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# A COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK OF CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS AND JUDICIAL APTITUDE IN RIGHT TO EDUCATION

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## ABSTRACT

*The Right to Education is a fundamental pillar for the development of an equitable and democratic society. In India, education has been recognized as an essential right through constitutional provisions, particularly under Constitution of India and the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act. This research examines the constitutional framework governing the Right to Education and analyzes the significant role played by the judiciary in strengthening this right. It highlights key constitutional provisions, legislative developments, and landmark judicial decisions that have expanded educational access and protected children's rights. The study further explores judicial interpretation in ensuring equality, quality, and accessibility in education. It concludes that the judiciary has played a vital role in transforming education from a policy objective into an enforceable... fundamental right, thereby promoting social justice and national development.*

**Keywords-** Human Right, Rights to Education, Indian Constitution, Judiciary Role

## INTRODUCTION

In a culturally diverse democratic nation like India, education holds immense importance in ensuring equality, social justice, and national development. This research examines the constitutional provisions, legislative developments, and judicial interpretations that have shaped the Right to Education in India. It also analyzes the achievements and challenges involved in building an inclusive, equitable, and accessible education system for all.

Human rights serve as fundamental principles that protect the dignity, equality, and freedom of every individual. Over time, the international community has developed a strong framework of human rights through declarations, conventions, and treaties. Among these rights, the right to education occupies a central position because it plays a crucial role in human development and the realization of other fundamental rights.

The significance of education as a human right gained global recognition with the adoption of the United Nations's Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948<sup>1</sup>. The Declaration clearly recognizes education as a fundamental human right and emphasizes that elementary education should be free and compulsory. It also states that technical and higher education should be equally accessible to all based on merit.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights further emphasizes that education should aim at the full development of human personality and strengthen respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It should promote understanding, tolerance, and friendship among nations, racial groups, and religious communities, thereby contributing to peace and harmony in society.

The right to education received further international recognition through the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which came into force in 1976<sup>2</sup>. This covenant recognizes education as essential for the development of human dignity and personality. It also highlights that education must enable individuals to participate effectively in society and promote mutual respect and peace.

According to the Covenant, primary education must be compulsory and freely available to all. Secondary education, including technical and vocational education, should be generally available and accessible through appropriate means. Higher education should also be equally accessible based on individual capacity and merit. The Covenant further encourages the development of educational institutions at all levels and improvement in teaching standards<sup>3</sup>.

The Covenant also recognizes the rights of parents and guardians to choose educational institutions for their children, provided such institutions meet the minimum standards prescribed by the State. It also protects the freedom of individuals and organizations to establish and manage educational institutions in accordance with legal and educational standards.

Several other international instruments have also strengthened the right to education. These include the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which recognizes children's educational

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<sup>1</sup> Article 26 of UDHR

<sup>2</sup> Article 13 § 14 of ICESCR

<sup>3</sup> Article 28 of convention on the right of child gurantees free compulsory primary education for all.

rights under Articles 28 and 29, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, which promotes equal access to education for women and girls. These treaties collectively aim to eliminate discrimination and ensure quality education for all sections of society.

Thus, the right to education has emerged as a fundamental human right at both international and national levels. In India, this right has gained constitutional recognition and legal protection, making education an essential tool for empowerment, equality, and social transformation.

### **Meaning and Importance of Right to Education**

Right to Education means every child has the legal right to receive free and compulsory education without discrimination based on caste, religion, gender, economic status, or social background.

#### **Importance of Right to Education:**

- Promotes equality
- Reduces poverty
- Increases employment opportunities
- Strengthens democracy
- Protects human dignity
- Empowers weaker sections of society

Education is considered a basic human right because without education, the enjoyment of other rights becomes difficult.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research methodology serves as the backbone of any academic research as it provides a systematic framework for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting information. The present study adopts a doctrinal research methodology to examine the constitutional and legal dimensions of the Right to Education in India.

A doctrinal method primarily focuses on the analysis of legal principles, statutory provisions, constitutional mandates, judicial decisions, and academic literature. This approach is suitable for the present research because the study is centered on legal interpretation and analysis of constitutional provisions relating to educational rights.

