A STUDY ON THE AWARENESS OF RIGHT TO EDUCATION ACT (2009) AMONG THE B.ED STUDENT TEACHERS IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT

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Introduction

According to Article 45 of the India Constitution there is a provision that every child should get free and compulsory education. It is also made clear that the fulfillment of this should come before 1950. But because of the increasing population and lack of management of the growing population, this provision could not be fulfilled not only until 1960, but till now. The Right of Children to free and Compulsory Education Act which was passed by the India parliament on 4 August 2009 describes the modalities of the provision of free and compulsory education for children between 6 and 14 in India under Article 21 A of the Indian Constitution.

The present Act has its history in the drafting of Indian Constitution at the time of Independence; more specifically to the Constitutional Amendment that included the Article 21A of the Indian constitution making Education a fundamental right. This amendment, however, specified the need for a legislation to describe the mode of implementation of the same which necessitated the drafting of separate Education Bill. The rough draft of the bill was composed in year 2005. It received much opposition due to its mandatory provision to provide 25% reservation for disadvantaged children in private schools.

The bill makes education a fundamental right of every child between the ages of 6 to 14 and specifies the minimum norms in Government schools. It specifies reservation of 25% seats in private schools for children from poor families, prohibits the practice of unrecognized schools, and makes provisions for no donation or capitation and no interview of the child or parent for the admission. The bill has been criticized for failing to maintain a uniform equitable standard of quality for all schools and for excluding children under 6 years of age.

The bill was approved by the cabinet on 2 July 2009. Raja Saba passed the bill on 20 July 2009. It received Presidential assent and was notified as law on 3 Sept 2009 as The Children's Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE Act, 2009).

Statement of the problem

The importance of the RTE awareness process is predominant one. Teacher educators need to train B.Ed student teachers with an adequate and positive awareness

about RTE. So the present study proposes, **"A study on the awareness of Right to Education Act (2009) among B.Ed student teachers in Coimbatore district".**

Objectives of the study
- To find out the awareness of RTE Act among B.Ed student teachers.
- To find out the whether there is any difference between the awareness of RTE Act among student teachers based on the independent variables like gender, location, type of management, educational status, residential status, educational status of parents, socio economic status and family type.

Scope of the study

The present investigation aims at exploring the awareness of Right to Education Act among B.Ed students in Coimbatore district, which might help the Student Teachers, Teacher educators, Principals, Administrators, Policy makers and Parents to know the awareness of RTE Act and help in planning for better experiences and providing suitable environment to the learners.

Hypotheses
- The awareness of RTE Act (2009) among student teachers is not above average.
- There is no statistically significant difference exists among student teachers with respect to the awareness of RTE Act (2009) on the basis of gender, location, type of management, educational status, residential status, educational status of parents, socio economic status and family type.

Delimitation of the study
- The study is confined to the B.Ed student teachers who are studying in Coimbatore district only
- The researcher conducted the study from eighteen B.Ed colleges in Coimbatore district.

In spite of the above delimitations sufficient care has been take in selecting the sample constructing the tool, gathering reliable data and applying appropriate analysis procedure etc

Methodology of the study

The investigator adopted survey method to collect data from the population for studying the RTE Act awareness among B.Ed student-teachers in Coimbatore district.

Population and Sample

The B.Ed student-teachers those who are studying in colleges of education in Coimbatore district are considered as "population" for the present study. The Government,

Aided and Self-finance B.Ed colleges were selected for this study. The investigator adopted simple random sampling method and collected 550 samples for the investigation from Government (111), Aided (119) and self finance B.Ed colleges (320). The investigator collected data only from student-teachers those who were present at the time of data collection.

Tool used

The RTE Act (2009) awareness tool was prepared by the investigator. The investigator selected multiple-choice type questionnaire as a tool for collecting data in the present study. The tool includes 37 items related to RTE Act (2009) awareness regarding the responsibilities of schools, authorities, government and regulations. The validity and reliability of the tool was checked and corrected by the experts.

Variables

The investigator selected gender, location, type of management, educational status, residential status, educational status of parents, socio economic status and family type as the eight independent variables for the study. The awareness of RTE Act (2009) was treated as the dependent variable.

Statistical techniques used

The investigator employed descriptive statistics (Mean and SD) and parametric statistics (students "t" test) to process the data collected from the sample.

Data analyses

1. The mean values on the awareness of RTE Act (2009) of student teachers were calculated with respect to the variables of the study.

