

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

During the literature review it emerged that a lot of research work in the past had studied numerous metrics of school education and also on schooling of OOSC. The specific area of special training, bridge courses, and bridge camps seems to be an area which the relevant researchers mentioned only in the passing alongside the larger issues of schooling of OOSC. Given that the provisions of ST have been promulgated by various governments in India only recently in 2010, the study is likely to be delving into lesser researched areas.

Research Methodology Scheme

Different portions of the research question necessitate different methodologies of research. Accordingly, to assess the adequacy and the ease of implementation of the policy and its impact, the study of the RTE rules published by each state and UT government was analysed. The websites of some States were explored for impact assessment.

Focus group discussion with the stake holders, secondary research mainly based on data from secondary sources and study of documents such policy, guidelines, records, proceedings and success stories etc formed the outline of research methodology.

Research Design and Data collection

First of all, relevant data was gathered from the documents and websites in public domain. Raw data was obtained from the concerned agencies and compiled into databases. Relational databases were set up and these were analysed statistically in order to arrive at a more complete understanding of how the various attendant aspects of ST impacted the delivery of ST to OOSC. Data was collected on both school metrics and the special training related aspects.

Relevant school metrics/attributes which could impact the efficacy of the ST were analysed. These are:-

- Location of the school- Rural area or Urban area;
- Whether school is approachable by all weather roads?
- Agency managing the school - Department of Education, Tribal/Social Welfare Department, Local body, Private Aided, Private Unaided, Central Government, Unrecognised schools and Madarsa recognized by Wakf board/Madarsa Board etc.

Efficacy of Special Training was analysed considering the effect of the following aspects:-

- Number of children enrolled with need of 'Special Training' in current year.
- Number of children provided/being provided Special Training in current year.
- Number of children completed special training.
- Who conducts the special training - school teachers, specially engaged teachers or NGO?
- Where is the Special Training being conducted - in school premises or other than school premises?
- Type of training being conducted -residential or non-residential.
- Number of teacher(s)/education volunteers available for conducting special training.
- Number of teacher(s) received training for conducting special training.
- Whether special training material to children is made available?

In order to look at the trends, from more than one angle, secondary data from more than one source was obtained after frequent interactions with the stakeholders. Aggregated data available in public domain was not in tune with the research questions. Hence, raw data of was obtained from DISE, NUEPA on the attributes of school and special training.

This included raw data pertaining to 1.44 lakh schools in India for the period from 2010-15. An investigation was done, through interaction with the data generators, to assess the confidence levels and veracity of the data. The researcher used an Open Source RDMS for initial aggregation of the data and then subjected the same to statistical tools for trend analysis on the time-series. Analysis of the data collection instruments of DISE revealed that the raw data collected by DISE may suffer certain inaccuracies due to the language used in the data capture instrument used by them. To overcome this multiple conditional checks were incorporated to improve the validity of the raw data.

Aggregated data from SSA enabled assessment of the financial aspects and the levels to which mainstreaming targets have been achieved. Estimates of the OOSC were done from UNIESCO studies. Secondary data and focussed group interactions with NCERT, SSA, MHRD GOI, enabled testing of the trends obtained from statistical analysis. School report Cards of the DISE and their annual reports were also examined. Pearson correlation coefficients using 2 tail test were employed for assessing the correlation of various factors on the number of students completed ST.

Focussed Group Discussions

Success stories and best practises emerged during interactions and while exploring the websites of NGOs and civil society organisations such as RTE Forum, CARE India etc. Blogging with focussed groups such as Deshkal Inclusive Classroom added value to the study.

Enumerated data of the school, which was collected through well established and matured instruments, was assessed to be a better option than wholly relying on school level sample surveys. Qualitative analysis was used to fill the gaps in quantitative data. This was

done through several interactions and focussed group discussions with the practitioners and experts over several months. Notable among them are:-

- Director Elementary Education at MHRD, GOI. And Mr Adil Rasheed, Senior Consultant SSA HQ, Delhi regarding targets and achievements of mainstreaming.
- Directors of School Education in states of Telengana and Andhra.
- Directors of School Education in District of Rohtak and Jajhar (Haryana)
- Dr Arun C Mehta, Professor & Head, Department of Educational Management Information System, National University of Educational Planning & Administration mail: arunmehta@nuepa.org on matters of school report cards and raw data.
- Faculty members at the Department of Elementary Education at NCERT, Delhi on how they measure the effectiveness of the ST during their School Achievement Surveys annually.
- Shri Ambrish Rai, National Convener RTE forum regarding assessment of ST effectiveness. Email: rteforumnewdelhi@gmail.com
- Functionaries at CARE India, an NGO, on impact of ST on the learning outcomes of the bridge camps and school they survey.
- Esteemed members of the online blog called '*Inclusiveclassrooms*' patronised by Deshkal Society a group of activists.
- Researchers at ASER Centre Delhi on research if any by them on the impact of learning outcomes of OOSC once mainstreamed.
- Accountability Initiative Centre for Policy Research which comments on public spending (<http://www.accountabilityindia.in/team>).

Surveys

Besides the focussed group discussions with the above experts, the study also ran an **online survey** based on a graded scale questionnaire (Refer Appendix). The survey was aimed to assess the following:-

- What is the level of awareness of the Special Training for OOSC under the RTE?
- What is the assessment of the practitioners and researchers on the effectiveness of the ST?

The survey, surprisingly, elicited very limited response from the activists/experts by the time the study report was finalised.

The author also served data acquisition instrument to all the schools that the participants of Advanced Professional Programme on Public Administration (APPPA) visited during their Urban and Rural Study tours. Notable among them are Rohtak and Jajhar (Haryana), Coorg (Karnataka), Buvaneshwar (Odisha) and Imphal (Manipur).

Personal observation of the author in the schools of villages of Rohtak and Jajhar (Haryana) has also helped to shape the study.

Dataset from Open Government Data (OGD) Platform India - data.gov.in

This portal is intended to be used by Government of India Ministries/ Departments their organizations to publish datasets, documents, services, tools and applications collected by them for public use. It intends to increase transparency in the functioning of Government and also open avenues for many more innovative uses of Government Data to give different perspective. The author proposed a dataset for measuring the efficacy of the Special Training. However suitable response was not received till the finalisation of this study.

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