The research is based mainly on secondary sources of data. These sources include:

- Constitutional provisions
- Statutory laws
- Judicial decisions
- Legal commentaries
- Books and journals
- Research articles
- Government reports
- Official websites

The Constitution of India, especially Part III, Part IV, and Part IVA, forms the core source for understanding the legal foundation of educational rights. Important legislations such as the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, are also analyzed in detail.

In addition, landmark judicial decisions delivered by the Supreme Court and various High Courts have been critically examined to understand the judicial approach toward the Right to Education. Judicial interpretations have played a major role in expanding the scope of educational rights and strengthening constitutional protections.

This research also adopts an analytical and descriptive approach. The analytical approach helps in evaluating legal provisions and judicial decisions critically, while the descriptive approach assists in explaining the existing legal framework in a clear and systematic manner.

The methodology further includes comparative analysis wherever necessary, particularly in comparing India's educational framework with other countries. This helps in understanding global standards and best practices related to educational rights.

The overall purpose of this methodology is to ensure a comprehensive and structured examination of the Right to Education from constitutional, legislative, and judicial perspectives.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To examine the constitutional and legal framework governing the Right to Education in India: The primary objective of this research is to critically study the constitutional provisions, legislative measures, and important judicial decisions that have contributed to the recognition and enforcement of the Right to Education in India. Special emphasis is placed on understanding how constitutional guarantees such as Articles 21A, 41, 45, and 46 of the Constitution operate together in promoting educational rights.

This objective also focuses on analyzing the role of statutory laws, particularly the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, in ensuring access to education for children. The study seeks to evaluate whether the legal framework effectively protects educational rights and promotes equal opportunities for all sections of society.

2. To analyze the historical evolution and effectiveness of educational rights in India: Another important objective of this study is to explore the historical development of the Right to Education in India, from its early recognition under Directive Principles of State Policy to its transformation into a fundamental right through the 86th Constitutional Amendment.

This research aims to assess the effectiveness of constitutional mandates and legislative measures in achieving educational justice. It examines how government policies and legal reforms have influenced educational access, enrollment, and literacy levels over time. Further, the study identifies the gaps and shortcomings within the present legal structure and suggests areas where reforms are necessary to strengthen the educational system and improve implementation.

3. To evaluate the role of the judiciary in strengthening the Right to Education: This objective aims to study the significant role played by the Indian judiciary in interpreting and expanding the scope of the Right to Education. Through various landmark judgments, courts have recognized education as an essential component of the right to life and human dignity.
4. The research examines judicial interventions in addressing major issues related to educational inequality, discrimination, poor infrastructure, accessibility, and quality of education. It also analyzes how courts have ensured accountability of the State in fulfilling its constitutional obligations. The study seeks to understand whether judicial activism has effectively contributed to protecting and advancing educational rights in India.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION**

Rights serve as the foundational bedrock for individual self-actualization and societal advancement. Within the broader spectrum of human rights, specific entitlements are elevated to the status of Fundamental Rights due to their constitutional entrenchment. These rights possess two defining legal characteristics: they are explicitly codified within the constitutional text, and they are fully justiciable, empowering citizens to seek judicial enforcement and

remedies in the event of an infringement Part III of the Indian Constitution guarantees six primary Fundamental Rights to its citizenry:

- Right to Equality
- Right to Freedom
- Right against Exploitation
- Right to Freedom of Religion
- Cultural and Educational Rights
- Right to Constitutional Remedies

Historical Context Note: The Constitution originally recognized the Right to Property as a fundamental right. However, to resolve conflicts with socialist policies and facilitate equitable wealth distribution, this right was excised from Part III via the 44th Constitutional Amendment Act of 1978. It was subsequently reclassified, meaning individuals retain a legal entitlement—rather than a fundamental right—to acquire, possess, and alienate property.

### **THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION AS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT (PART III)**

Article 21A and the RTE Act: The formal recognition of education as an unalienable entitlement culminated in the enactment of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act of 2009 by Parliament.

Constitutional Evolution: This legislative milestone materialized following the landmark 86th Constitutional Amendment Act of 2002, which inserted Article 21A into the Constitution. Enforced on April 1, 2010, this provision imposes an absolute obligation upon the State to provide free and compulsory education to all children between the ages of six and fourteen.

