



STATUS OF SAFETY CONDITIONS OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL IN THE LIGHT OF RASHTRIYA MADHYAMIK SHIKSHA ABHIYAN (RMSA)

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ABSTRACT

After independence, various initiatives and strategies have played an important role in providing better education and better learning outcomes for students. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan is a program centrally sponsored by the Ministry of Human Resources Development of India to promote secondary education in public schools throughout India. According to the RMSA guidelines, school safety conditions are an important aspect. The term 'safety' is comprehensive and it covers several aspects. The present study aims to investigate the present status of safety conditions in secondary schools among selected districts of West Bengal in the light of RMSA. The findings of the present study clearly show that selected secondary schools of both Nadia and Murshidabad districts have no proper safety conditions according to the guidelines of RMSA and comparatively the safety conditions are better among selected secondary schools of Nadia district than in the selected secondary schools of Murshidabad district.

Keywords: *Safety, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), Secondary School, West Bengal.*

INTRODUCTION

After independence, the focus has been on educational programs and initiatives. The main purpose of these programs and initiatives is to encourage student involvement and recognize the value of education. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan is a program centrally sponsored by the Government of India's Human Resources Development Department to promote secondary education

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in public schools across India, released in March 2009. This policy requires secondary schools to provide safe conditions for students. "School safety is defined as providing a safe environment for children from home to school and back to school. It includes all kinds of abuse, violence, psychosocial problems, etc. Includes protection against disasters (natural and man-made, fire or traffic). Emotional safety is especially important as it is often difficult for teachers and parents to identify emotional problems and difficulties in their children. Bullying can reduce student self-esteem and leave behind daily stress associated with well-being. Schools are important infrastructure for educating future citizens. A safe environment is a prerequisite for effective education and learning. Therefore, in the event of a natural disaster, the safety of children, teachers, and staff must be ensured. School safety serves the purpose of dual-use as an emergency shelter, as children's safety is an important consideration. Building a safe school should be a priority for architects, engineers, policymakers, managers, and emergency planners. School safety includes structural building safety itself and non-structural measures such as awareness-raising communication, school preparation plans, student and teacher training, rehearsals, and classrooms.

Building a safe school is not just about ensuring safety. It not only helps children with natural disasters but also contributes to quick recovery after natural disasters. As students spend 67 hours in school, school safety conditions are known to have a significant impact on achieving desired learning outcomes. Therefore, when these conditions are present, you will feel comfortable and friendly in the school environment. The main focus of school authorities in developing safety policies is the condition of the classroom. The environmental conditions of the classroom should be designed to properly encourage student learning. At the same time, it is very important to pay attention to the safety conditions. The main benefits of a safe environment are that school members can work in a well-organized way, students can focus effectively on learning, and people can achieve their educational goals.

There are quite a few studies regarding Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan and its relevance. Researchers have reviewed this topic from a variety of sources like books, e-books, journals, articles, websites, reports of various organizations, the internet, blogs, and written documents. Various research works on Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan done by various researchers in the past give us an actual picture of the present research. For example, Alex, M., & Shivkumar, D. (2021). Role of Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan Scheme in Indian Secondary Education., Das, P., & Deb, P. (2016). Level of Perception on Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan among Guardians of Uttar Dinajpur District of West Bengal., H. Lalrinmawii., & Fanai. L. (2018). A study on the implementation of Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) in Aizawl city., L.C.K, Naveen., & M, Narayashayam. (2019). A Study of Opinion of Teachers towards Evaluation of RMSA in Karnataka.

In the present context, various plans and policies play a crucial role to provide better education and greater learning outcomes to the learners. The problem of the study has been stated as follows –“Status of Safety Conditions of the Secondary School in the light of RMSA”

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study were:

1. To investigate the present safety condition among selected secondary schools of Nadia District of West Bengal in the light of RMSA.
2. To investigate the present safety condition among selected secondary schools of Murshidabad District of West Bengal in the light of RMSA.
3. To make the comparison between safety conditions among selected secondary schools of Nadia District and Murshidabad District of West Bengal in the light of RMSA.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study has the following delimitations:

- **The approach used-** The research work is only qualitative research work and percentage calculation was done.
- **Sample size-** The researcher has selected only 10 Secondary schools for this study.
- **Area-** The study area has been limited to only two districts (Nadia and Murshidabad) of West Bengal.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The current research has significance in various fields. This study will help analyze the importance of educational and global aspects.

