

# Perception of CRCCs on Equity Issues in Implementation of the RTE Act, 2009

**Prof. (Dr.) Pradipta Kumar Mishra**

Professor-cum-Principal, Yogoda Satsanga Palpara Mahavidyalaya, Palpara (NAAC Accredited-B++) Palpara, Purba Medinipur, West Bengal, India.

[drpradiptakumarmishra@gmail.com](mailto:drpradiptakumarmishra@gmail.com)

**Abstract**—The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 envisages equity and quality as core principles for strengthening elementary education in India. Cluster Resource Centre Coordinators (CRCCs) play a pivotal role in translating these principles into practice by providing academic support, training, monitoring, and supervision at the grassroots level. The present study examines the perception of CRCCs regarding the concept of equity in institutionalising a sound academic support system consequent upon the implementation of the RTE Act, 2009. A descriptive survey method was adopted, and a self-developed tool comprising 16 equity-related statements was administered to a stratified random sample of 50 CRCCs drawn from 12 blocks of Balasore district, Odisha. Findings reveal a strong consensus among CRCCs on the effective implementation of equity-related provisions, particularly in girls' enrolment, provision of free textbooks, uniforms, scholarships for Scheduled Caste children, inclusive education for Children with Special Needs (CWSN), and reduction of gender and social-category gaps. However, concerns remain regarding scholarship distribution for girls and the need for strengthened induction training for teachers. The study underscores the necessity of sustained capacity building, reduction of non-academic workload, and focused academic supervision to realise the equity goals of the RTE Act more effectively.

(Abstract)

**Index Terms**— Equity in Education, Academic Support System, Elementary Education, Inclusive Education, Odisha

## I. INTRODUCTION

The academic and professional assistance of CRCs for teachers to improve their academic performance and professional growth is one of the quality interventions of RTE-SSA Scheme. As we all know, at the Block level, Cluster Resource Center (CRC) is housed in a well-equipped school complex that serves 15-20 elementary schools. These CRCs were established in India to provide academic and professional support to the teachers for bringing enhancement in the performance of teachers and their professional development. All States/ UTs have developed various formats for schools and classroom observation for refinement of teachers and schools. Capacity building Programs are organized at the district wise by DIETs and State level by TE and SCERT and SIEMAT, NCERT and NIEPA at the National level under the purview of SSA to train and orient CRCCs and BRCCs on their roles and responsibilities for academic monitoring and supervision of schools.

The role and functions of Block Resource Centers and 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, the measures like; physical facilities ,support from competent authorities; co-operation from colleagues; teachers' responsiveness, intellect utilization, management of conflicts, flexibility and independence, an opportunity for individual development, good remuneration, and a suitable posting location, among other issues, should be addressed with serious consideration and immediate action at the national level. As a result, the major educational issues and problems faced by the CRC Coordinators, such as enrolment of out-of-school children, TLMs and NT Books not timely distributed; poor quality teaching by primary teachers; poor student achievement, notably in Mathematics, Science, and English at elementary level; lack of expertise of teachers on how to develop and implement TLMs and do remedial lectures; teachers' lack of commitment; lack of quality monitoring, and so on. (Source: MHRD, Govt. of India, Role of CRC Centers in assisting elementary school students with their academics).In addition to this, they should be accounted with the quality initiatives taken by MHRD, Govt. of India in collaboration with other Educational Agencies like NCERT, NIEPA after implementation of the RTE Act, 2009. These are NAS, PINDICS, NCSL, LEP, RAA, ShaGun etc on which the CRC Coordinators should be oriented and trained for proper implementation of these quality initiatives at the grass-root level. There are 69,268 CRCs functioning in the States and Union Territories of the Country (Source; U – DISE 2009-10) which number is the same as of today. In Odisha, there are '314' Block Education Officers,'948' Additional Block Education Officers operating at the Block level, and '4806' Cluster Resource Center Coordinators providing academic support to schools as well as academic monitoring and supervision. The government has organized training or orientation programs to improve their capacity-building efficiencies in existing and creative areas of learning.

## II. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The role and functions of Block Resource Centers and 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 BRC Coordinators and CRC Coordinators for the teachers and schools to take measures followed by immediate action at the National level. As a result, the major educational issues and problems faced by the CRC Coordinators need to be addressed properly. Besides, the quality initiatives are taken by MHRD, Govt. of India in collaboration with other Educational Agencies like NCERT, NIEPA after implementation of the RTE Act,2009 such as NAS, PINDICS, NCSL, LEP, RAA, ShaGun, etc on which the CRC Coordinators should be oriented and trained for proper implementation of these quality initiatives at the grass-root level. 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), Singh & Kumar (2013); 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 equipments 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).