   The results of the analysis were presented in table 1.

Table 1 Mean Values on the awareness of RTE Act (2009)

Variables	Specification	N	M
Gender	Boys	279	18.55
	Girls	271	16.59
Locality	Rural	204	16.58
	Urban	346	18.18
Type of management	Government	111	16.79
	Aided	119	17.13
	Private	320	18.03
Qualification	UG	359	17.97
	PG	191	16.86

Residential status	Hostellers	345	18.08
	Day scholars	205	16.75
Parents qualification	Literate	380	17.85
	Illiterate	170	16.99
Income	Above 10000	349	18.07
	Below 10000	201	16.74
Family type	Joint	238	17.08
	Nuclear	312	17.96
Total		550	17.42

The table 1 reveals that, the calculated RTE Act awareness values of student teachers are below 50%.

Therefore the null hypothesis (H_01): "The awareness of RTE Act (2009) among B.Ed student teachers is not above the average" is accepted.

Hence, it may be concluded that the awareness of RTE Act among student teachers are below the average.

Analysis of RTE act awareness among the Student-teachers with respect to Gender

RTE act awareness of student-teachers was analyzed on the basis of gender.

Table 2 Comparison of RTE act awareness among the
Student-teachers with respect to Gender

Variable	Specification	N	M	SD	t-value 0.01 level
Gender	Boys	278	18.55	6.04	4.18**
	Girls	272	16.59	4.85	

*-Significant at 0.05 level   **- Significant at 0.01 level

The table 2 reveals that the calculated 't' value between the RTE awareness of student-teachers based on the views of boys Vs girls is 4.18. The value is greater than the table value and a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level could be noticed between them with respect to gender.

Therefore the null hypothesis (H_02): "There is no statistically significant difference exists among student teachers with respect to the awareness of RTE Act (2009) on the basis of Gender" is rejected.

Boys had better RTE awareness than girls. Compare with girls, boys may have more friendship circle. So they have more chances to discuss the social issues and announcements among the friends group. So they may have better awareness than girls.

Analysis of RTE act awareness among the Student-teachers with respect to Location

RTE act awareness of student-teachers was analyzed on the basis of location.

**Table 3 Comparison of RTE act awareness among the
Student-teachers with respect to Location**

Variable	Specification	N	M	SD	t-value 0.01 level
Location	Rural	204	16.58	4.84	3.27**
	Urban	346	18.18	5.89	

*-Significant at 0.05 level   **- Significant at 0.01 level

The table 3 reveals that the calculated 't' value between the RTE awareness of student-teachers based on the views of rural area student-teachers Vs urban area student-teachers is 3.27. The value is greater than the table value and a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level could be noticed between them with respect to location.

Therefore the null hypothesis (Ho3): "There is no statistically significant difference exists among student teachers with respect to the awareness of RTE Act (2009) on the basis of locality of residence" is rejected.

Urban area student teachers have more RTE awareness than rural area student teachers. Urban area student teachers can easily use the library facility and internet facility. So they may have better awareness than rural area.

Analysis of RTE act awareness among the Student-teachers with respect to type of management

RTE act awareness of student-teachers was analyzed on the basis of type of management.

**Table 4 Comparison of RTE act awareness among the
Student-teachers with respect to type of management**

Variables	N	M	SD	Aided	Private
Government	111	16.79	4.60	0.52 NS	1.98*
Aided	119	17.13	5.31		1.44 NS
Private	320	18.03	5.93		

NS – Not Significant   *- Significant at 0.05 level

It is evident from the table 4 that, the calculated t- values for the student teachers belong to the category Government vs Aided and Aided vs Private are 0.52 and 1.44 respectively. No statistically significant difference is found between the mean values. While comparing the views of government college students with the views of private college students, the calculated t-value 1.98 indicated the significant difference between the mean values at 0.05 level.

Therefore the null hypothesis (H_04): "There is no statistically significant difference exists among student teachers with respect to the awareness of RTE Act (2009) on the basis of type of management is accepted except in the comparison between government and private.

Hence it may be inferred from the analysis that the RTE Act awareness level of Government College and aided college students teachers; aided college and private college student teachers are similar.

But it may be inferred that the private college student teachers have better than Government College student teachers with respect to RTE Act awareness

Analysis of RTE act awareness among the Student-teachers with respect to educational status of student teachers

RTE act awareness of student-teachers was analyzed on the basis of educational status of student teachers.

