

DOES DEMOCRATIZATION OF EDUCATION LEAD TO SOCIAL INCLUSION?: SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON RTE ACT IN PRIVATE SCHOOLING

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ABSTRACT

This paper argues that the role of democratization and its impact on social inclusion in education in general and schooling in particular. The public education needs to be reclaimed to fulfill its role as a democratizing force to address social and economic inequality and to respect and recognize diversity and difference. By analyzing the main factors and to demonstrate that the role of the state has been dismantled and the public nature of education has been reduced due to privatization of school education. The factors responsible are articulated and discussed with particular reference to the impact of neo-liberal policy, the marketisation of education, and new policy Acts. The RTE Act was introduced with the intention to promote democratization of education and social inclusion of poorer and deprived section kids. Is it a real inclusion and equity and equality by providing 25% seats to these sections in private schooling through fee reimbursement by the government? Are the teachers' treating the entire pupil equally? Why does public education matter in the equality aspects? What are the purposes, nature and role of public education in the 21st century? These are key question that frame for this paper. How public education has dismantled through privatization, and the fancy of English medium in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Some examples of how systems have revitalized and supported the public nature of education are discussed. These include more good accountability system which respect the professionalism of teachers and collaborative curriculum development strategies that engage with all including those who are least bothered such as the deprived.

Keywords: Democratization of Education, RTE Act, 25% seats for poor and deprived, Private school, Equity, and Social Justice.

INTRODUCTION

Since Independence, public education has played a vital role in Indian democratic society. In addition to this preparing young people for productive work and fulfilling lives, public education

has also been expected to accomplish certain collective missions aimed at promoting the common good. These include, among people, preparing youth to become responsible citizens, forging a common culture, indulging patriotism and reducing inequalities in Indian society. In recent years, however, some of these public-sectors of education have been neglected and are in danger of being abandoned. Most current efforts to reform public education have focused on increasing student's enrolment and reduce dropout rate, access, equity, equality among the pupil and student's academic achievement as a central purpose of schooling. But the reasons given for why it is important to improve achievement often stress individual or private economic benefits such as preparing youth for good jobs in a global economy, rather than public benefits (such as preparing youth for active citizenship in a democratic society). An emphasis on the individual goals of education is especially obvious in proposals to give families vouchers toward private school tuition proposals that treat education as a private consumer good.

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009, which provides for free and compulsory education to children between the age of 6 to 14 years and mandates government aided and non-minority unaided schools to reserve 25 percent of the seats for these children. Some government schools got close down due to lack of pupil strength and some schools are running under the tress, rented building though the SSA funds, DPEP and midday meal programmes are actively implemented in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Due to the rampant growth of private school with the fancy names such as techno schools, international schools, English medium with language lab facilities and enriched class room facilities. The above reasons are raising the query that 'Do we still need public schools?' but we need them in order to promote the poorer and deprived sections children and to implement democratization of education in the society.

As used the term 'public education' means education that is publicly financed, tuition fee, accountable to public authorities, and accessible to all students. It covers various types of public schools, including traditional schools, charter and magnet schools, vocational schools, and alternative schools such as Andhra Pradesh Residential Schools, Social welfare schools, and Tribal welfare schools with residential facility and Zilla Parishad as well as municipal schools as non-resident schools fulfilling educational needs from the decades. Much of the debates focus on technical rather the theoretical in key areas such as curriculum and assessment reform. So the focus remains on efficiency and effectiveness not on the values that underpin such reforms. Education for democracy is a key yet it is rarely debated, issues of power and control tend to be analyzed rather than the meaning and the values that underpin the change. It is often the

relationship between education and productivity or economic growth is at the heart of the debate rather than education and the common good (Looney, 2000).¹