### III. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To determine the Perception of CRCCs about the concept of “Equity” to institutionalize a sound academic support system. The following Research Questions were framed to fulfill the objective.

1. Do the CRCCs give a clear perception about the Equity issues in providing academic support and monitoring of Elementary Schools.
2. Do the CRCCs give a clear perception about Equity issues in providing training support and supervision of Elementary Schools.

### IV. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Panda (2007) in his study on the role and functions of CRCs in the implementation of SSA in Angul District of Odisha reported that most of the CRCs were unable to perform their role satisfactorily because of lack of infrastructure and required facilities. Mishra (2008) in his study on the CRCs' efficiency in offering academic help and ideas to Odisha's elementary schools reported that each sample school was visited 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 CRCCs in the context of the SSA program's implementation reported that the 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 have 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 TamilNadu, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat, the academic training inputs such as teaching-learning process, development of Teaching-Learning Materials 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 Head Masters 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 audiovisual 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 lack 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 CRC Coordinators 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 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. Kurian and Singh (2018) conducted a study on school education regarding BRCs and CRCs in India and found that in most of the States and UTs, the CRCCs make a school visit either monthly or bimonthly. It is found that most of the 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 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 71 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. Pandey et al. (2025) report that despite expanded enrolment under the RTE Act, gaps in infrastructure, teacher availability, funding, and monitoring persist, particularly affecting marginalized groups. Gaur (2024) highlights inconsistencies in implementation and weak enforcement, emphasizing the need for stronger governance to realize the constitutional mandate of equitable education. 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).

## V. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The Study included 50 CRCCs covering all of the District's Blocks to get their perception on equity in relation to the implementation of the RTE Act, 2009. There are 211 cluster resource centre co-ordinators working in 211 cluster resource centres for providing academic support, training and supervision to the teachers and schools in a decentralised manner covering the "12" blocks in the Balasore District of Odisha. The stratified random sampling procedure was adopted where each block was taken as a Strata to select the CRCCs randomly out of 211 CRCCs, 50 CRCCs were selected randomly which comprised more than 20 percent of the CRCCs population in Balasore District of Odisha for the Study. The distribution of the CRCCs as the participants of the study has been given in Table -1.

Table 1: Distribution of CRCCs as Participants of the Study

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of CRCCs
1	Bahanaga	4
2	Basta	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

A tool was developed by the researcher to investigate how CRCCs have perceived the concept of "Equity" in relation to the implementation of the RTE act, 2009. The tool comprising "16" Statements pertaining to gender, cwsn, disadvantaged categories and others, educational facilities as per RTE Act, 2009 was used for the study. The respondents were asked to put a tick ( ) mark in the appropriate provided against each statement followed by a five point rating scale- Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Indifferent (I), Disagree(D) and Strongly Disagree (S.D) After getting the tool ready, the researcher visited CRCs to distribute the Questionnaire to CRCCs in order to examine their perception on the concept of "Equity" in light of the RTE Act's implementation.

## VI. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table-2: Perception of CRCCs about the concept 'Equity' for a sound academic support system consequent upon the implementation of RTE Act, 2009.

PART-1 (EQUITY)						
Sl.N.	Statement	SA	A	I	D	SD
1	Girls enrolled in Elementary school avail themselves of all the benefits extended to them under RTE-SSA.		50(100%)			
2	Separate toilet facilities for girl students are available in school and used.	50(100%)				
3	All free Text books and School uniform are timely distributed among the Girls.	50(100%)				
4	Scholarships meant for Girl Students are properly distributed to them.		6(12%)	44(88%)		
5	Scholarship facilities are provided to SC Children.	50(100%)				
6	Out of School Children (OoSC) admitted in Age appropriate Classes are supported to catch up with the studies in enrolled class.	4(8%)	46(92%)			
7	Disabled friendly Environment is available in the School.		50(100%)			
8	Proper care and attention are given by the Schools for Children with Special Needs (CWSN).	50(100%)				
9	CWSN Committee is functioning properly for educational betterment of Children with Special Needs (CWSN).		50(100%)			
10	Various categories of Children with Special Needs (CWSN) are provided with Assistive Devices.		50(100%)			
11	Availability of ramp with hand rails for Children with Special Needs in the Schools is ensured.	46(92%)	4(8%)			
12	Resource Teachers are in position for dealing with Children with Special Needs.		50(100%)			
13	All Teachers have been provided with special training to deal with Children with Special Needs.	8(16%)	42(84%)			
14	Gap between the education of boys and girls has been bridged up.		50(100%)			
15	Gap between students of general category and students of disadvantaged groups has been bridged up.		50(100%)			
16	The interest of the Minority students is taken care of.		50(100%)			