### **THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION AND DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES OF STATE POLICY (PART IV)**

While Part III commands immediate enforcement, Part IV sets forth the socio-economic vision of the nation through foundational principles that guide State policy:

Article 41: This provision mandates that the State, subject to the limits of its economic capacity and growth, formulate effective measures to secure the right to education, employment, and public relief in eventualities such as involuntary unemployment, advanced age, illness, or other forms of unmerited disablement.

Article 45: In its original formulation, this Article directed the State to provide free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of fourteen within a decade of the

Constitution's adoption. Following the structural shift brought by the 86th Constitutional Amendment, its focus was recalibrated; it now explicitly instructs the State to prioritize early childhood care and pre-primary education for all children until they reach the age of six.

Article 46: This directive obligates the State to conscientiously foster and protect the educational and economic advancements of historically marginalized and vulnerable segments of society, with particular emphasis on Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), while proactively shielding them from social inequities and systemic exploitation.

## **The Constitutional Architecture of the Right to Education**

The Indian Constitution incorporates education through a tripartite framework across Part III (Fundamental Rights), Part IV (Directive Principles), and Part IVA (Fundamental Duties).

### **1. The Fundamental Right: Article 21A**

Inserted via the Constitution (86<sup>th</sup> Amendment) Act, 2002, Article 21A states:

"The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine."

Constitution of India

Age Limitation: The right explicitly bounds the State's absolute obligation to children between 6 and 14 years.

The Enabling Clause: The phrase "in such manner as the State may, by law, determine" granted Parliament the power to enact statutory mechanisms, resulting in the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009.

### **2. The Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP)**

Article 45 (Early Childhood Care): Originally, Article 45 directed the State to provide free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14 within ten years of the Constitution's commencement. Post the 86<sup>th</sup> Amendment, it was substituted to focus on early childhood care: "The State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years."

Article 41 (Right to Education post-14 years): Secures the right to work, to education, and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, or sickness, but strictly "within the limits of its economic capacity and development."

Article 46 (Weaker Sections): Mandates the State to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, particularly Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs).

### **3. The Fundamental Duty: Article 51A(k)**

The 86<sup>th</sup> Amendment added a corresponding constitutional duty upon citizens under Part IVA: It dictates that it shall be the duty of every citizen of India who is a parent or guardian to provide opportunities for education to his child or ward between the age of 6 and 14 years.

#### 4. Legislative Distribution: The Seventh Schedule

Originally, education was a State subject (Entry 11 of List II). However, via the 42<sup>nd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, 1976, education was transposed to Entry 25 of the Concurrent List (List III). This structural shift granted concurrent legislative competence to both the Union and the State Governments, allowing the federal enactment of the RTE Act, 2009.

### **Challenges in Implementation of Right to Education**

Although the Right to Education has been recognized as a Fundamental Right under Article 21A of the Constitution of India and implemented through the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, several challenges continue to hinder its effective implementation in India. The existence of legal provisions alone is not sufficient unless they are properly implemented at the ground level.

India faces multiple social, economic, and administrative barriers that affect the realization of educational rights. These challenges create inequality and reduce access to quality education.

#### . Poor Infrastructure in Schools

One of the major challenges in implementing the Right to Education is inadequate infrastructure in schools, especially in rural and remote areas.

Many government schools lack:

- Proper classrooms
- Clean drinking water
- Functional toilets
- Electricity
- Libraries
- Laboratories
- Digital learning facilities

Poor infrastructure creates an unhealthy learning environment and negatively affects students' academic performance. Lack of separate toilets for girls often leads to higher dropout rates among female students.

Therefore, infrastructure development remains a key requirement for effective implementation of educational rights.

### Shortage of Qualified Teachers

Teachers are the backbone of the education system. However, many schools in India face a serious shortage of trained and qualified teachers.

Common issues include:

- Teacher vacancies
- Unequal teacher distribution
- Lack of professional training
- Poor teaching quality

In some schools, one teacher handles multiple classes simultaneously. This reduces teaching effectiveness and affects learning outcomes.

Without qualified teachers, the objective of quality education cannot be achieved.

### High Dropout Rates

Although enrollment rates have improved, dropout rates remain a serious concern.