Education as a public good has been dominated by the discourse of individual rights and choice. Education in the 21st century has come to be seen in a 'positional good' (Reid 2002).² Funding for education has favored choice to allow those who have a preference for private education. Neo-liberal policies draws on a realistic conception of democracy that assumes democracy flourishes best in an individualistic society with a competitive market economy, minimal state intervention, and a political socialization and passive citizenry as well as active elite political leadership. This view of democracy sees education as a positional good rather than a public good.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the democratic values in private schooling
- To know the reasons why public education matters in a democratic society
- To analyze the accessibility, equity and inclusion in public schools through common school system
- To evaluate the relationship between education, educational leadership and the democratic society
- To elucidate the exclusion of poorer children in private schooling through RTE Act

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Emery, J.³ in her article, 'An Assessment of the Historical arguments in vocational education reform'. This traces the historic development of vocational education during the 20th century and evaluates the views of various educators an attempt to inform current reasoning on the issue. Concerning about that popularity of institutional employability skills curricular, this paper further proposes and alternative approach to vocational education that promotes democratic ideals while still preparing students for their career challenges. It is also argue that a morally-appropriate model for vocational education is found within comprehensive democratic approach developed rather than through narrowly-conceived skills-based programs. In the conclusion,

¹ Looney, A. 2001. *Curriculum as policy: some implications of the contemporary policy studies for the analysis of curriculum policy, with particular reference to post primary curriculum policy in the Republic of Ireland*. The Curriculum Journal. Vol.12 (2), p.149-162.

² Reid, A. 2002. *Public Education and democracy: A changing relationship in a globalizing world*. Journal of Education policy. Vol.17 (5), p.571-585.

³ Emrey J. Hyslop-Margison, 1999. 'An Assessment of the Historical arguments in Vocational Education Reform'. Simon Fraser University, *University Press*, P.23-30.

teaching skills, attitudes and values identified by industry may furnish human capital to satisfy labor market needs, but such schooling is morally and democratically distinguishable from educating students to expand both their occupational and existential possibilities.

Val Klenowski⁴, 2009. In his article 'Public Education Matters: Reclaiming Public education for the common good in a global era' enumerates about the discussion and explanation of the interface of policy development and practice, support for the development of schools as learning organizations with a focus on the relationship between teacher learning and student learning, and schools as reflective and inclusive communities of practice. It is distributive leadership that is valued in his context. The value of partnership with academe, teachers, school leaders and policy makers is illustrated. His study also conceptualized the notion of 'productive pedagogies' that views teachers as at the core of making a difference to student outcomes and encourages classroom practices. The 'productive pedagogies' and productive assessment are key to improving learning for all students, especially those from disadvantaged.

James and Pauline,⁵ 2006. 'De facto' privatization of education and the poor: implications of a study from sub-Saharan Africa and India. Explains in their article discussed about teacher absenteeism in public schools and a chain of accountability is much weaker, as teachers have a permanent job with salaries and promotions unrelated to performance. Despite in private schools the poor parents are willing to pay for their education, because there is accountability. They have concluded in the introductory accepts that government schools are of low quality, but degrees that quality improvements can be effected and explored other indicators of quality, extending and implying the access to private schools and problems of government schooling.

METHODOLOGY

This research carried out based on the implementation of Right to Free and compulsory Act in private schools and policy formulation with the name of social inclusion of 25% poorer sections and deprived in the elite schools. In this study, the researcher is selected two types of schools both public and private where the democratic values existing and how democratic values are got vanished in the name RTE Act in the private schools in India. The researcher carried out the study based on empirical work of two private schools – Delhi Cambridge School and Delhi Public School where 25% reservations are implementing for poorer sections under RTE Act. The Primary sources are mainly the data collected by the researcher from the children those who are studying under RTE Act and the discrimination the pupil facing in those schools, perspectives

⁴ Val Klenowski, 2009. 'Public Education Matters: Reclaiming Public Education for the Common Good in a Global Era'. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, Volume 36, Number 1, p.1-26.

⁵ James and Pauline,⁵ 2006. 'De facto' privatization of education and the poor: implications of a study from sub-Saharan Africa and India. *Compare*, Vol.36, No.4, December, pp.443-462.

