

AWARENESS ABOUT RIGHT OF CHILDREN TO FREE AND COMPULSORY (RTE) ACT 2009 AMONG ELEMENTARY TEACHERS IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT

By

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ABSTRACT

As per RTE Act 2009, all children between the age of 6 and 14 shall have the right to free and compulsory elementary education at neighborhood schools. The facilities as mentioned in the RTE Act should reach into the hands of students properly and the teachers should have a good awareness level. This article explores the awareness of RTE Act 2009 among elementary school teachers in Coimbatore District. In this article, survey method was adopted with 100 elementary school teachers taken as a sample from Coimbatore District. A Personal Data Sheet was used to collect demographic information like qualification, locale, teaching experience and type of management. It was found that awareness level of average group was highest with 58% of the total sample. The mean scores of teachers in rural area was higher than the mean scores of urban area. In this case mean scores of under graduate teachers and post graduate teachers as well as teachers having teaching experience between 0 and 10 years and between 10 and 20 years are almost equal. From the total analysis it was found that the teachers are required to have better awareness about RTE Act in order to attain the aim of the Act.

Keywords: RTE Act 2009, Compulsory Elementary Education, Neighborhood Schools.

INTRODUCTION

Education helps the development of the society according to its ideals to mold the present generation which will have far reaching effect on the future generations. It aims at individual freedom, empowerment and self reliance. Education is therefore considered as 'fundamental right' across the globe and essential for the exercise of all human rights. Since India's pre independence period there has been significant concern about the quality of education provided in the country, especially to the masses. The development of any country can never be possible without ensuring the spread of education among the masses.

Elementary education is the foundation and forms the basis for all levels of learning which ultimately results in educating the masses. It develops an individual and equips him/her with analytical capabilities, build up confidence and fortifies with him/her determination to achieve the goals.

The dreams of the founding fathers of constitution to improve the quality of elementary education was conceptualized with the 86th amendment (2002) via Article 21 A (Part III) which seeks to make free and compulsory education as a fundamental right for all children in the age group 6-14 years. The 86th Amendment Act 2002, made three specific provisions in the constitution to the facilities and the realization of the free and compulsory education to children between the age of 6 and 14 years as a fundamental right. These were (I) add Article 21 A in part III (Fundamental Rights),(II) modifying Article 45, and (III) adding a new class (K) under Article 51 A (Fundamental duties) making the parent or guardian responsible for providing opportunities for education to their children between 6 and 14 years. In translating this into action, the 'Right of children to free and compulsory Education Bill' was drafted in 2005. This was revised and became the Act in August 2009.

Review of Related Literature

Nithya, (2012) in her study, "A study on the awareness of Right to Education Act (2009) among the B.Ed student teachers", explained that the male student teachers and urban area student teachers had better awareness than female student teachers and rural area student teachers. Hence, the study recommends that the institutions may enhance student's teachers knowledge in contemporary affairs.

Gadam (2013) conducted a study entitled "Teacher Awareness of the Responsibility under Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act". The result of the study showed significant impact of teacher's experience and educational qualification on their awareness of the responsibility under RTE Act. Those teachers with high work experience and educational qualification showed better awareness of the responsibility under RTE Act.

Gandhi & Yadav (2013) conducted a study entitled "A study of Awareness among Primary School Teacher's towards Right to Education Act 2009". The findings of the study revealed that, there was significant difference in awareness of male and female teachers working in Government and Private primary school towards Right to Education Act, 2009. The findings of the study had a bearing for the Researchers, Educational Planners, Principal, Counselors, Teachers and other personnel related to teaching profession.

Asha & Shivaswamy (2013) undertakes a study to find out whether the elementary school teachers have an awareness of the provisions of the Act. The study was conducted in the district of Chamarajanagar in Karnataka and it revealed that there is no significant difference in the awareness level of male and female teachers as well as urban and rural teachers on RTE Act, but the awareness of the teachers on RTE Act is significantly higher among Government school teachers than the Private school teachers.

