



Implementation of the Right to Education Act, 2009: A Study of CRCCs' Perceptions on Quality in Elementary Education

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Abstract: *The present study explores the perceptions of Cluster Resource Centre Coordinators (CRCCs) regarding the implementation of the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 with reference to quality in elementary education. The study intends to know that CRCCs role in providing academic support, monitoring, and supervision at the grassroots level from the standpoint of quality. A descriptive research design was adopted, and data were collected from 50 CRCCs selected from different blocks of Balasore district, Odisha, using a structured questionnaire. The findings reveal that CRCCs hold a positive perception regarding various quality dimensions under RTE implementation, such as provision of academic support to teachers, activity-based teaching, use of teaching-learning materials, conduct of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE), and organization of capacity-building programs for teachers and School Management Committees (SMCs). The study also indicates effective practices like regular parent-teacher meetings, use of local resources, and efforts to improve student learning outcomes. However, certain areas such as induction training for newly recruited teachers require further strengthening. The study concludes that while CRCCs perceive the implementation of RTE as effective in promoting quality education, continuous training, monitoring, and policy support are essential to address existing gaps and ensure qualitative improvement in elementary education.*

Keywords: RTE Act, CRCCs, Quality Elementary Education, Academic Support.

Introduction: The SSA was focused on the quality interventions for bringing quality in elementary education. Being in line with this, the RTE Act focused on these quality interventions for achieving its promises leading to inclusive, equitable, and quality elementary education known as RTE-SSA Scheme. These are;

1. Curriculum and Evaluation with emphasis on quality and flexible curriculum and continuous and comprehensive evaluation
2. Granting of a TLE @ Rs.20, 000 assistance to newly formed primary schools and Rs. 50, 000 to newly renovated middle or UP schools not coming under the OBBS.
3. Learning Enhancement Program (LEP), another quality intervention under RTE-SSA in the Country was implemented with effect from 2010-11 to 2015-2016 for all the classes of Elementary Education.
4. Different kinds of Teacher Training as a quality intervention in the SSA were undertaken for professional growth of the teachers such as;
 - Up to 20 days of in-service training each year for teachers.

- Newly appointed teachers to receive 30 days of induction training, and
 - 60 days of training for untrained teachers.
5. Community mobilization in order to facilitate decentralized planning, management, and monitoring which is strengthened by the RTE Act, 2009 for making of “School Management Committee” with importance on “Primary Stake holders” and “Local Authority” in the administration, management, and development of Elementary Schools.
 6. To boost the academic and professional assistance of BRCs and CRCs for teachers to improve their academic performance and professional growth. As we all know, at the Block level, a BRC is responsible at least 8-10 schools academic monitoring and supervision, while Cluster Resource Center (CRC) is housed in a well-equipped school complex that serves 15-20 elementary schools.
 7. Setting up of libraries with existing elementary schools as a quality intervention for which the Central Govt. under the purview of SSA releases grants for infrastructure, procurement of furniture, and purchase of books and prescribed minimum time for each class in the library.
 8. Innovation Fund for Computer- Aided Education (CAE), which serves upper primary schools with a focus on Science, Mathematics, and Computer Applications, including hardware, software, training, maintenance, and resources support. For this, an Innovation Fund for CAE of rupees 50 lakh per district releases by SSA every year through the System of Budgeting to be made by the State for the said purpose.
 9. Research and Evaluation is another quality intervention of SSA to identify the needs of the Learners, Schools, Community, and the Nation by assessing critically the impact of interventions with developing new strategies for quality in Elementary Education. The funds for this purpose are accessible through the Research, Evaluation, Monitoring, and Supervision (REMS) System, which provides technical resource support to States in the areas of innovation, research, capacity building and social mapping.

Out of the above-mentioned quality interventions, the role of CRCCs is highly essential for which there is the necessity to mobilize and orient the CRCCs through capacity building programs for them at the State and Block levels on how to impart academic feedback for schools through proper monitoring and supervision. Here the researcher has taken the initiative to study the situation in case of CRCCs.