Many children discontinue education due to:

- Poverty
- Family responsibilities
- Child labour
- Early marriage
- Lack of awareness

Dropout rates are higher in economically weaker sections and rural areas. This weakens the constitutional objective of universal education.

Ensuring retention of students is as important as ensuring admission.

### Poverty and Child Labour

Poverty is one of the biggest barriers to education in India.

Many families depend on children for earning income or assisting in household work. As a result, children are often forced into labour instead of attending school.

Child labour directly violates the constitutional vision of education for all. Poor families often prioritize survival over education.

Even though laws prohibit child labour, the problem continues in many parts of India. Thus, poverty and child labour significantly affect the implementation of the Right to Education.

### Gender Inequality

Gender inequality remains a major obstacle in educational access.

In many areas, girls face discrimination due to:

- Social customs
- Early marriage
- Safety concerns
- Lack of sanitation facilities

Families sometimes prioritize boys' education over girls' education. This creates gender imbalance in literacy and school attendance.

Equal educational opportunities for girls are essential for achieving educational justice.

### Rural-Urban Educational Gap

There is a significant difference between urban and rural educational facilities.

Urban schools generally have:

- Better infrastructure
- Qualified teachers
- Digital resources
- Higher academic performance

In contrast, rural schools often suffer from poor facilities and limited resources.

This gap creates educational inequality and prevents equal opportunity.

Reducing this rural-urban divide is necessary for inclusive education.

### Limited Digital Access

In the modern era, digital education has become highly important. However, digital inequality remains a major challenge.

Many students lack:

- Smartphones
- Internet access
- Computers

- Digital literacy

This issue became more visible during online education periods. Students from poor and rural backgrounds suffered heavily.

Digital inclusion is now essential for modern educational development.

#### Weak Policy Implementation

Sometimes educational policies are strong on paper but weak in implementation.

Common administrative issues include:

- Poor monitoring
- Lack of accountability
- Delayed funding
- Corruption
- Inefficient management

These problems reduce the effectiveness of educational reforms.

Proper implementation mechanisms are necessary to achieve constitutional goals.

## **ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT IN ENSURING THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION**

The government plays a central role in ensuring the effective realization of the Right to Education. As the primary duty bearer, the State is responsible for creating policies, building educational infrastructure, recruiting qualified teachers, and ensuring equal educational opportunities for all children.

To achieve these objectives, the government has introduced several schemes and initiatives aimed at increasing educational access and improving quality.

Some major initiatives include:

1. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

This program was launched to achieve universal elementary education across India. Its primary objective is to ensure that all children have access to quality elementary education.

2. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)

This scheme focuses on improving access to secondary education and enhancing educational quality at the secondary level.

3. Mid-Day Meal Scheme

This initiative aims to improve school attendance, reduce dropout rates, and address child malnutrition by providing nutritious meals to students.

#### 4. National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

The National Education Policy 2020 represents a major reform in India's educational system. It focuses on improving educational quality, skill development, digital learning, and inclusive access.

These initiatives demonstrate the government's commitment to strengthening educational rights and ensuring that every child has access to meaningful education.

## **THE RIGHT OF CHILDREN TO FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION ACT, 2009**

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, commonly known as the RTE Act, is one of the most significant legislative developments in India's educational history. It was enacted to implement Article 21A of the Constitution and came into force on 1 April 2010.

The Act provides a legal framework for ensuring free and compulsory elementary education to all children between six and fourteen years of age.

The RTE Act aims to ensure that no child is denied education due to economic hardship, social discrimination, or institutional barriers.

### Key Features of the RTE Act, 2009

#### 1. Free and Compulsory Education (Section 3)

Every child between the ages of six and fourteen years has the right to free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school until completion of elementary education.

No child shall be liable to pay any fee or charges that may prevent them from pursuing education.

#### 2. Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity

The Act prohibits discrimination against children on grounds such as:

- Religion
- Caste
- Gender
- Race
- Place of birth

- Social or economic background

The objective is to ensure equal educational opportunity for every child.

### 3. 25% Reservation in Private Schools

The Act mandates private unaided schools to reserve 25% of seats at entry level for children belonging to economically weaker sections and disadvantaged groups.

This provision promotes inclusive education and social equality.