- The results of the study help to identify specific theoretical knowledge about RMSA.
- The results of the research will add information to the existing field of research.
- The results of the research will serve as a review of future research literature and to carry out any research work on this topic in the future.
- The results of the study will provide guidelines for conducting policy analysis.
- The results of the study will provide guidance to school administrators to strengthen secondary and high schools.
- The results of the study will help inform students, teachers, and researchers about the current suitability of RMSA.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF THE TERMS

- **Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA):** Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan is a program sponsored by the Ministry of Human Resources Development, Government of India, to promote Secondary education in public schools throughout India. It was launched in March 2009.
- **School Safety:** ‘School safety’ is defined as creating a safe environment for children from home to school and back to school. This includes safety from all kinds of abuse, violence, psychosocial problems, and disasters (natural and man-made, fire or traffic). Emotional safety is especially important because it is often difficult for teachers and parents to detect emotional problems and difficulties in children. Bullying

can make victims students suffer from low self-esteem and daily stress about their well-being.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The present study is qualitative in nature. This study is purely based on primary data which is collected from the secondary school teachers of West Bengal by a self developed standardised tool and also the researchers used sources of information like books, e-books, journals, articles, websites, reports of various organizations, the internet, and written documents.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Objective-1: To investigate the present safety condition among selected secondary schools of Nadia District of West Bengal in the light of RMSA.

Statements		Nadia District			
		Response		Percentage	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	The school is surrounded by a boundary wall	79	20	79.80	20.20
2	The boundary wall of the school is made of concrete and brick	79	20	79.80	20.20
3	Toilets are clean and hygienic	54	45	54.55	45.45
4	Adequate water is available in the toilets	62	37	62.63	37.37
5	There is an exhaust fan in the toilet	12	87	12.12	87.88
6	Toilets have well-arranged sanitary	6	93	6.06	93.94
7	Special toilets are there for students with physical disabilities	21	78	21.21	78.79
8	A medical check-up facility is provided for the students by the school	92	7	92.93	7.07
9	The school has an effective fire extinguisher	20	79	20.20	79.80
10	The school environment is always clean and tidy	99	0	100	0
11	School authorities facilitate safe transportation (school bus, car) for students	0	99	0	100
12	Adolescent awareness programs are organized for girls in schools	42	57	42.42	57.58
13	The school has an effective water purification system	52	47	52.53	47.47
14	The school provides various essential medicines	26	73	26.26	73.74

15	Educators and teachers are trained on these fire extinguishers	0	99	0	100
16	The playground is located inside the school boundary wall	62	37	62.63	37.37
17	The school organizes various awareness meetings on hygiene and healthcare	44	55	44.44	55.56
18	Provides protection for students with special needs	99	0	100	0

Interpretation: From the above table we can see that 20.20% of teachers responded that the school does not have a boundary wall and the boundary walls are not made of concrete and brick. 45.45, 37.37, 87.88, 93.94, 78.79% teachers respectively respond that toilets are clean and hygienic, adequate water is not available in the toilets, the exhaust fan is not in the toilet, toilets have not well-arranged sanitary, special toilets are not in school for students with physical disabilities. 7.07% of teachers respond that a medical check-up facility is not provided for the students by the school, 73.04 % of teachers respond that the school does not provide various essential medicines for students; 79.80% of teachers respond that the school has no an effective fire extinguisher, 100% teachers respond that the educators and teachers are no trained on these fire extinguishers; 57.58% teachers respond that the adolescent awareness programs are not organized for girls in schools, 47.47% teachers respond that the school has no effective water purification system, 37.37% teachers respond that the playground is not located inside the school boundary wall, 55.56% teachers respond that the schools do not organize various awareness meetings on hygiene and healthcare.

Objective-2: To investigate the present safety condition among selected secondary schools of Murshidabad District of West Bengal in the light of RMSA.

Statements		Murshidabad District			
		Response		Percentage	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	The school is surrounded by a boundary wall	79	18	81.44	18.56
2	The boundary wall of the school is made of concrete and brick	69	28	71.13	28.87
3	Toilets are clean and hygienic	46	51	47.42	52.58
4	Adequate water is available in the toilets	56	41	57.73	42.27
5	There is an exhaust fan in the toilet	6	91	6.19	93.81

6	Toilets have well-arranged sanitary	1	96	1.03	98.97
7	Special toilets are there for students with physical disabilities	15	82	15.46	84.54
8	Medical check-up facility is provided for the students by the school	84	13	86.60	13.40
9	In the school has an effective fire extinguisher	8	89	8.25	91.75
10	The school environment is always clean and tidy	92	5	94.85	5.15
11	School authorities facilitate safe transportation (school bus, car) for students	0	97	0	100
12	Adolescent awareness programs are organized for girls in schools	29	68	29.90	70.10
13	The school has an effective water purification system	36	61	37.11	62.89
14	The school provides various essential medicines	14	83	14.43	85.57
15	Educators and teachers are trained on these fire extinguishers	0	97	0	100
16	The playground is located inside the school boundary wall	54	43	55.67	44.33
17	The school organizes various awareness meetings on hygiene and healthcare	32	65	32.99	67.01
18	Provides protection for students with special needs	97	0	100	0