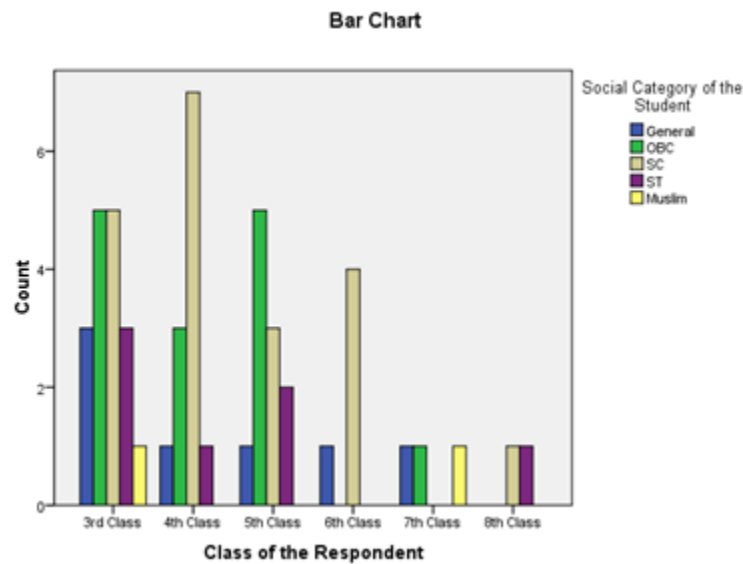
about teachers regarding the children of poorer sections and their grasping levels, and inclusive aspects in private schooling through structured interview schedule by purposive sampling technique. The Secondary sources are collected through a survey of literature both published and unpublished, books, articles, and vernacular newspaper essays. The data is analyzed by both qualitative and quantitative techniques, and scrutinized by SPSS software in order to show the government policy making led towards equity and inclusion in general and by RTE Act in particular.

The researcher carried out a comparative study between Government, Local Bodies, and Private Day Schools. The Study explored the difference between the institutions regarding access, equity, inclusion and democratization of education in the schooling system.

FIELD ANALYSIS

Class of the Respondent * Social Category of the Student

| Class of the Respondent | Social Category of the Student | | | | | Total |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| | General | OBC | SC | ST | Muslim | |
| 3rd Class | 3 17.6% | 5 29.4% | 5 29.4% | 3 17.6% | 1 5.9% | 17 100.0% |
| 4th Class | 1 8.3% | 3 25.0% | 7 58.3% | 1 8.3% | 0 .0% | 12 100.0% |
| 5th Class | 1 9.1% | 5 45.5% | 3 27.3% | 2 18.2% | 0 .0% | 11 100.0% |
| 6th Class | 1 20.0% | 0 .0% | 4 80.0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 5 100.0% |
| 7th Class | 1 33.3% | 1 33.3% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 1 33.3% | 3 100.0% |
| 8th Class | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 1 50.0% | 1 50.0% | 0 .0% | 2 100.0% |
| Total | 7 14.0% | 14 28.0% | 20 40.0% | 7 14.0% | 2 4.0% | 50 100.0% |