Thote, Mathew & Rathoure (2013) in their study, makes an attempt to find the awareness on Right to Education Act - 2009 among Primary School Teachers of Morena District, Central India. The information was gathered through a

questionnaire constructed for this purpose. The questionnaire consists of 40 questions related to awareness on Right to Education act. A survey was conducted among 200 respondents by using the questionnaire. The data collected were grouped and analyzed using mean, SD, 't' test. Findings revealed that the primary school teachers of the Morena district have significant awareness on Right to Education act. The result of the survey showed that the Right to Education act awareness must be promoted.

Sudha & Mohmmad (2014) conducted a study on the awareness among the primary school teachers regarding the Right to Education Act, 2009. The researcher has pursued the study to find out the awareness level of the primary teachers on the basis of region, gender and management (Government and non-government). The researcher has used self made tool to collect the data from the population (primary teachers of Aligarh District) The samples were selected on random basis. The data were analyzed by using various statistical techniques like Mean, SD, t-test etc.

Need of the study

Teachers are the cornerstone of good quality of Education. Right to free and compulsory education aims at providing quality elementary education which is free and compulsory. On that part, the teachers are required to know about their responsibility and role towards the society. The teachers are not only to work in the classroom for teaching and learning, they are also required to provide all facilities for students as required under RTE Act. When the awareness level of teachers is increased, it will indirectly help in the development of quality of elementary education for all. This study was conducted with a view to understand the extent to which the teachers are aware about the RTE Act.

Statement of the Problem

The study is stated as Awareness of Right of Children To Free And Compulsory (RTE) Act 2009 among elementary teachers in Coimbatore District.

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the level awareness of RTE Act among

elementary school teachers of Coimbatore District.

2. To find out the difference in awareness of RTE Act among elementary school teachers based on locale, work experience, educational qualification and type of management in Coimbatore District.

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is no significant mean difference in the awareness of RTE act among elementary school teachers based on their locale of Coimbatore District.

2. There is no significant mean difference in the awareness of RTE act among elementary school teachers based on their educational qualification of Coimbatore District.

3. There is no significant mean difference in the awareness of RTE Act among elementary school teachers based on the years of teaching experience of Coimbatore District.

4. There is no significant mean difference in the awareness of RTE Act among elementary school teachers based on the type of school of Coimbatore District.

Methodology

Method of Study

The present study is descriptive in nature, hence the researcher adopted the survey method for investigation

Population and sample

Population for the present study was identified as working teachers in Coimbatore district. Among the population 100 elementary teachers handling different subjects were selected by using stratified random sampling method.

Tools used for the study

- Personal data sheet (PDS) was used to collect information regarding locale, experience, educational qualification and type of management.
- The tool used for measuring the awareness level was the 'Awareness of RTE Act 2009' [Reshmi Ramachandran and Dr. G Subramonian 2013] The questionnaire consists of 30 multiple choice questions.

Variables

The independent variable of the study was awareness level and the researchers have taken demographic variables of locale, educational qualification, teaching experience and type of management.

Statistical Techniques Used

The statistical techniques used for the study were:

- Descriptive analysis
- 't' test.
- ANOVA

Analysis

Table 1 reveals that the measures of central tendency viz, mean, median and mode are almost similar to that of a normal distribution. The extent of skewness or index of asymmetry is -0.405, the value of kurtosis is -0.439; is less than the required value for normal curve (0.263) the distribution is platykurtic.

From Table 2, it is evident that High awareness group has 17% and Low Awareness group has 25% about the awareness of RTE Act. In case of average group the awareness level is highest that is 58% of the total sample.

Discussion of Results

According to Table 3, the calculated 't' value 3.16 is greater than the table value 2.57 at 0.01 level of significance indicate that there is significant difference between rural and urban teachers with regard to awareness of RTE Act. The mean score of teachers in urban area (13.88) is lesser than mean scores of teachers in rural area (15.83). It reveals that rural teachers have more awareness of RTE Act. Hence the hypothesis 1 is

N	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation	Kurtosis	Skewness
100	14.68	15	16	3.16	-0.439	-0.405

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the Awareness of RTE Act for total sample of Elementary School Teachers in Coimbatore District