Interpretation: From the above table we can see that 18.56 & 28.87% of teachers respectively respond that the school does not have a boundary wall and the boundary walls are not made of concrete and brick. 52.58, 42.27, 93.71, 98.97, 54.54% teachers respectively respond that toilets are clean and hygienic, adequate water is not available in the toilets, the exhaust fan is not in the toilet, toilets have not well-arranged sanitary, special toilets are not in school for students with physical disabilities. 13.40% of teachers respond that the medical check-up facility is not provided for the students by the school, 85.57 % of teachers respond that the school does not provide various essential medicines for students; 91.75% of teachers respond that the school has no an effective fire extinguisher, 100% teachers respond that the educators and teachers are no trained on these fire extinguishers; 70.10% teachers respond that the adolescent awareness programs are not organized for girls in schools, 62.89% teachers respond that the school has no effective water purification system, 44.33% teachers respond that the playground is not located inside the school boundary wall, 67.01% teachers respond that the schools do not organize various awareness meetings on hygiene and healthcare.

Objective-3: To make the comparison between safety conditions among selected secondary schools of Nadia District and Murshidabad District of West Bengal in the light of RMSA.

Statements	Percentage				
	Nadia		Murshidabad		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	
1	The school is surrounded by a boundary wall	79.80	20.20	81.44	18.56
2	The boundary wall of the school is made of concrete and brick	79.80	20.20	71.13	28.87
3	Toilets are clean and hygienic	54.55	45.45	47.42	52.58
4	Adequate water is available in the toilets	62.63	37.37	57.73	42.27
5	There is an exhaust fan in the toilet	12.12	87.88	6.19	93.81
6	Toilets have well-arranged sanitary	6.06	93.94	1.03	98.97
7	Special toilets are there for students with physical disabilities	21.21	78.79	15.46	84.54
8	Medical check-up facility is provided for the students by the school	92.93	7.07	86.60	13.40
9	In the school has an effective fire extinguisher	20.20	79.80	8.25	91.75
10	The school environment is always clean and tidy	100	0	94.85	5.15
11	School authorities facilitate safe transportation (school bus, car) for students	0	99	0	100
12	Adolescent awareness programs are organized for girls in schools	42.42	57.58	29.90	70.10
13	The school has an effective water purification system	52.53	47.47	37.11	62.89
14	The school provides various essential medicines	26.26	73.74	14.43	85.57
15	Educators and teachers are trained on these fire extinguishers	0	100	0	100
16	The playground is located inside the school boundary wall	62.63	37.37	55.67	44.33
17	The school organizes various awareness meetings on hygiene and healthcare	44.44	55.56	32.99	67.01
18	Provides protection for students with special needs	100	0	100	0

Interpretation: From the above table we can see that in Nadia district 20.20% and in Murshidabad district 18.56 & 28.87% of teachers responded that school does not have a boundary wall and the boundary walls are not made of concrete and brick. In Nadia district 45.45, 37.37, 87.88, 93.94, 78.79% teachers and in Murshidabad district 52.58, 42.27, 93.71, 98.97, 54.54% teachers respectively respond that toilets are clean and hygienic, adequate water is not available in the toilets, exhaust fan is not in the toilet, toilets have not well-arranged sanitary, special toilets are not in school for students with physical disabilities; In Nadia district 7.07% and in Murshidabad district 13.40% teachers respond that medical check-up facility is not provided for the students by the school, In Nadia district 73.04 % teachers and in Murshidabad district 85.57% teachers respond that the school is not provides various essential medicines for students; In Nadia district 79.80% and in Murshidabad district 91.75% teachers respond that the school has no effective fire extinguisher, In Nadia district 100% teachers and in Murshidabad district 91.75% teachers respond that the educators and teachers are no trained on these fire extinguishers; In Nadia 57.58% teachers and in Murshidabad 70.10% teachers respond that the adolescent awareness programs are not organized for girls in schools, In Nadia 47.47% and in Murshidabad 62.89% teachers respond that the school has no effective water purification system, In Nadia 37.37% and in Murshidabad 44.33% teachers respond that the playground is not located inside the school boundary wall, In Nadia 55.56% and in Murshidabad 67.01% teachers respond that the schools are not organizes various awareness meetings on hygiene and healthcare.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. It is found that selected secondary schools of both Nadia and Murshidabad districts have no proper safety conditions according to the guidelines of RMSA.
2. It is found that comparatively, the safety conditions are better among selected secondary schools of Nadia district than in the selected secondary schools of Murshidabad district.

CONCLUSION

The most important recent reform program for universalizing secondary education is the RMSA, which addresses quality and equity issues. However, schools need help in promoting the institutional environment, capabilities, and resources to take action to improve schools. Creating space for school development in policymaking and programming and providing adequate budget resources for this intervention are recognized as important development challenges for the current decade of secondary education. Therefore, given all aspects, especially the security situation of secondary schools in the light of RMSA and West Bengal, the implementation of Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan cannot be expected to be successful.

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