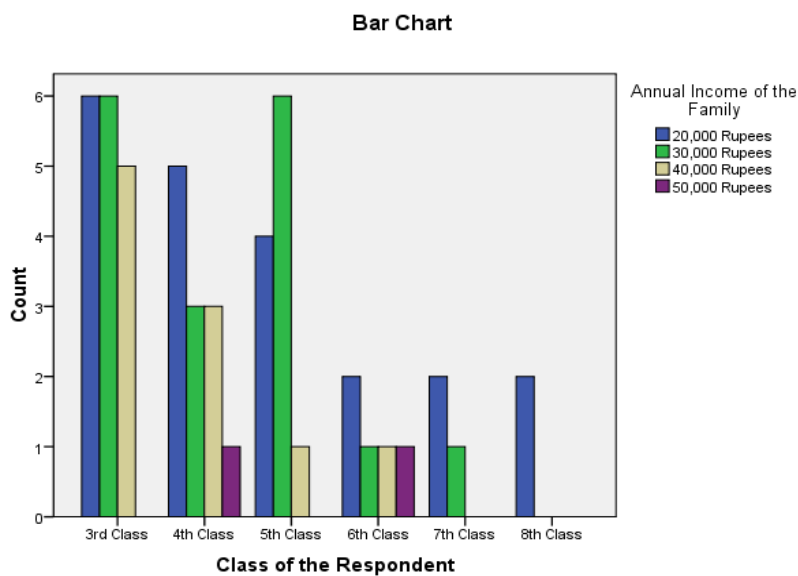


The above table explains about two private schools implementing RTE Act and the students' admitted under this Act at Delhi. From the class 3rd to class 8th admissions have taken place in DPS and Modern Cambridge School. Majority of 40% are admitted from SC category, followed by 28% OBC children got admissions in 3rd, 4th and 5th classes. The equal number of students joined under this Act with 14% of general category and schedule tribe kids, followed by 4% Muslim boys. Lastly, admissions have taken place in ascending order in relation to increase in the standard of class.

Class of the Respondent * Annual Income of the Family

| Class of the Respondent | Annual Income of the Family | | | | Total |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| | 20,000 Rupees | 30,000 Rupees | 40,000 Rupees | 50,000 Rupees | |
| 3rd Class | 6 35.3% | 6 35.3% | 5 29.4% | 0 .0% | 17 100.0% |
| 4th Class | 5 41.7% | 3 25.0% | 3 25.0% | 1 8.3% | 12 100.0% |
| 5th Class | 4 36.4% | 6 54.5% | 1 9.1% | 0 .0% | 11 100.0% |
| 6th Class | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 |

| | | | | | |
|-----------|--------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| | 40.0% | 20.0% | 20.0% | 20.0% | 100.0% |
| 7th Class | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| | 66.7% | 33.3% | .0% | .0% | 100.0% |
| 8th Class | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| | 100.0% | .0% | .0% | .0% | 100.0% |
| Total | 21 | 17 | 10 | 2 | 50 |
| | 42.0% | 34.0% | 20.0% | 4.0% | 100.0% |

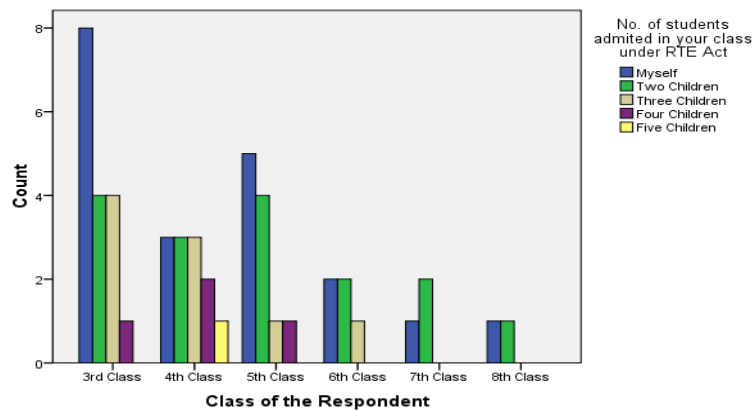


The students admitted under RTE Act according to class-wise and their annual income of their families. They have produced their income certificates during their admission in private schools. Majority of them are from 20,000 rupees annual income with 42%, followed by 30,000 rupees and 40,000 rupees as their family annual income with 34% and 20% respectively. This shows the income criteria and social category of the students in enrolment or getting admission into the private school under RTE Act. Here the fee has been fixed and will be reimbursed by the government for this 25% children in private schooling.

Class of the Respondent * No. of students admitted in your class under RTE Act

| Class of the Respondent | No. of students admitted in your class under RTE Act | | | | | Total |
|-------------------------|--|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| | Myself | Two Children | Three Children | Four Children | Five Children | |
| 3rd Class | 8 47.1% | 4 23.5% | 4 23.5% | 1 5.9% | 0 .0% | 17 100.0% |
| 4th Class | 3 25.0% | 3 25.0% | 3 25.0% | 2 16.7% | 1 8.3% | 12 100.0% |
| 5th Class | 5 45.5% | 4 36.4% | 1 9.1% | 1 9.1% | 0 .0% | 11 100.0% |
| 6th Class | 2 40.0% | 2 40.0% | 1 20.0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 5 100.0% |
| 7th Class | 1 33.3% | 2 66.7% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 3 100.0% |
| 8th Class | 1 50.0% | 1 50.0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 2 100.0% |
| Total | 20 40.0% | 16 32.0% | 9 18.0% | 4 8.0% | 1 2.0% | 50 100.0% |