Table 5 Comparison of RTE act awareness among the

Student-teachers with respect to educational status of student teachers

Variable	Specification	N	M	SD	t-value 0.05 level
Educational qualification	UG	359	17.97	5.69	2.23*
	PG	191	16.86	5.28	

*-significant at 0.05 level   **- significant at 0.01 level

The table 5 reveals that the calculated 't' value between the RTE awareness of student-teachers based on the views of UG qualified student-teachers Vs PG qualified student-teachers is 2.23. The value is greater than the table value and a statistically significant difference at 0.05 level could be noticed between them with respect to educational status of student teachers.

Therefore the null hypothesis (Ho5): "There is no statistically significant difference exists among student teachers with respect to the awareness of RTE Act (2009) on the basis of educational status of student teachers (UG & PG)" is rejected.

UG qualified student teachers have better awareness than they PG qualified student teachers. PG qualified student teachers are mostly focused on subject content and project areas. But UG qualified student teachers have more chances to read extra items other than subject area. So UG student teachers may have more RTE awareness.

Analysis of RTE act awareness among the Student-teachers with respect to Residential status of student teachers

RTE act awareness of student-teachers was analyzed on the basis of residential status of student teachers.

Table 6 Comparison of RTE act awareness among the
Student-teachers with respect to Residential status of student teachers

Variable	Specification	N	M	SD	t-value 0.05 level
Residential status	Hostel	345	18.08	5.75	
	Day scholar	205	16.75	5.17	2.17*

*-Significant at 0.05 level   **- Significant at 0.01 level

The table 6 reveals that the calculated 't' value between the RTE awareness of student-teachers based on the views of hostellers Vs day scholars is 2.17. The value is greater than the table value and a statistically significant difference at 0.05 level could be noticed between them with respect to residential status of student teachers.

Therefore the null hypothesis (Ho6): "There is no statistically significant difference exists among student teachers with respect to the awareness of RTE Act (2009) on the basis of Residential status of student teachers (Hostel & Days scholar)" is rejected.

Hostel student teachers have better awareness than they day scholars. Day scholar student teachers may have home based work and limited time to mingle in a group. Hostel student teachers have good friendship circle and they have ample time to discuss social issues and activities whatever happened in the socially with their friends. So they may have better awareness than day scholar student teachers.

Analysis of RTE act awareness among the Student-teachers with respect to Parents educational qualification

RTE act awareness of student-teachers was analyzed on the basis of parents educational qualification.

Table 7 Comparison of RTE act awareness among the
Student-teachers with respect to Parents educational qualification

Variable	Specification	N	M	SD	t-value 0.05 level
Parents educational status	Literate	380	17.85	5.60	
	Illiterate	170	16.99	5.47	1.67 NS

NS – Not Significant   *- Significant at 0.05 level

The table 7 reveals that the calculated 't' value between the RTE awareness of student-teachers based on the views of literate parents Vs illiterate parents is 1.67. The value is lesser than the table value and no statistically significant difference between them with respect to parent's educational qualification.

Therefore the null hypothesis (Ho7): "There is no statistically significant difference exists among student teachers with respect to the awareness of RTE Act (2009) on the basis of educational status of parental qualification (literate and illiterate)." is accepted.

Student teachers whose parents are literate and illiterate have similar level of awareness of RTE Act.

Analysis of RTE act awareness among the Student-teachers with respect to Socio-Economic Status

RTE act awareness of student-teachers was analyzed on the basis of socio-economic status.

Table 8 Comparison of RTE act awareness among the Student-teachers with respect to socio-economic status

Variable	Specification	N	M	SD	t-value 0.01 level
Socio-economic status	Above 10,000	349	18.07	5.72	2.70**
	Below 10,000	201	16.74	5.21	

*-Significant at 0.05 level   **- Significant at 0.01 level

The table 8 reveals that the calculated 't' value between the RTE awareness of student-teachers based on the views of parents income above 10000 Vs parents income below 10000 is 2.70. The value is greater than the table value and a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level could be noticed between them with respect to socio-economic status. Therefore the null hypothesis (Ho8): "There is no statistically significant difference exists among student teachers with respect to the awareness of RTE Act (2009) on the basis of socio economic status (Above 10000 and below 10.000)" is rejected. Student teachers whose parent's income is above 10,000 have better RTE awareness than student teachers whose parent's income below 10,000. Those who get high salary, they may spend more money for their children's knowledge development process like buying newspaper, arranging internet facility and etc.