Review of Related Literature: Panda (2007) in his study on the role and functions of BRCs and CRCs in the implementation of SSA in Angul District of Odisha reported that most of the BRCs and CRCs were unable to perform their role satisfactorily because of lack of infrastructure and required facilities.

Mishra (2008) in his study on the BRCs and CRCs’ efficiency in offering academic help and ideas to Odisha’s elementary schools reported that each sample school was visited 1.72 times in a year by BRCCs as compared to 13.86 times by CRCCs to assist teachers and schools with academic support.

AMC Research Group (2012) in its study on assessment of functioning of BRCCs and CRCCs in the context of the SSA program’s implementation reported that the BRCCs and CRCCs in the Balasore District of Odisha were visited the schools for their academic support to teachers, monitoring and supervision of schools regularly for bringing quality in elementary education. The CRCCs has received support from the BRCCs in the areas like monthly progress review, teacher training and completion of schools’ data, organizing cluster level meetings, assistance in community mobilization, and thrilling up monitoring formats. The CRCCs were given pedagogical support to schools, conducted teacher training programs and the VEC/PTA/MTA meetings along with ensuring the enrolment of all youngsters aged 6 to 14 years old.

Yadav (2012) reported that training facilities were not available properly and monthly CRC meetings were not conducted in States and Union Territories of the Country except Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Meghalaya and Odisha, In most of the States/Union Territories, the administrative issues like Pulse Polio Program, Mid-day Program, Staff problem, School record, Salary, Attendance, etc. were discussed instead of academic and training issues in the monthly meetings for which more than 50% of CRC Coordinators and Teachers were not satisfied with the proceedings of the meetings. The States like Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat, the academic training inputs such as teaching-learning process, development of Teaching-Learning Materials (TLMs) work in groups, use of Activity Cards, etc. were discussed in the monthly meetings.

Patel (2012) reported that the BRCCs faced the problems like absence of a teacher's handbook, least interested CRCCs, and being busy with the different tasks from various fronts. Whereas the CRCCs faced the problems like identification of competencies among the teachers, lack of interest of teachers on activity-based approach and various overburdened assignments to provide academic support of teachers in their classroom transaction work. However, there is the necessity for special training for pedagogical materials and supply of reference materials to the CRCCs, he reported.

Panda and Mohanty (2013) reported that the Teachers and Headmasters of Elementary Schools perceived the role of CRCCs more like data and departmental record manager than an academic facilitator although the absence of teachers has been reduced to a minimum; records and registers of schools were maintained properly; interaction of CRCCs with the community members was done due to visit and support of CRCCs. Whereas, the academic support extended and demonstration lessons delivered by the CRCCs were no way different than their normal classes. The HeadMasters of the elementary schools have admitted the help given by the CRCCs. However, the academic support given by the CRCCs needs improvement for quality in schooling in a healthy and conducive environment with the administrative control required for it and there is the necessity of inspiring community members and building CRC as a resource center for teachers has given low priority by the CRCCs, he reported.

Gairola (2013) conducted a study on Management of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan's Training and Skill Development Activities (SDA) in six Blocks of Dehradun and two developmental Blocks of Raipur and Doiwala in the State of Uttarakhand and found that the motivating level of 63% of primary school teachers, 77 percent of upper primary school teachers, 75 percent of CRCCs, 80 percent of DIETs and BRCCs is good; in terms of training methods, 77 percent of upper primary school teachers, 75 percent of primary school teachers find training methods to be good. Whereas, only 16% of upper primary school teachers rated the training methods are excellent with indicating the lecture method as common among them. According to the findings, none of the respondents said they used audio-visual resources in their training. However, with the stipulation that the modules are in the self-instructional mode, a gap has been identified between the planners and implementers of the training.

The DIETs and CRC personnel believed that the training venues are having lack of adequate space, toilets, boarding and lodging facilities, proper drinking water, electricity, and furniture; nearly 37.5 percent of CRCCs believed that teachers are dissatisfied with the training center facilities; nearly 50 percent of CRCCs, as well as all BRCCs and BEOs believed that the training has an impact on the teaching-learning process in the classrooms by teachers.