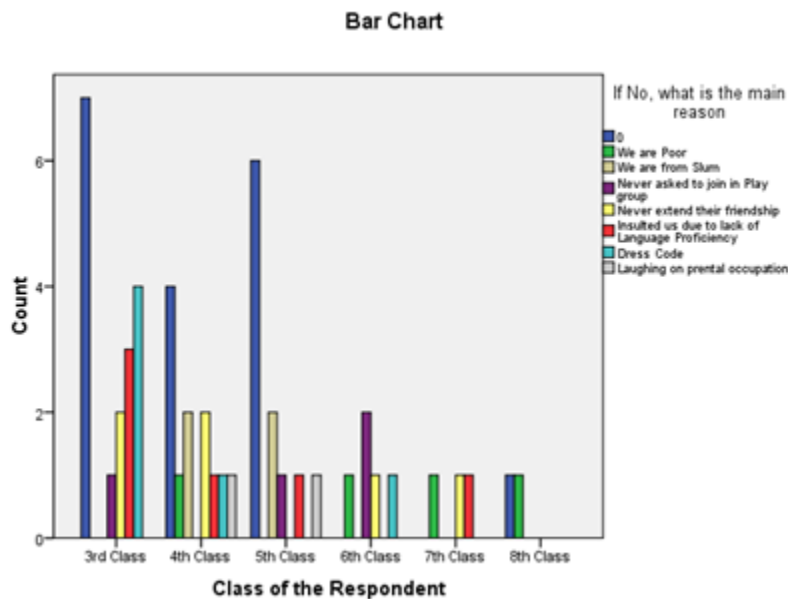
Bar Chart



In these two private schools, there is an increase in number in the admission has taken place in the 3rd standard, followed by remaining classes in descending order. Majority of 40% have got single admissions in various classes from 3rd to 8th class. Two children in a class of 32% got admitted in all the classes, followed by 18% are three students admission and 8% are in primary schooling with four children in each class. Lastly highest number of 5 students got admitted in 4th standard in two sections.

Class of the Respondent * Peer Group Response

| Class of the Respondent | If No, what is the main reason | | | | | | | | Total |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| | N.A | Poverty | From Slum | Never asked to join in Play group | Never extend their friendship | Insulted us due to lack of Language Proficiency | Dress Code | Laughing on parental occupation | |
| 3rd Class | 7 41.2 % | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 1 5.9% | 2 11.8% | 3 17.6% | 4 23.5% | 0 .0% | 17 100.0% |
| 4th Class | 4 33.3 % | 1 8.3% | 2 16.7% | 0 .0% | 2 16.7% | 1 8.3% | 1 8.3% | 1 8.3% | 12 100.0% |
| 5th Class | 6 54.5 % | 0 .0% | 2 18.2% | 1 9.1% | 0 .0% | 1 9.1% | 0 .0% | 1 9.1% | 11 100.0% |
| 6th Class | 0 .0% | 1 20.0% | 0 .0% | 2 40.0% | 1 20.0% | 0 .0% | 1 20.0% | 0 .0% | 5 100.0% |
| 7th Class | 0 .0% | 1 33.3% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 1 33.3% | 1 33.3% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 3 100.0% |
| 8th Class | 1 50.0 % | 1 50.0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 2 100.0% |
| Total | 18 36.0 % | 4 8.0% | 4 8.0% | 4 8.0% | 6 12.0% | 6 12.0% | 6 12.0% | 2 4.0% | 50 100.0% |