Variable	Category	Sample size	Percentages
Awareness of RTE Act	High awareness group	17	17
	Average awareness group	58	58
	Low awareness group	25	25

Table 2. Sample size and Percentage of the Variable Awareness of RTE Act for the Three Groups

Hypothesis	Dimensions	Category	Statistical Technique			t-value		Result at 0.01 level
			N	Mean	SD	Calculated Value	Table value	
1	Locale	Rural	41	15.83	2.43	3.16	2.57	S*
		Urban	59	13.88	3.38			
2	Educational Qualification	Under Graduates	55	14.8	3.34	0.42	2.57	NS**
		Post Graduates	45	14.53	2.96			
3	Teaching Experience	Below 10 Years	59	14.73	3.31	0.18	2.57	NS**
		Below 20 Years	41	14.61	2.97			

S* -Significant. NS** - Not Significant.

Table 3. Data and result of test of significant difference in Awareness of RTE Act based on locale, educational qualification and experience of elementary school teachers Coimbatore District.

rejected.

According to Table 3, the calculated value 't' 0.42 is lesser than the table value 2.57 at 0.01 level of significance and indicates that there is no significant difference between Under Graduates and Post Graduate teachers with regard to awareness of RTE Act. The mean score of under graduate teachers (14.80) is almost similar to the mean scores of post graduate teachers (14.53). It reveals that under graduate teachers and post graduate teachers have equal awareness of RTE Act. Hence hypothesis 2 is accepted.

According to Table 3, the calculated value 't' 0.18 is lesser than the table value 2.57 at 0.01 level of significance and indicates that there is no significant difference between teaching experience below 10 years and teaching experience below 20 years with regard to awareness of RTE Act. The mean score of teachers having teaching experience below 10 years (14.73) is almost similar to the mean scores of teachers having teaching experience below 20 years (14.61). It reveals that teachers having experience below 10 years and below 20 years have equal awareness about RTE Act. Hence, the hypothesis 3 is accepted.

Table 4 shows that the obtained F value 2.60 lesser than the table value 3.09 at 0.05 level of significance. It shows that there is no significant difference among the mean scores of aided, government and unaided elementary school teachers about the awareness of RTE Act and

Hypothesis	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F
4	Between groups	2	25.26	2.60
	Within groups	97	9.70	
	Total	99		

Table 4. Data and result of test of significant difference in awareness of RTE Act with respect to type management of elementary school teachers

hence hypothesis 4 is accepted.

Findings of the Study

The extent of Awareness of RTE Act 2009 among the elementary school teachers is found to be average. The mean score of teachers in urban area is lesser than mean scores of teachers in rural area. It is understood that teachers in rural areas are having more awareness which is a good sign in the sense that still majority of areas in India are rural areas. These teachers could play an important role in implementation of the Right to Education Act at elementary level.

The mean scores of under graduate teachers is similar to the mean scores of post graduate teachers, it reveals that under graduate teachers and post graduate teachers have equal awareness of RTE Act. The mean scores of teachers having teaching experience between 0 to 10 years is almost similar to the mean scores of teachers having teaching experience between 10 to 20 years. It reveals that teachers having experience between 0 to 10 years and teachers having experience between 10 to 20 years have equal awareness about RTE Act.

Suggestions for Further Research

- The same study can be conducted in other districts of Tamil Nadu state and with other states among Elementary and Secondary teachers of various disciplines.
- Some more variables can be taken into account for further investigation on critical analysis of RTE Act passed by the Government of India.

Conclusion

The future of any nation depends on the sound development of children. Every society has the responsibility to protect the well being of the children in the context of universal elementary education. The Right To

Education (RTE) Act would play an important role in achieving Universal elementary education in India. But it is clear that after two years of the implementation of the Act it has not covered much ground. There is a lot of preparatory work to be done in terms of creating framework, action plans, experiments as well as creating the structures for enabling the environment both at the centre and the states; enabling the involvement of teachers, parents, elders, community leaders and society collectively for proper implementation of Fundamental Right to Education Act throughout the country. Therefore a vivid awareness about the key factors of Right to Education Act 2009 among the responsible personalities for its implementation is needed.

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