### 4. Norms for School Infrastructure

The Act lays down standards for:

- Classrooms
- Drinking water
- Toilets
- Libraries
- Playground facilities
- Teacher-student ratio

These standards aim to improve educational quality and learning environments.

### 5. Teacher Qualifications and Responsibilities

The Act emphasizes the recruitment of qualified teachers and defines their responsibilities toward effective teaching and child development.

Teachers are expected to maintain educational quality and ensure meaningful learning outcomes.

### 6. Child-Centered Learning

The Act promotes child-friendly and activity-based learning methods that focus on the holistic development of children.

This approach encourages creativity, understanding, and skill development rather than rote learning.

## **. JUDICIAL APPROACH TO THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION IN INDIA**

The judiciary in India has played a transformative and highly significant role in strengthening and protecting the Right to Education. Judicial interpretation has been instrumental in expanding the scope of educational rights and ensuring that constitutional promises are translated into practical reality. Through progressive judgments and judicial activism, Indian courts have recognized education as an essential component of human dignity, equality, and social justice.

Before the formal insertion of Article 21A through the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act,

the Right to Education was not expressly recognized as a Fundamental Right under the Constitution. However, the judiciary played a vital role in filling this constitutional gap by interpreting education as an integral part of the Right to Life under Article 21.

The Supreme Court of India consistently emphasized that the right to live with dignity is incomplete without access to education. Education was viewed not merely as a developmental necessity but as a foundational right essential for the exercise of all other rights.

Judicial intervention in education-related matters has addressed key concerns such as:

- Accessibility of education
- Equality in educational opportunities
- Prevention of discrimination
- Regulation of private institutions
- Educational quality and inclusion

The contribution of the judiciary can be better understood through several landmark judgments.

### LANDMARK JUDICIAL DECISIONS

#### 1. Mohini Jain v. State of Karnataka<sup>4</sup>

The case of *Mohini Jain v. State of Karnataka* is regarded as one of the most significant judgments in the history of educational rights in India.

The case arose when the State of Karnataka permitted private medical colleges to charge capitation fees from students seeking admission. This practice made professional education accessible primarily to wealthy students, thereby excluding economically weaker sections of society.

The petitioner challenged this policy before the Supreme Court, arguing that charging excessive capitation fees violated the constitutional principle of equality and denied deserving students access to education.

The Supreme Court held that the Right to Education is an essential part of the Right to Life under Article 21 of the Constitution. The Court observed that dignity, liberty, and meaningful life cannot be achieved without education.

The Court further ruled that the State cannot discriminate in providing educational opportunities on the basis of economic capacity. Access to education should not depend solely upon a student's financial background.

This judgment was a historic step because it established education as a constitutional

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<sup>4</sup> 1992 AIR 1858, SCR (3)658

right and reinforced the principle of equal educational opportunity.

2. *Unni Krishnan v. State of Andhra Pradesh*<sup>5</sup>

The case of *Unni Krishnan v. State of Andhra Pradesh* further strengthened the constitutional recognition of educational rights.

This case dealt with the issue of admission procedures and fee structures in private professional educational institutions. The central question before the Court was whether the State could regulate private institutions in the larger public interest.

The Supreme Court reaffirmed that the Right to Education flows directly from Article 21 of the Constitution. The Court clarified that every child has a fundamental right to free education up to the age of fourteen years.

The judgment drew a balance between individual rights and state obligations. While recognizing the rights of private institutions to administer educational institutions, the Court also upheld the authority of the State to regulate them to ensure fairness and prevent exploitation.

This judgment became a major constitutional milestone because it laid the legal foundation for the later insertion of Article 21A through the 86th Constitutional Amendment.

3. *Society for Unaided Private Schools of Rajasthan v. Union of India*<sup>6</sup>

The case of *Society for Unaided Private Schools of Rajasthan v. Union of India* is another landmark decision concerning the implementation of the Right to Education Act, 2009.

The main issue in this case was the constitutional validity of Section 12(1)(c) of the RTE Act, which requires private unaided schools to reserve 25% of seats for children belonging to economically weaker sections and disadvantaged groups.

Private schools challenged this provision, arguing that it interfered with their autonomy and violated their constitutional rights.

The Supreme Court upheld the constitutional validity of the provision and ruled that the 25% reservation policy was consistent with constitutional principles of equality and social justice.

