-14 years of age through its flagship programme-SarvaShikshaAbhiyan (SSA). It is assumed that, the chief aim of such an education must have been just to fit one to earn a living. With this situation and concept in mind, on April 1, 2010, India has reached a historic milestone in country's struggle for Children's Right to Education. The Constitution (86thAmendment) Act 2002 making elementary education a Fundamental Right and its consequential legislation, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009, came into force.

The Salient Features of the RTE Act are:

1. School and social mapping
2. Catching those out of school
3. Re-deployment of teachers
4. Filling vacancies
5. Grievance redressal
6. The funding.

The objective of the Act is also to bridge the access and enrolment gap to a large extent and to reach the poorest of the poor. The key concern with the RTE is to serve the poorest sections of the society who are unable to meet their educational needs without significantly increasing their fees.

Perpetual inflow of population to the most modern urban centre for searching jobs is one of the main factors which has led to the rising number of slums in all the countries of the world irrespective of developed, developing and under developed. Shortage of

The study does not consider socio-economic status and is confined to selected slums of Mysuru city only.

Below table1 shows the **Type of School** of the respondents.

Table-1: Type of School

SL.NO.	Type of School	Percentage
1	Government	73
2	Private	27
	Total	100

Table 1.1 shows that among 100 respondents, 73% of them attend Government School and 27% of them attend private School. The result indicates that maximum numbers of respondents are going to government school.

Table-2: RTE Act Admissions

SL.NO.	Admission under RTE Act	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	YES	2	2
2.	NO	98	98
	Total	100	100

Table 2 shows that among 100 respondents, only 2% of them had got admission under RTE Act quota 98% of them had not got the admission under RTE Act. This indicates that majority of the respondents had not got the admissions under RTE Act because they lacked awareness about it.

ANALYSIS OF PARENTS FEEDBACK

TABLE-3: Economic Status of the Family

SL.NO.	Economic status of the family	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Lower-upper class	3	3
2.	Lower-middle class	91	91
3.	Lower-lower class	6	6
	Total	100	100

Table-3 depicts the economic status of the family. Out of 100 respondent's 3% of them have good economic status, 91% of respondent's have medium economic status and 6% of respondent's economic status is bad.

TABLE-4: Objective of sending children to the school

SL.NO.	Objective of sending children to the school	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Good Future	27	27
2.	Gain Good Job	46	46
3.	Self-Dependent	12	12
4.	Good Knowledge	15	15
	Total	100	100

Table-4 defines the parent's objective of sending the children to school. out of 100

respondents, 46% of them sending their children to school with the objective to gain jobs, 27% with the objective to get good future, 15% with the objective to get good knowledge and 12% of respondents sending their children to school with the objective to become self-dependent.

The result indicates that maximum number of respondent's send their children to the school with an objective of getting good jobs for their children.

TABLE-5 : Parents Support to their Children's higher Education

SL.NO.	Parents support to their children s higher education	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Left to Children's Interest	63	63
2.	Up to our Strength	15	15
3.	Up to get Good Job	18	18
4.	Till Govt Facilities Available	4	4
	Total	100	1

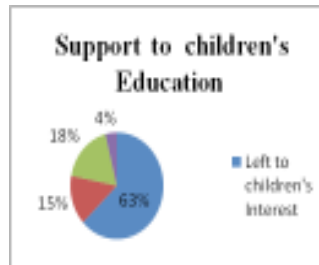


Table-5 shows that out of 100 respondent's, 63% of them say that their children's education is left to children's interest, 18% of them want their children to get education for good jobs, 15% of them says that they provide education up to their strength and rest of them says that till the availability of Govt. facilities they are going to support their children's education.

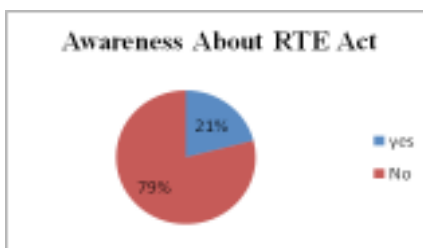
The result indicates that maximum numbers of respondents are going to support their children's education according to the interest of children towards the study.

TABLE-6: Awareness about RTE Act

SL.NO.	Awareness about RTE Act	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Yes	21	21
2.	NO	79	79
	Total	100	100

Table-6 shows that the parent's awareness about RTE Act. Out of 100 respondents, 21% of respondents know about RTE Act and 79% of respondents don't have the

awareness about RTE Act. The result indicates that maximum number of respondents don't have the awareness about RTE Act.