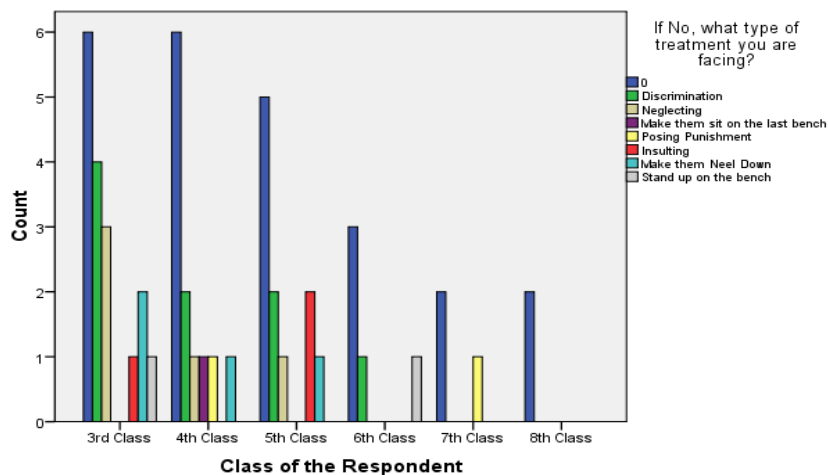
The above table explains an important aspect of equality and access in the class environment from the peer group. The students who got admitted under RTE Act 8% students have some problems with their peer group due to poverty, slum background and they never ask them to join in their play group. The equal number of 12% students reacted that their class mates never extended their friendship towards them, insulted by pointing out dress code, and lack of English language proficiency elite class kids have showing discrimination by comparing with them. The other 4% are unable to adjust because they are laughing on their parental occupation. It indicates though the government is ready to provide good education to the poorer, the act itself has some drawbacks based on child psychology. It impacts on child’s all round development.

Class of the Respondent * Teachers’ treatment

| Class of the Respondent | Teachers’ treatment towards these students | | | | | | | | Total |
|-------------------------|--|--------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------|
| | N.A | Showin g Discrim ination | Neglec ting | Make them sit on the last bench | Posing Punishm ent | Insulting | Make them Kneel Down | Stand up on the bench | |
| 3rd Class | 6 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 17 |
| | 35.3 % | 23.5% | 17.6% | .0% | .0% | 5.9% | 11.8% | 5.9% | 100.0 % |
| 4th | 6 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 12 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|--------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|---------------|
| Class | 50.0 % | 16.7% | 8.3% | 8.3% | 8.3% | .0% | 8.3% | .0% | 100.0 % |
| 5th Class | 5 45.5 % | 2 18.2% | 1 9.1% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 2 18.2% | 1 9.1% | 0 .0% | 11 100.0 % |
| 6th Class | 3 60.0 % | 1 20.0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 1 20.0% | 5 100.0 % |
| 7th Class | 2 66.7 % | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 1 33.3% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 3 100.0 % |
| 8th Class | 2 100.0 % | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 2 100.0 % |
| Total | 24 48.0 % | 9 18.0% | 5 10.0% | 1 2.0% | 2 4.0% | 3 6.0% | 4 8.0% | 2 4.0% | 50 100.0 % |