Mishra (2014) reported that the BRC Coordinators and CRC Coordinators were faced various problems while discharging their duties and most notably among these is non-academic assignments given to them which must be reduced to a minimum and BRCCs and CRCCs have to give focus on training of teachers with giving them and to schools the academic support frequently.

Pradhan & Bagarti (2016) studied on Perceptions, Problems, and Promises of Newly Appointed CRCCs in Odisha's Koraput District found that some CRCCs think that this is a good job to prepare report

staying at home without making any visit to the schools rather they compelled the teachers and headmasters to come and submit their reports and documents at their residences. Whereas, some CRCCs did not go to their parent schools. The CRCCs are not free from more official formalities and documentation. They should be given ample opportunities to visit schools, deliver demo or model lessons, organize need-based local specific training and orientation of teachers, prepare supplementary textbooks, teaching- learning materials, and conducting action research relating to issues of students, schools, and community members.

Singh and Kurian (2018) conducted a study on school education regarding BRCCs and CRCCs in India and found that only half of the BRCCs were in position. All the BRCCs in 12 States/ UTs including Odisha were preparing their schedule for school visits. Whereas, in five States/UTs only less than half of the BRCCs are making their school visits and in a majority of the States and UTs, the average number of visits made by BRCCs to schools was less than five. In most of the States and UTs, the CRCCs make a school visits either monthly or bi- monthly. It is found that most of the BRCCs and CRCCs are making prior planning for school visits. However, the frequency of such visits should be increased so that they may extend academic support at different levels and bring about qualitative improvement. Proper planning of lessons and use of Teaching-Learning Materials (TLMs), implementation of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE), classroom observation, conducting pieces of training and meetings, etc are the major duties pointed out by different BRCCs and CRCCs of all the States and Union Territories.

Dash (2019) in his study on strengthening CRC as a forum for Continuous Teacher Development conducted in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha reported that CRCCs were not functional in the Blocks in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. The monthly sharing meetings were not happening regularly and when held there was no academic discussion, rather meetings were held for data collection purposes. The CRCCs were having a lack of ICT materials and resources and the CRCCs were not interested to conduct meeting every month due to lack of time. There is the necessity of regularization of cluster meeting through special agenda- morning assembly, review of the activities based on last month plan, technical session for conceptual clarity on any topic, resource generation for development of charts, big books, etc, issue solving session on pedagogical issues and planning sessions for the next month for which he stressed on Cluster forum.

To sum up, although the CRCCs were in the position to monitor the academic and training matters of the elementary school teachers they were involved in the administrative assignment in case of most of the State Govts. of the Country from time to time reported by Panda (2007), Yadav (2012), Gairola (2013), Mishra (2014), Pradhan & Bagarti (2016) and Kurian & Singh (2018). Hence, they failed to deliver the good in the field of providing academic and training inputs to the teachers and monitoring the educational process as their prime responsibility. Therefore, the focus should be given on training of CRCCs as it has a positive impact on them to train the teachers on proper planning of lessons and use of TLMs, delivering the good in the classroom, implementation of CCE, use of audio-visual materials in the classroom teaching with conducting monthly CRC meetings to discuss on academic and training issues in the meetings reported by Mishra (2008), Patel (2012), AMC Research Group (2012), Yadav (2012), Gairola (2013) and Kurian & Singh (2018) and Dash (2019).

Rationale: The role and functions of Cluster Resource Centers are very much important as these Centers are the main academic monitoring and supervising centers for teachers and schools. Hence, to strengthen the academic support capacity of the CRC Coordinators for the teachers and schools to take measures followed by immediate action at the National level, the major educational issues and problems faced by them need to be addressed properly. The regular school visits by the CRCCs with providing on-site assistance to teachers was the immediate responsibility; whereas, they could not do it properly due to the administrative tasks assigned to them reported by Patel (2012), whereas many CRCCs

could not visit the schools and were not holding the monthly meetings at regular intervals revealed by Pradhan & Bagarti(2016) and Dash (2019). Training has a positive impact as per the opinion of 50% CRCCs, and BEOs for delivering the good in the classrooms by teachers; lecture method was the common training method among the methods adopted during the training period with no use of audio-visual equipment revealed by Patel (2012), Gairola (2013). Proper planning of lessons and use of TLMs, implementation of CCE, classroom observation, conducting training and meetings are the major duties of CRCCs reported by Kurian & Singh (2018) and Dash (2019).

