

# Right to Education for Human Resources Development in Recent ERA in India - A Policy Perspective

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**Abstract** - This article discusses the importance of the right to education for human resource development in India. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 is a significant milestone in India's education system, but the implementation has been uneven. Education is critical for economic and social development, and investment in education, improving infrastructure, teacher training, technology in education, and focus on early childhood education are essential policy perspectives for ensuring the right to education. The government must take a multi-dimensional approach to ensure access to quality education for all, which can unlock the full potential of India's human resources and ensure sustainable economic and social development.

**Keywords** - Human resource development, right to education, RTE Act, education system, sustainable economic and social development

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## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the right to education has emerged as a crucial policy issue in India, with significant implications for human resource development. Education is a fundamental human right and a critical tool for social and economic development. However, in India, access to quality education has been uneven, with significant disparities across regions and socioeconomic groups. In this article, we will examine the right to education in India, its importance for human resource development, and policy perspectives on how to ensure that all citizens have access to quality education.

Education is one of the fundamental rights that every individual is entitled to. In India, the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009, was introduced to ensure that every child between the ages of 6 to 14 years receives compulsory and free education. The RTE Act was a landmark legislation that aimed to provide quality education to all children, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. This article discusses the right to education in India from a policy perspective and how it can contribute to human resources development in the recent era.

India is a developing country with a large population, and the quality of education has a significant impact on the development of the country. Education is the foundation for human resources development, which is essential for the overall development of the country. The Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009, is a significant policy initiative by the government of India to ensure that every child has access to quality education. In this article, we will discuss the importance of the Right to Education Act in human resources development in recent times in India.

## THE CURRENT STATUS OF EDUCATION IN INDIA

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), India has made significant progress in education in recent years. The literacy rate in India has increased from 52.21% in 1991 to 74.04% in 2011. However, there is still a significant gap between urban and rural areas, and between males and females. According to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2019, 27% of children in rural areas in the age group of 6-14 years cannot read simple sentences in their mother tongue. The ASER report

also highlighted that the enrolment rate in schools has improved significantly, but the quality of education remains a concern.

The government of India has introduced various policies and programmes to promote education in India. The Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, launched in 2018, aims to provide quality education to all children from pre-school to class 12. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, introduced after 34 years of the previous policy, aims to transform the education system in India and make it more holistic, flexible, and multidisciplinary.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA**

Human resources development refers to the process of improving the knowledge, skills, and abilities of individuals in a country. Human resources development is essential for the overall development of a country as it helps to improve productivity, efficiency, and innovation. In India, human resources development has been a key focus area of the government's policies and programmes.

The National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 and the Programme of Action (POA) 1992 were the first significant policy documents that laid down the framework for human resources development in India. The NPE and POA recognised the importance of education in human resources development and stressed the need for quality education for all.

In recent years, the government has introduced several policies and programmes to promote human resources development in India. The Skill India Mission, launched in 2015, aims to provide vocational training to the youth of India and make them employable. The Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), launched in 2015, aims to provide skill training to youth in various sectors such as agriculture, healthcare, and construction.

The Digital India Programme, launched in 2015, aims to promote the use of digital technologies in various sectors such as education, healthcare, and governance. The Atal Innovation Mission, launched in 2016, aims to promote innovation and entrepreneurship among the youth of India.

The government has also introduced several policies and programmes to promote education in India. The Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, launched in 2018, aims to provide quality education to all children from pre-school to class 12. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, introduced after 34 years of the previous

policy, aims to transform the education system in India and make it more holistic, flexible, and multidisciplinary.

## **RIGHT TO EDUCATION IN INDIA**

The right to education is enshrined in Article 21A of the Indian Constitution, which mandates that the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children between the ages of 6 and 14. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, was enacted to give effect to this constitutional provision. The RTE Act guarantees every child the right to free and compulsory education in a neighborhood school, regardless of their social or economic background.

The RTE Act has been a significant milestone in India's education system, bringing millions of children into the formal education system. However, the implementation of the RTE Act has been uneven, with significant challenges in ensuring access to quality education. According to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2020, only 60% of children in rural India have access to a smartphone or a computer, and only 11% of households have an internet connection. These challenges have been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has disrupted the education system and widened existing inequalities.

The Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009, was passed by the Indian Parliament on 4th August 2009, and it came into force on 1st April 2010. The RTE Act mandates that all children between the ages of 6 to 14 years have the right to free and compulsory education. The Act also provides for the establishment of neighbourhood schools within a walking distance of 1 km for children in rural areas and 0.5 km for children in urban areas.

The RTE Act also lays down certain norms and standards for schools, such as pupil-teacher ratio, infrastructure, and teacher qualifications. The Act mandates that all schools must have a minimum of one teacher for every 30 students and that they must have certain basic infrastructure facilities such as a playground, a library, and a toilet. The Act also mandates that all teachers must have a minimum qualification of a diploma in education or a bachelor's degree in education.

The RTE Act also lays down certain responsibilities of the government and local authorities. The Act mandates that the government must ensure that all children between the ages of 6 to 14 years are

enrolled in school and are attending school regularly. The Act also provides for the establishment of School Management Committees (SMCs) at the school level to ensure community participation in the functioning of schools.

The RTE Act has been a significant step towards achieving universal elementary education in India. According to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2020, the enrolment of children in the age group of 6 to 14 years has increased from 96.7% in 2016 to 98.3% in 2020. However, there are still many challenges that need to be addressed to ensure that all children receive quality education.

### **THE ROLE OF RIGHT TO EDUCATION IN HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT**

The Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009, has a crucial role to play in human resources development in India. The Act aims to provide universal elementary education to all children, which is the foundation of human resources development. The Act also provides for the establishment of neighbourhood schools, which makes education accessible to children in rural areas and reduces the distance between their homes and schools. This can help to increase enrolment rates and reduce dropouts.