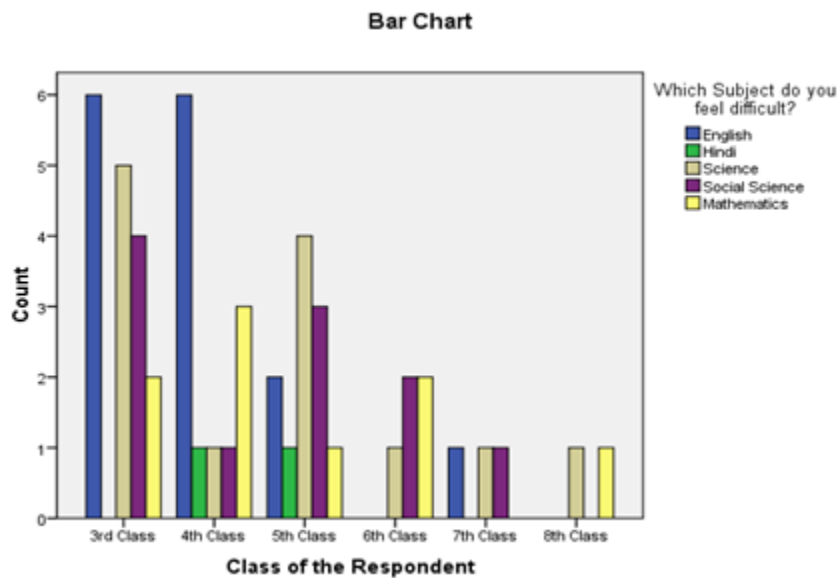
Bar Chart



It is well known fact that teacher should be bias free in his/her classroom teaching. The above table explains the teachers' treatment towards RTE Act admitted students in various forms such as 18% have responded teachers' are showing discrimination, and 10% have understood that teachers' neglecting them intentionally. The rest of the students have reacted that imposing punishments such as kneel down in the class, make them stand on the bench, make them sit on the last rows of the class, insulting and abusing based on parental occupation and social category of the respondent.

Class of the Respondent * Which Subject do you feel difficult?

| Class of the Respondent | Which Subject do you feel difficult? | | | | | Total |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|----------------|-------------|--------------|
| | English | Hindi | Science | Social Science | Mathematics | |
| 3rd Class | 6 35.3% | 0 .0% | 5 29.4% | 4 23.5% | 2 11.8% | 17 100.0% |
| 4th Class | 6 50.0% | 1 8.3% | 1 8.3% | 1 8.3% | 3 25.0% | 12 100.0% |
| 5th Class | 2 18.2% | 1 9.1% | 4 36.4% | 3 27.3% | 1 9.1% | 11 100.0% |
| 6th Class | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 1 20.0% | 2 40.0% | 2 40.0% | 5 100.0% |
| 7th Class | 1 33.3% | 0 .0% | 1 33.3% | 1 33.3% | 0 .0% | 3 100.0% |
| 8th Class | 0 .0% | 0 .0% | 1 50.0% | 0 .0% | 1 50.0% | 2 100.0% |
| Total | 15 30.0% | 2 4.0% | 13 26.0% | 11 22.0% | 9 18.0% | 50 100.0% |



The above table enumerates about the class of the respondent and the subject they feel difficult in their class curriculum. Majority of 30% students are having problem in understanding the pronunciation and spelling, rote practicing of synonyms and antinomy's, followed by science subject with 26% and 22% students feel social science is hard in English medium. Though maths is logic based simple arithmetic it is also hard for 18% students and very few responded that Hindi is difficult to learn.

Class of the Respondent * Which Subject do you feel easy

| Class of the Respondent | Which Subject do you feel easy | | | | Total |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|--------------|
| | Hindi | Science | Social Sciences | Maths | |
| 3rd Class | 11 64.7% | 2 11.8% | 1 5.9% | 3 17.6% | 17 100.0% |
| 4th Class | 4 33.3% | 2 16.7% | 2 16.7% | 4 33.3% | 12 100.0% |
| 5th Class | 4 36.4% | 5 45.5% | 0 .0% | 2 18.2% | 11 100.0% |

| | | | | | |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 6th Class | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 5 |
| | 40.0% | 40.0% | .0% | 20.0% | 100.0% |
| 7th Class | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| | 66.7% | .0% | .0% | 33.3% | 100.0% |
| 8th Class | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| | 50.0% | .0% | .0% | 50.0% | 100.0% |
| Total | 24 | 11 | 3 | 12 | 50 |
| | 48.0% | 22.0% | 6.0% | 24.0% | 100.0% |