Analysis of RTE act awareness among the Student-teachers with respect to Family Type

RTE act awareness of student-teachers was analyzed on the basis of family type.

Table 9 Comparison of RTE act awareness among the Student-teachers with respect to family type

Variable	Specification	N	M	SD	t-value 0.05 level
Family type	Joint	238	17.08	4.96	1.84 NS
	Nuclear	312	17.96	5.98	

NS – Not Significant   *- Significant at 0.05 level

The table 9 reveals that the calculated 't' value between the RTE awareness of student-teachers based on the views of joint family Vs nuclear family is 1.84. The value is lesser than the table value and no statistically significant difference between them with respect to family type.

Therefore the null hypothesis (Ho9): "There is no statistically significant difference exists among student teachers with respect to the awareness of RTE Act (2009) on the basis of type of family of student teachers (Joint family and Nuclear family)" accepted.

Hence it may be inferred from the analysis that, the RTE awareness of student-teachers based on the views of joint family and nuclear family is similar.

Findings
1. The awareness of RTE Act among student teachers is below the average.
2. There is significant difference exist among student teachers with respect to the awareness of RTE Act (2009) on the basis of gender. Male student teachers had better awareness than female student teachers.
3. There is significant difference exist among student teachers with respect to the awareness of RTE Act (2009) on the basis of locality of residence. Urban area student teachers had better awareness than the rural area student teachers.
4. There is no significant difference exist among student teachers with respect to the awareness of RTE Act (2009) on the basis of type of management (government vs aided & aided vs private) except government vs private.
5. There is significant difference exists among student teachers with respect to the awareness of RTE Act (2009) on the basis of educational status of student teachers. UG qualified student teachers had better awareness than they PG qualified Student teachers
6. There is significant difference exist among student teachers with respect to the awareness of RTE Act (2009) on the basis of residential status of student teachers. Hostel student teachers have better awareness than they day scholars.
7. There is no significant difference exist among student teachers with respect to the awareness of RTE Act (2009) on the basis of educational status of parental qualification.
8. There is significant difference exist among student teachers with respect to the awareness of RTE Act (2009) on the basis of socio economic status. Student teachers whose parent's income is above 10,000 have better RTE awareness than the student teachers whose parent's income below 10,000.
9. There is no significant difference exist among student teachers with respect to the awareness of RTE Act (2009) on the basis of family type of student teachers.

Recommendations
The recommendations based on the results of the study are as follows:
▪ The study revealed that the RTE Act awareness of B.Ed student teachers is below the average. Hence it may be the recommendation of the study that Principals, Teacher educators, Curriculum framers and Policy makers should consider this and make necessary actions to enhance the awareness about RTE Act.
▪ The study revealed that the male student teachers had better awareness than female student teachers. Hence it may be the recommendation of the study that the Institutions may provide proper motivation and orientation to female student teachers to enhance their knowledge in contemporary affairs.

- The study revealed that the urban area student teachers had better awareness than rural area student teachers. Hence it may be the recommendation of the study that the Institutions may provide proper motivation and facility to rural area student teachers to enhance their knowledge updating and improve their current affairs.
- The study revealed that the Self finance college student teachers had better awareness than Government college student teachers. Hence it may be the recommendation of the study that the Government may provide proper library and facility to Government College of education to enhance students learning.
- The study revealed that the UG qualified student teachers had better awareness than they PG qualified Student teachers. Hence it may be the recommendation of the study that the institutions may motivate the PG qualified student teachers to show interest on social issues and activities with their learning.
- The study revealed that hostel student teachers had better awareness than they day's scholars. Hence it may be the recommendation of the study that the Institutions may provide proper motivation to the day scholars to spend more time to enhance their knowledge updating and improve their current affairs.
- The study revealed that Student teachers whose parent's income above 10,000 had better RTE awareness than the student teachers whose parent's income below 10,000. Hence it may be the recommendation of the study that the Institutions may provide the proper motivation, library facility and internet facility to the student teachers to enhance their knowledge updating and improve their current affairs.

Conclusion

The importance of RTE act is being highlighted in many educational policies and exponents' speeches but studies on this area are very few. Therefore the present investigation has opened up a new direction in RTE Act awareness among student teachers. The problems which have been identified by the investigator will give a proper direction to the authorities concerned in developing and modifying the programs regarding RTE act awareness. Through this study it can be understand that by providing the RTE Act to the society, the Government tries to decrease the child labour problem indirectly.

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