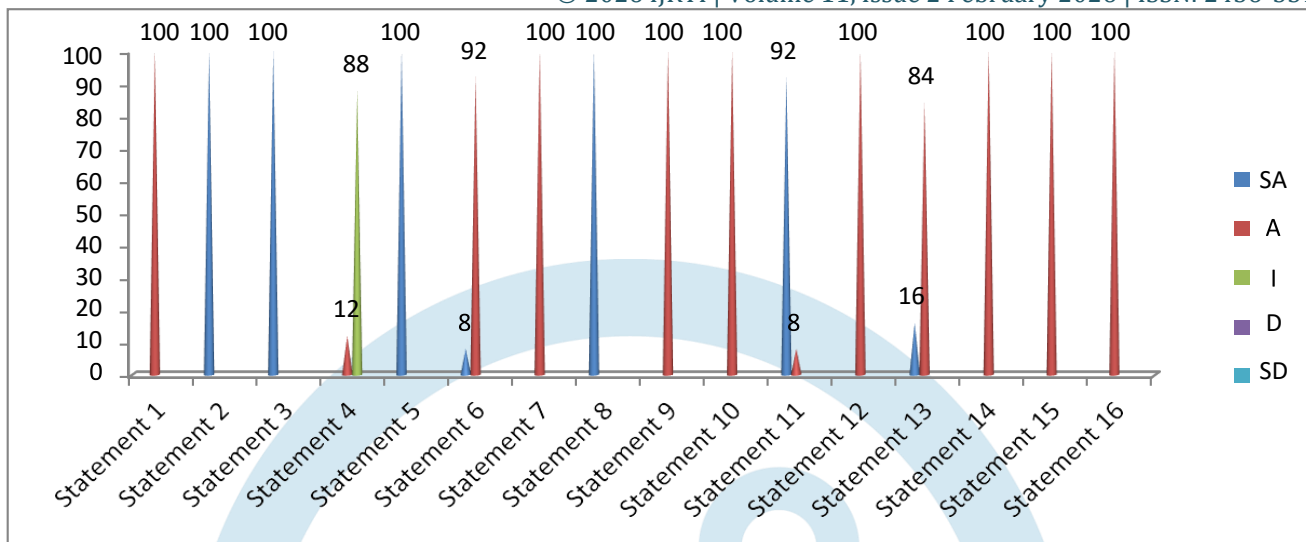


Figure 1: Perception of CRCCs about the concept of 'Equity' for a sound academic support system consequent upon the implementation of RTE Act, 2009

With reference to Equity; Girls enrolled in Elementary Schools avail themselves of all the benefits extended to them under RTE-SSA was agreed by 100% CRCCs; Separate toilet facilities for girl students are available in school and used was strongly agreed by 100% ; All free Text books and School uniform are timely distributed among the Girls was strongly agreed by 100% ; Scholarships meant for Girl Students are properly distributed to them was agreed by 12% and indifferent extended by 88% ; Scholarship facilities are provided to SC Children was strongly agreed by 100%; Out of School Children (OoS) admitted in Age appropriate Classes are supported to catch up with the studies in enrolled class was agreed by 92% and strongly agreed by 8% ; Disabled friendly Environment is available in the School was agreed by 100%; Proper care and attention are given by the Schools for CWSN was strongly agreed by 100% ; CWSN Committee is functioning properly for educational betterment of Children with Special Needs (CWSN) was agreed by 100% ; Various categories of Children with Special Needs (CWSN) are provided with Assistive Devices was agreed by 100% ; Availability of ramp with hand rails for Children with Special Needs(CWSN) in the Schools is ensured was strongly agreed by 8% and agreed by 92% ; Resource Teachers are in position for dealing with Children with Special Needs(CWSN) was agreed by 100% ; All Teachers have been provided with special training to deal with Children with Special Needs was strongly agreed by 84% and agreed by 16% ; Gap between the education of boys and girls has been bridged up was agreed by 100% ;Gap between students of General Category and students of Disadvantaged Groups has been bridged up was agreed by 100% and the interest of the Minority Students is taken care of was agreed by 100% CRCCs relating to their perception on Equity with reference to the implementation of the RTE Act, 2009.