The RTE Act also lays down certain norms and standards for schools, which ensure that children receive quality education. The Act mandates a pupil-teacher ratio of 1:30, which ensures that teachers can pay attention to individual students and provide them with personalised attention. The Act also mandates certain infrastructure facilities such as a playground, a library, and a toilet, which can help to create a conducive learning environment.

The RTE Act also mandates that all teachers must have a minimum qualification of a diploma in education or a bachelor's degree in education. This ensures that teachers are qualified and trained to teach and can provide quality education to children.

The RTE Act also provides for the establishment of School Management Committees (SMCs) at the school level, which ensures community participation in the functioning of schools. The SMCs can help to monitor the functioning of schools and ensure that children receive quality education.

### **IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION FOR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

Education is critical for human resource development, as it equips individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to the economy and society. Education is not only important for economic growth but also for social development, as it promotes social mobility, reduces poverty and inequality, and fosters social cohesion.

Education has a significant impact on economic growth, as it increases productivity and innovation, which are critical for economic competitiveness. Education also helps to reduce income inequality by providing individuals with the skills and knowledge necessary to secure higher-paying jobs. Furthermore, education is essential for social development, as it promotes social mobility and empowers individuals to participate fully in the political and social life of their communities.

### **IMPACT OF RIGHT TO EDUCATION ACT**

The RTE Act has had a significant impact on education in India. According to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2018, the enrolment rate in schools has improved significantly since the implementation of the RTE Act. The report also highlighted that the percentage of out-of-school children has reduced from 6.6% in 2014 to 4.2% in 2018. The RTE Act has also helped to reduce the gender gap in education, as more girls are now attending school.

The RTE Act has also had a significant impact on the infrastructure of schools. According to the District Information System for Education (DISE) 2017-18 report highlighted that the percentage of schools with separate toilets for girls has increased from 34.48% in 2010-11 to 96.64% in 2017-18. The report also highlighted that the percentage of schools with a library has increased from 53.88% in 2010-11 to 80.16% in 2017-18.

The RTE Act has also had a significant impact on the quality of education. According to the ASER 2018 report, the percentage of children in class 3 who can read a class 1 level text has increased from 40.2% in 2008 to 54.2% in 2018. The report also highlighted that the percentage of children in class 5 who can do division has increased from 24.8% in 2008 to 27.2% in 2018.

### **POLICY PERSPECTIVES FOR ENSURING THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION**

Ensuring the right to education requires a multi-dimensional approach that addresses the various

barriers to access and quality. In this section, we will examine some policy perspectives for ensuring the right to education in India.

**1. Investment in Education:** Investment in education is critical for ensuring access to quality education. The Government of India has taken significant steps in this direction, increasing the budget allocation for education in recent years. However, there is still a significant gap between the current level of investment and the actual needs of the education sector. The government must increase its investment in education to ensure that all children have access to quality education.

**2. Improving Infrastructure:** Access to quality education requires adequate infrastructure, such as schools, classrooms, libraries, and laboratories. However, in many parts of India, schools lack basic facilities such as toilets, clean drinking water, and electricity. The government must invest in improving the infrastructure of schools to ensure that all children have access to quality education.

**3. Teacher Training and Professional Development:** Teachers are critical for the delivery of quality education. However, in India, many teachers lack the necessary training and professional development to deliver quality education. The government must invest in the training and professional development of teachers to ensure that they have the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver quality education.

**4. Technology in Education:** The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of technology in education. Online learning has become an essential tool for ensuring continuity in education during the pandemic, especially for children who do not have access to traditional classrooms. However, the digital divide in India means that many children do not have access to the necessary technology for online learning. The government must invest in digital infrastructure and ensure that all children have access to the necessary technology for online learning.

**5. Focus on Early Childhood Education:** Early childhood education is critical for laying the foundation for lifelong learning. However, in India, early childhood education has not received the necessary attention, and many children do not have access to quality early childhood education. The government must focus on early childhood education and invest in programs that provide access to quality early childhood education.

## CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD

Despite the significant progress made in education in India, there are still challenges that need to be addressed. One of the major challenges is the quality of education. The ASER report has highlighted that the quality of education remains a concern, and many children are not able to read and write at their grade level. The NEP 2020 has recognised this challenge and has proposed various measures to improve the quality of education, such as teacher training, curriculum reform, and technology integration.

Another challenge is the digital divide. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of digital education, and many schools have shifted to online education. However, many children in rural areas do not have access to the internet or digital devices, which has created a digital divide. The government of India has launched various initiatives such as the Digital India campaign and the PM eVidya programme to address this challenge.

## CONCLUSION

The right to education is a fundamental human right and a critical tool for human resource development. In India, significant progress has been made in ensuring access to education, but many challenges remain in ensuring access to quality education for all. The government must take a multi-dimensional approach and invest in education, improve infrastructure, provide training and professional development to teachers, use technology in education, and focus on early childhood education to ensure the right to education for all. Only then can India unlock the full potential of its human resources and ensure sustainable economic and social development.

The Right to Education Act, 2009, has played a significant role in promoting education and human resources development in India. The Act has helped to increase enrolment rates, reduce dropouts, and improve the infrastructure and quality of education in schools. However, there are still challenges that need to be addressed, such as the quality of education and the digital divide. The government of India has introduced various policies and initiatives to address these challenges and promote education in India. The NEP 2020 is a significant policy initiative that aims to transform the education system in India and make it more holistic, flexible, and multidisciplinary. With the support of the government, civil society, and the private sector, India can achieve its goal of providing quality

education to all children and promote human resources development in the country.

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