Methodology

Design of the Study: There are “2845” Elementary Schools along with 03 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalays (KGBVs) running under the administrative control of DEO, Balasore with “10,625” teachers teaching in different Primary and Upper Primary Schools in Balasore District. There are 211 CRCCs in position in the district to extend onsite academic support through monitoring and supervision of the Elementary Schools. There are ‘12’ Blocks in the Balasore district and the figure showing these Blocks have been extended in Table-1.

Table-1: Block wise Number of CRCCs and Schools

Sl. No.	Blocks	CRCCs	No. of Elementary Schools(Primary and Upper Primary)
1	Basta	17	242
2	Bahanaga	17	185
3	Baliapal	17	264
4	Sadar	21	231
5	Bhogarai	25	374
6	Remuna	17	228
7	Nilagiri	19	204
8	Jaleswar	17	249
9	Oupada	11	130
10	Simulia	16	155
11	Soro	17	243
12	Khaira	17	240
	Total	211	2845

Population and Participants

The Study included 50 CRCCs covering all of the District’s Blocks selected randomly by taking each block as a strata for which the stratified random sampling procedure was adopted by the researcher to get their perception on quality in relation to the implementation of the RTE Act, 2009. The distribution of the CRCCs as the participants of the study has been given in Table-2.

Table-2: CRCCs as Participants of the Study

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of CRCCs
1	Basta	4
2	Bahanaga	4
3	Baliapal	4
4	Bhograi	4
5	Khaira	4
6	Soro	4
7	Sadar	5
8	Remuna	5
9	Nilagiri	4
10	Oupada	4
11	Jaleswar	4
12	Simulia	4
	Total	50

In the Study, CRCCs as participants constitute 20% of the CRCC Population in Balasore district.

Development of Tool: A Questionnaire to study the Perception CRCCs about the concept of ‘Quality’ with reference to implementation of RTE Act, 2009 was developed by the researcher to investigate how CRCCs have perceived the concept of “Quality” in relation to the implementation of RTE Act, 2009. Altogether 24 statements have been incorporated in this tool.

Tool Used: The self-developed questionnaire to study the perception of CRCCs about the concept of Quality with reference to the implementation of RTE Act, 2009 for the purpose.

Procedure of Data Collection: The Researcher went to the field to gather data from Elementary Schools in the Balasore district after getting the tool ready. The researcher visited CRCs to distribute Questionnaire to CRCCs in order to investigate how CRCCs see the concept of “Quality” in light of the RTE Act’s implementation.

Questionnaire on Perception of CRCCs about the concept of Quality with reference to the implementation of RTE Act, 2009 distributed to the CRCCs and collected accordingly.

Data Analysis: The data collected from CRCCs of Balasore District on their perception about the concept of ‘Quality’ with reference to the implementation of RTE Act, 2009 was analysed item wise through thick description.

Results:

Table 3: Perception of CRCCs about the concept 'Quality' for a sound academic support system consequent upon the implementation of RTE Act, 2009.