The availability of all the benefits for girls enrolment in elementary schools with providing them separate toilet facilities for them in schools; all the free text books and school uniform are timely distributed among the girls with providing scholarship facilities to SC children ; out of school children admitted in the age appropriate classes are supported to catch up with studies in the enrolled classes ;disabled friendly enrolment is available with giving proper care and attention to the CWSN ;CWSN Committee is functioning properly for educational betterment of children with special needs and various categories of assistive devices along with the availability of ramp with hand rails are provided to the CWSN resource teachers are in position and all teachers have been provided with special training for dealing with the CWSN ;no gap has been found between the education of the boys and girls even if between the students of general and disadvantaged categories along with taking care of the interest of the minority students were perceived properly by the BRCCs and CRCCs on Equity with reference to the 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 and BRCCs 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 nicely by the BRCCs and CRCCs on Quality. However, scholarships meant for girl students are properly distributed under Equity and Induction training program organized for newly recruited teachers on Quality component need improvement.

## VII. DISCUSSION

The synthesis of findings from the present study, supported by earlier empirical research, indicates that while the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 has significantly expanded formal access to elementary education, the equitable realization of its provisions remains uneven across regions and social groups. From the perspective of Cluster Resource Centre Coordinators (CRCCs), the Act has succeeded in establishing statutory mechanisms and entitlements; however, systemic, administrative, and contextual barriers continue to impede equity in implementation (Poornima et al., 2024). CRCCs perceive that major equity

concerns persist across rural–urban divides, tribal habitations, and marginalized communities, particularly with regard to access to neighbourhood schools, admission of disadvantaged children under the 25% EWS provision in private schools, and retention beyond the primary stage. Structural challenges such as school closures, inadequate transport facilities, unreliable identification of out-of-school children, and the growing dominance of private schooling were identified as critical factors undermining the equity mandate of the RTE Act (Poornima et al., 2024). Weak enforcement mechanisms, fragmented data systems, and under-resourced government schools were viewed as systemic barriers preventing the realization of the Act’s inclusive vision under the Government of India.

Pandey et al. (2025), in a study observe that although the RTE Act has substantially increased enrolment and formal access to schooling for children aged 6–14 years, major implementation gaps persist. Drawing upon UDISE+, ASER, and government data, the authors highlight deficiencies in infrastructure, shortage of qualified teachers, high pupil–teacher ratios, inadequate financial allocation, and weak monitoring systems. Socioeconomic disparities—particularly affecting rural, tribal, and marginalized communities—continue to constrain equitable access and retention. Their conclusions echo the perceptions of CRCCs in the present study, emphasizing that without stronger policy enforcement, increased funding, improved teacher recruitment and training, and targeted interventions, the goals of universal and quality elementary education remain only partially achieved (Pandey et al., 2025). The constitutional and legal dimensions of these implementation challenges are further examined by Gaur (2024), who analyzes the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 within the framework of Article 21A of the Constitution of India. While recognizing the Act as a landmark legal reform that establishes comprehensive norms for infrastructure, teacher qualifications, and child-friendly learning environments, the study underscores persistent malpractices, administrative lapses, uneven compliance, and weak accountability mechanisms. Gaur argues that despite strong national and international recognition of education as a fundamental right, gaps in enforcement and governance dilute its transformative potential. This perspective complements the field-based observations of CRCCs, highlighting the disjunction between constitutional guarantees and ground-level realities.

These perceptions align closely with findings from empirical studies conducted in Odisha. Tripathy and Bhuyan (2018) reported that although most headmasters and teachers had received training on the RTE Act, such training was largely short-term and procedural, limiting its impact on sustained capacity building. While compliance-related provisions—such as strict adherence to working hours, constitution of School Management Committees (SMC/SMDC), and abolition of corporal punishment—were largely achieved, deeper equity-related challenges persisted. These included shortages of teaching staff, inadequate infrastructure, weak planning, and financial constraints, disproportionately affecting schools serving disadvantaged populations.

District-level studies further corroborate these concerns. Pati (2016), in a study conducted in Kalahandi district, observed marginal improvements in enrolment and achievement among children from unprivileged groups; however, retention and quality indicators remained weak, suggesting that expanded access had not translated into equitable learning outcomes. Similarly, Meher and Nag (2017) concluded that the RTE Act was neither effectively nor uniformly implemented in rural areas of Odisha, with significant gaps in student–teacher ratios, physical infrastructure, and the establishment of neighbourhood schools—core equity provisions of the Act.