Discussion

The present study aimed at understanding the need to create awareness on Right to Information Act. The study was conducted in slums of Mysore City. The general objective of the study was to understand the parental support towards their children's education, the problems faced by them in providing education, the facilities provided by the schools of slums to the children residing in slums and to understand the attitude of the children towards education. With this aim, the researcher, after going through some of the reviews in the subject area prepared a structured interview schedule and started collecting data from the slums identified for the study.

The study showed that majority of the students attended Government school while 27% of them attended private school. They were asked to evaluate their respective schools by the researcher. Majority of the students said that mid-day meals, teaching aids were very good while library, kitchen for preparing mid-day meals, sports equipments, toilet facilities and computer facilities were medium which needs to be improved. They also said that co-curricular and cultural activities provided at schools needs to be improved. The respondent students were asked about the encouragement and support given by the family. In majority of the families, mothers encouraged their children to obtain education.

The respondents went to primary schools and they were too young to understand about their future goals and employment. When asked what they wanted to achieve or become in future they said they wanted to become doctors, engineers, police, teachers, pilot etc.

The researcher also interviewed the parents to know their attitude towards educating their children, whether they are for equal education and their satisfaction level with their children's education .While survey, it was found that majority of the parents wanted their children to get good jobs, have a good future , gain good

knowledge and lead an independent life. Economic problems were the major issue faced by them in providing education. Despite of this majority parents are ready to give education to their children and encourage their interest.

The major finding of the study was that there is totally **no awareness** in parents about Right to education Act and the benefits they get from the Act. This alarms that there is a critical need for the awareness of the Act which increases enrollment and provides with the opportunity for all to get education. Majority of the parents are uneducated and are more employment oriented in order to overcome their economic problems since most of them work for daily wages which is insufficient to meet their needs. All these factors have been a major drawback in creating a conducive environment for education of children dwelling in slums. Such an environment lacks motivation for the children to study and improve socially, economically and morally.

Social Work Intervention:

Social Work is primarily practice-oriented. Social work practice includes interventions with various sections of the population, especially the marginalized sections, who are more in need. The nature of relationship between theory and practice in Social Work can be analyzed with reference to any area of social work intervention like social work practice in hospital settings, community settings, practice with the disabled, women-centric social work, social work practice with notified and de-notified tribes, etc. One such area of social work intervention chosen for analysis in this study is slum children.

Social Work takes place at four levels: Curative, preventive rehabilitative and developmental. The approach towards children dwelling in slums at the curative level is direct. This approach concentrates on solving the problem once it has happened. With children dwelling in slums, curative level practice involves working along with them and creating awareness about their rights provided by the Nation. Also awareness should be given on Govt. schemes and programmes provided for their betterment. As a part of curative level of practice, integration of children with their families, especially for dropouts and child laborers becomes important. Working with families and the communities they belong to becomes preventive approach. This approach concentrates on involving the families and the community to join hands in tackling problem and thus find a way to bring them to the main stream. Methods of Social Work like Group work, Community organization practice etc can be used in this approach. Models of community organization like locality development model and social action model can be adopted.

Rehabilitative approach involves advocacy for their rights. At this level, the problem is addressed at the societal level. It aims at controlling the re-occurrence of the problems and concentrates on rehabilitating drop-outs and child laborers. For this there is a need to create awareness for all the sectors of the society. In a developmental perspective, people are further mentored and prepared for the future challenges and thus facilitate their full integration into the social and economic life of the community. Social Work models like problem-solving model task-centered model and crisis intervention model can be used by the social workers to effectively handle the problem and thus make the whole community thrive towards development.

CONCLUSION:

India's growth relies on a well-educated and skilled workforce. Improving education is a critical area of investment. In order to build India as a consumer market of global standards, it is very important that every child reaps the benefits of quality education. Social work professionals working in the urban slums can focus on providing a positive atmosphere where the child dwelling in slum and deprived of education can make use of the Govt. initiative to make use of his/her right to education, commit to study in a formal education system and thus attain development and join the main stream. Macro level of Social Work intervention can be applied by the workers to reach the entire community by joining hands with non-governmental organizations, the youth, and the community as a whole.

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