1.	Teachers in Schools are given onsite academic support as and when required by them.		50 (100%)			
2.	Induction training programme is organised for the newly recruited teachers.		18 (36%)		30 (60%)	2 (4%)
3.	Training needs of the teachers are identified before organising in-service training programmes for them.		50 (100%)			
4.	Teachers transact curriculum following activity-based approach.		50 (100%)			
5.	Capacity building programs are organized for School Management Committee members at regular intervals.		50 (100%)			
6.	School Management Committee (SMC) members visit schools for monitoring the activities of the schools.		50 (100%)			
7.	Varied teaching-learning materials are available and used in classrooms	4 (8%)	46 (92%)			
8.	Parent Teacher Meetings (PTM) are organized by the schools to discuss academic issues.	4 (8%)	46 (92%)			
9.	Efforts are made to improve student learning achievement on the basis of their previous result or performance.	28 (46%)	22 (44%)			
10.	Teachers encourage low achievers to attain the special classes organised by Schools.	13 (26%)	37 (74%)			
11.	SMC Members actively participate in the preparation and implementation of School Development Plan (SDP).	12 (24%)	36 (72%)			
12.	SMC members support in the organisation of co-curricular activities in School.	14 (28%)	36 (72%)			
13.	SMC members support in the organisation of co-curricular activities in School.	8 (16%)	42 (84%)			
14.	Library facilities have been extended to all children.	13 (26%)	37 (74%)			

15.	Teachers conduct Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) in school.	4 (8%)	46 (92%)			
16.	Learning in groups is facilitated by teachers.	8 (16%)	42 (82%)			
17.	Teachers maintain CCE records and learners' profile properly.		50 (100%)			
18.	Activity Banks are available in each school.	8 (16%)	42 (82%)			
19.	Monthly review and planning meeting of teachers are done for implementation of RTE Act, 2009.		50 (100%)			
20.	DIET provides academic support to CRCCs and BRCCs		50 (100%)			
21.	There is Continuous improvement in student learning performance of students.		50 (100%)			
22.	Local resources are tapped by the school for benefit of the classroom.		50 (100%)			
23.	The teaching-learning process has become child-centered and friendly.	10 (20%)	40 (80%)			
24.	Self-learning materials (SLM) are made made available to students.	8 (16%)	42 (82%)			

(Figures within the parenthesis indicate the percentage of response of Participants)

With reference to Quality; Teachers in Schools are given onsite academic support as and when required by them was agreed by 100% CRCCs ; Induction Training Program is organized for the newly recruited teachers was agreed by 36% and indifferent extended by 60% and disagreed by 4% ; Training needs of the teachers are identified before organizing in- service training programs for them was agreed by 100% ; Teachers transact curriculum following activity based approach was agreed by 100% ; Capacity Building Programs are organized for the School Management Committee (SMC) Members at regular intervals was agreed by 100% ; School Management Committee (SMC) Members visit the schools for monitoring the activities of the Schools was agreed by 100% ; Varied Teaching-Learning Materials(TLMs) are available and used in classroom was strongly agreed by 8% and agreed by 92%; Parent-Teacher Meetings (PTMs) are organized by the Schools to discuss academic issues was strongly agreed by 8% and agreed by 92%; Efforts are made to improve student learning achievement on the basis of their previous result or performance was strongly agreed by 46% and agreed by 54%; Teachers encourage low achievers to attain the special classes organized by Schools was strongly agreed by 26% and agreed by 74% ; SMC Members actively participate in the preparation and implementation of School Development Plan(SDP) was strongly agreed by 24% and agreed by 76%; SMC Members support in the organization of curricular activities in School was strongly agreed by 28% and agreed by 72%; SMC Members support in the organization of co-curricular activities in

School was strongly agreed by 16% and agreed by 84%; Library facilities have been extended to all children was strongly agreed by 26% and agreed by 74%; Teachers conduct Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) in the School was strongly agreed by 8% and agreed by 92%; Learning in groups is facilitated by the teachers was strongly agreed by 16% and agreed by 84%; Teachers maintain CCE records and learners' profile properly was agreed by 100% ; Activity Banks are available in each school was strongly agreed by 16% and agreed by 84%; Monthly review and planning meeting of teachers are done for implementation of RTE Act, 2009 was agreed by 100%; DIET provides academic resource support to the CRCCs was agreed by 100%; There is continuous improvement in the learning performance of students was agreed by 100%; Local resources are tapped by the school for benefit of the classroom was agreed by 100% ; The teaching-learning process has become child-centred and child-friendly was strongly agreed by 20% and agreed by 80%; Self-Learning Materials (SLMs) are made available to students was strongly agreed by 16% and agreed by 84% CRCCs relating to their perception on the concept of Quality with reference to the implementation of RTE Act, 2009.