Bar Chart

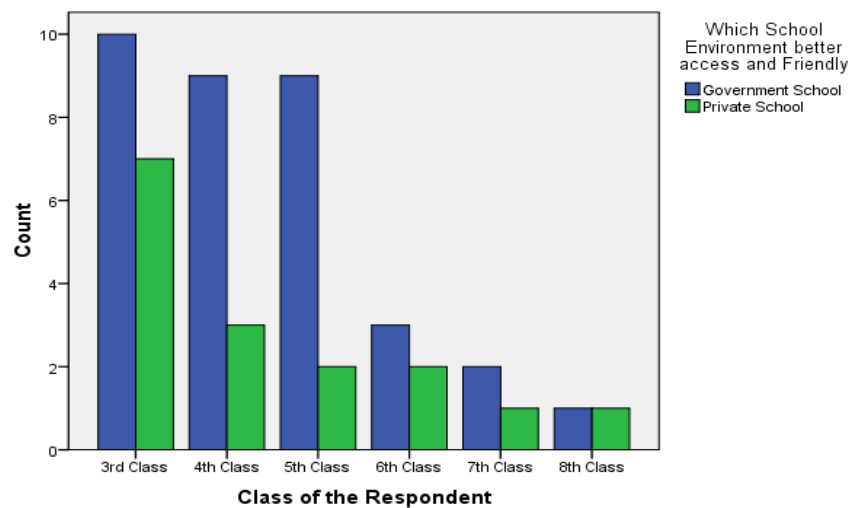


The students admitted under RTE Act responded that except English they do not have any problem with the remaining subjects. Majority of 48% have responded that they are very familiar to Hindi as being a vernacular language and their pre-schooling was in the same medium of instruction. Though the students have problem with mathematics are good in simple additions and multiplications as such only language is the barrier for these kids in spite of the subject. Around 22% have responded that science is very interesting and got interest through the day to day scientific incidents, followed by social sciences with 6% respondents.

Class of the Respondent * Which School Environment better access and Friendly

| Class of the Respondent | Which School Environment better access and Friendly | | Total |
|-------------------------|---|----------------|--------------|
| | Government School | Private School | |
| 3rd Class | 10 58.8% | 7 41.2% | 17 100.0% |
| 4th Class | 9 75.0% | 3 25.0% | 12 100.0% |
| 5th Class | 9 81.8% | 2 18.2% | 11 100.0% |
| 6th Class | 3 60.0% | 2 40.0% | 5 100.0% |
| 7th Class | 2 66.7% | 1 33.3% | 3 100.0% |
| 8th Class | 1 50.0% | 1 50.0% | 2 100.0% |
| Total | 34 68.0% | 16 32.0% | 50 100.0% |

Bar Chart



From the 3rd class to 8th class students under RTE Act have reacted on the comfort ability between government and private schools, regarding good peer group and student friendly environment. Among these students about 68% have responded that government school environment has better access and friendly relationship compare to 32% of private schooling at Delhi.

CONCLUSION

Post Independence India laid emphasis on education. Many new institutions right from school level to advanced higher education were created and the earlier ones expanded manifold. Yet, education was perhaps not considered as important as agriculture, industry, defence or administration. The growth of educational opportunities fell roughly in tune with the growth of the economy and remained so for about three decades after independence. The policies and their implementation mechanisms fully overlooked at universal literacy and education for all. In respect of Elementary education, the objective of the NEP had been addressed about the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Mid-Day Meal scheme the two flagship programmes of the Government, Teacher Education schemes and programmes under the National Literacy Mission. As a result, most of the indicators have turned positive which is highly encouraging. There has been a reduction in the number of out of school children, decline in gender and social gaps and a decline in dropout rates. The number of teachers and number of schools have increased substantially. Where recently launched as in RTE Act has some challenges and gaps have been noticed in access and equity of 25% reservation in private schooling from class 1 to class 8.

In principle, the RTE Act 2009, with appropriate modifications and financial provisioning, offers a great opportunity to correct the anomaly of poor education outcomes, and can deliver on the long-standing commitment of providing basic and quality education to the so called poor and deprived sections of the country. This study reveals about the discrimination and some challenges in socialization of children, comfort ability of poor children in private schools through this reservation. Unfortunately, short-term political gains and poor judgment on the part of poor and deprived by politicians and policymakers may continue to be major roadblocks in accomplishing this critical goal.

In the state of Andhra Pradesh, the Right to have free and compulsory education RTE Act 2009 is a best example for the lagging behind from the paper to reality. No Private institution admitted 25% of weaker and disadvantaged section pupil into their schools; it is really a critical gap where the policy framework is talking about the social justice with equity in each and every scheme.

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