The Court emphasized that education is a fundamental right of every child and that the

<sup>5</sup> 1993 AIR 2178, 1993 SCR (1) 594

<sup>6</sup> WRIT PETITION © NO. OF 2010

State has a constitutional obligation to ensure educational access for disadvantaged groups.

This judgment significantly strengthened inclusive education and reinforced the constitutional goal of educational equality.

#### 4. Rajneesh Kumar Pandey v. Union of India

The case of *Rajneesh Kumar Pandey v. Union of India*<sup>7</sup> represents an important judicial development in the field of inclusive education.

This case focused on educational rights of children with disabilities and addressed the issue of maintaining an appropriate pupil-teacher ratio in schools admitting children with special needs.

The Supreme Court recognized the importance of inclusive education and emphasized that children with disabilities must be provided equal educational opportunities.

The Court highlighted that educational institutions must create supportive and accessible learning environments capable of addressing the special needs of children with disabilities.

This judgment strengthened the concept of inclusive education by affirming that educational equality requires not only admission but also meaningful participation and adequate support.

### IMPACT OF JUDICIAL ACTIVISM ON RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Judicial activism has significantly influenced the development of educational rights in India. Through progressive interpretation of constitutional provisions, the judiciary has expanded the meaning and scope of the Right to Education.

The judiciary has contributed in several important ways:

- Recognizing education as part of the Right to Life under Article 21
- Strengthening equality and non-discrimination in educational access
- Protecting weaker and marginalized sections of society
- Ensuring accountability of private educational institutions
- Promoting inclusive and quality education

The Indian judiciary has acted as a guardian of constitutional values by ensuring that educational rights are not treated as mere legal provisions but as enforceable rights essential

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<sup>7</sup>WRIT PETITION (CIVIL) NO.132 OF 2016

for human development.

Thus, judicial intervention has played a critical role in transforming the Right to Education from a constitutional aspiration into a meaningful and enforceable reality. The proactive role of the judiciary continues to shape the future of educational justice in India.

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Thus, judicial intervention has played a critical role in transforming the Right to Education from a constitutional aspiration into a meaningful and enforceable reality. The proactive role of the judiciary continues to shape the future of educational justice in India.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Right to Education has emerged as one of the most significant constitutional and human rights developments in India. Education is not merely a tool for acquiring knowledge; rather, it serves as the foundation for individual empowerment, social transformation, and national progress. It plays a crucial role in promoting equality, reducing poverty, eliminating discrimination, and strengthening democratic values. In a diverse and developing nation like India, education acts as a powerful instrument for achieving social justice and inclusive growth. This research highlights that the constitutional framework of India provides a strong legal foundation for protecting educational rights. The combined effect of Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles of State Policy, and Fundamental Duties reflects the constitutional commitment toward ensuring access to education for all. The insertion of Article 21A through

the 86th Constitutional Amendment marked a historic milestone by granting constitutional recognition to free and compulsory education for children between six and fourteen years of age.

The enactment of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 further strengthened this constitutional vision by establishing a statutory mechanism for implementation. The Act has significantly improved access to education, increased enrollment, and enhanced awareness regarding educational rights among citizens. It has also promoted inclusivity by addressing barriers faced by economically weaker and socially disadvantaged groups.

The judiciary has played a transformative role in expanding and strengthening the Right to Education in India. Through progressive judicial interpretation, the Supreme Court of India recognized education as an integral part of the Right to Life under Article 21. The judicial interventions demonstrate the judiciary's proactive role in protecting constitutional values and ensuring educational justice.

However, despite remarkable constitutional, legislative, and judicial developments, several challenges continue to hinder the effective realization of educational rights in India. Issues such as poverty, child labour, inadequate infrastructure, shortage of qualified teachers, gender inequality, digital divide, and weak policy implementation remain significant obstacles. These challenges indicate that legal recognition alone is insufficient unless accompanied by effective implementation and strong institutional support.

In conclusion, the Right to Education represents not only a constitutional guarantee but also a moral and social commitment toward building an equitable, inclusive, and progressive society. Ensuring quality education for every child is essential for realizing the broader constitutional ideals of justice, liberty, equality, and dignity. The future of India's development largely depends on its ability to transform educational rights into meaningful realities for every citizen.