Equity challenges become more pronounced in tribal-dominated regions. Majhi and Acharya (2020) identified multiple intersecting barriers to tribal inclusion, including low awareness of legal entitlements, lack of infrastructure, shortage and poor retention of trained teachers, culturally unresponsive curricula, and weak monitoring systems. Their findings also revealed gender and ethnic disparities in access to RTE benefits, indicating that marginalized groups experience differentiated educational outcomes even within the same legal framework.

At the same time, findings from the present study indicate that BRCCs and CRCCs perceive notable progress in certain equity dimensions of RTE implementation. These include improved enrolment of girls, provision of separate toilet facilities, timely distribution of free textbooks and uniforms, and scholarship support for Scheduled Caste children. Coordinators also reported effective mainstreaming of out-of-school children through age-appropriate enrolment and academic support mechanisms. Inclusive practices for Children With Special Needs (CWSN)—such as functional CWSN committees, availability of ramps with handrails, assistive devices, deployment of resource teachers, and specialized teacher training—were perceived as largely operational. Importantly, BRCCs and CRCCs reported minimal gender-based disparities and increasing sensitivity toward minority learners.

These positive perceptions resonate with earlier studies highlighting progress in inclusive education and gender equity under SSA–RTE frameworks (Mohay & Woodhouse, 2002; Sharma, 2002; Mishra, 2008; Kirupa, 2011; Patel, 2012; Singh, 2013; Mishra et al., 2015; Mohalik, 2017). However, they stand in contrast to studies that report persistent implementation gaps, particularly in infrastructure, teacher preparedness, monitoring, and accountability mechanisms (ICMR, 2012; Julka, 2015; Sharma, 2017; Dash & Mallick, 2018).

Taken together, the evidence suggests a dual reality of RTE implementation: procedural compliance and targeted inclusion measures coexist with deep-rooted structural inequities. From the perspective of CRCCs and BRCCs, achieving the equity goals of the RTE Act requires moving beyond formal provisioning toward sustained teacher capacity-building, context-sensitive planning, reliable data systems, and strengthened institutional accountability—especially in rural and tribal areas. Without addressing these structural constraints, the transformative promise of inclusive, equitable education and Education for All (EFA) envisioned under the RTE–SSA framework remains only partially fulfilled.

## VIII. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Policies should be done on frequent monitoring of the Equity and 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 is 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 Equity and Quality related matters carried out in the Schools as per RTE Act, 2009.

It is the task of BRCCs and CRCCs to supervise the Equity and Quality related activities emphasized consequent upon the implementation of the 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 the RTE Act, 2009.

## IX. CONCLUSION

The present study titled Perception of CRCCs on Equity Issues in Implementation of the RTE Act, 2009 reveals that Cluster Resource Centre Coordinators (CRCCs) in Balasore district hold a largely positive perception regarding the implementation of equity provisions under the RTE Act, 2009. The findings demonstrate strong consensus on key equity indicators such as girls' enrolment, provision of separate toilet facilities, timely distribution of free textbooks and uniforms, scholarship support for Scheduled Caste children, inclusive education for Children with Special Needs (CWSN), availability of ramps and assistive devices, and reduction of gender and social-category gaps. The study indicates that institutional mechanisms for inclusion are operational at the grassroots level, and CRCCs acknowledge significant progress in bridging disparities among boys and girls, disadvantaged groups, and minority students. However, concerns remain regarding the proper distribution of scholarships meant for girl students and the need for strengthened induction and continuous professional training for teachers, particularly in inclusive practices. Overall, while the procedural and structural components of equity under the RTE framework appear substantially implemented in the study area, sustained academic supervision, focused capacity building of CRCCs and teachers, reduction of non-academic workload, and strengthened monitoring systems are essential to ensure that equity translates into improved learning outcomes. The transformative vision of inclusive and quality elementary education under the RTE Act can be fully realized only through continuous institutional support and accountable implementation at all levels.

## X. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors sincerely acknowledge the valuable cooperation and support of the Cluster Resource Centre Coordinators (CRCCs) of Balasore district, whose insights and field experiences form the core of this study. Grateful thanks are also extended to the Block Resource Centre Coordinators (BRCCs) for their guidance and facilitation during data collection. The authors appreciate the contributions of elementary school teachers and other education stakeholders of Balasore district for sharing their experiences and perspectives on equity issues in the implementation of the RTE Act, 2009. Their collective support made this study possible.

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