Discussion:

Perception of CRCCs about the Concept of “Quality” in Implementation of RTE Act, 2009: Teachers in Schools are given onsite academic support as and when required by them; training needs of the teachers are identified before organizing training programs for them; teachers transact their curriculum by following activity based approach with getting the availability of variety teaching-learning materials used in the classrooms; capacity building programs are organized for the SMC members with facilitating them to visit the schools for monitoring purpose; parent teacher meetings are organized by the schools to discuss the academic issues; SMC members participate in the preparation and implementation of school development plans and support in the organization of curricular and co-curricular activities; efforts are made to improve student learning achievement on the basis of their previous result with encouraging the low achievers to attain the special classes organized by schools ; library facilities have been extended to all children with availability of learning groups and activity banks for students in schools; teachers conduct Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) by maintaining CCE records and learners profile properly to fulfill the purpose of continuous improvement in the learning performance of students; DIETs provide academic resource support to the CRCCs to enable the teachers to make the teaching-learning process child centred and child friendly; local resources are arranged by the schools with the availability of Self-Learning Materials for the students in schools and monthly review and planning meeting of teachers were done for implementation of RTE Act, 2009 were perceived properly by the CRCCs on Quality. However, Induction training program organized for newly recruited teachers on Quality component needs improvement. Hence, Quality will be ensured in the Elementary Education consequent upon the implementation of the RTE Act, 2009. The findings of the study have been supported by the findings of the study conducted by Mishra (2008), AMC Research Group (2012), Yadav (2012), Panda (2013), Kurian & Singh (2018). Whereas, the findings of the study conducted by Panda (2007), Mishra (2014) and Dash (2019) contradicts the findings of the study. However, Induction training program organized for newly recruited teachers on Quality component needs improvement. Therefore, it is concluded that CRCCs perceived the Quality related issues except few Quality related indicators in providing academic support to the teachers and schools following the RTE Act, 2009.

Educational Implications

- Policies should be done on frequent monitoring of the Quality related activities in the elementary schools and planning have to be done accordingly to give the responsibility to the educational personnel- BRCCs/ BEOs & CRCCs dealing with the grass root level.
- A specific policy is required and planning needs to be done accordingly for making induction training program mandatory for the newly recruited teachers in the elementary schools at the Block and District level.

- The Educational Administrators and Supervisors have to monitor the educational progress of the schools by ensuring the academic support given by the district resource groups to the teachers in different subjects.
- The Educational Administrators at the Block and District level like BEO and DEO should have to examine the Quality related matters carried out in the schools as per RTE Act,2009.
- It is the task of CRCCs to supervise the Quality related activities emphasized consequent upon the implementation of RTE Act,2009.
- It is the task of Teacher Education Institutions dealing with elementary education to organize capacity building programs for the teachers, CRCCs, BRCCs, Community members on the policies and plans adopted for substantial improvement in elementary education with reference to the implementation of RTE Act, 2009.

Conclusion: The study highlights that Cluster Resource Centre Coordinators (CRCCs) hold a largely positive perception regarding the implementation of the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 in ensuring quality elementary education. Key dimensions such as academic support to teachers, activity-based teaching, use of teaching-learning materials, Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE), and community participation through School Management Committees are being effectively practiced. The findings also indicate that regular monitoring, capacity-building programmes, and the use of local resources have contributed to improving student learning outcomes and promoting a child-centred teaching-learning environment.

However, certain gaps persist, particularly in the area of induction training for newly recruited teachers, which requires immediate attention. Strengthening this aspect, along with continuous professional development, better resource utilization, and systematic monitoring, is essential for sustaining quality improvements. Overall, the study concludes that while the implementation of the RTE Act has made significant progress in enhancing educational quality, focused policy support and ongoing capacity building of CRCCs and teachers are crucial to address existing challenges and ensure equitable and effective elementary education for all learners.

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