Research Paper EDUCATION

Awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the Prospective Teachers at Secondary Level

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ABSTRACT

The present study has tried to explore the awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the prospective secondary teachers. 227 prospective secondary teachers have been selected from the various colleges in Salem and Namakkal districts in Tamil Nadu. The study carried out is a descriptive study and the data collected for the study is through a questionnaire which was researcher made. Appropriate statistical techniques have been employed to analyze the data. The findings of the study revealed that there is no significant difference in the awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the prospective secondary teachers on the basis of gender, locality, stream of study, nature of the college and parental educational level. While there is a significant difference on the basis of type of thecollege.

KEYWORDS RTE Act, Awareness, and Prospective Secondary Teachers

INTRODUCTION

Everyone has the right to education. Right to education is a basic human right. As the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) under its article 26 states that "Everyone has the right to free education, at least up to the elementary stage and it shall be compulsory." Elementary education forms the foundation for all levels of learning and development. It equips individuals with analytical capabilities and provides confidence (Parimala, 2012). Article 45 of Indian constitution provides free and compulsory education up to 14 years. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act, 2009) have been inserted by the 86th amendment in December, 2002 and passed by the Indian parliament in July 2009. It mandates free and compulsory education to all children of 6-14 years of age until they complete elementary education in a neighbourhood school. With the RTE Act, 2009 coming into force there is an expectation that this will finally be translated into provision of quality school education for all children (Rao, 2011).

NEED FOR THE STUDY

There is a need of awareness about the RTE Act, 2009 among the different stakeholders of education for effective implementation. Teachers being the agent for effective implementation deserve special attention. If they are well aware, then there would be possibility of successful implementation of the act. So, knowledge about RTE Act, 2009 is must for all in-service and pre-service teachers to implement the rules and regulations laid down in the act. The purpose of the study is to assess the awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the prospective secondary teachers i.e. B.Ed., student teachers. They are going to work in the schools after completing their teacher education programme. In this context, the investigator decided to assess the level of awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the prospective secondary teachers.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem for the study has been stated as "Awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the Prospective Teachers at Secondary Level."

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out the level of awareness regarding the RTE Act, 2009 among the prospective secondary teachers.
- To find out if there is any significant difference in the awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the prospective secondary teachers with regard to gender, locality, stream of study, type of the college, nature of the college and parental educational level.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

- The level of awareness of RTE Act, 2009 is high among the prospective secondary teachers.
- There is no significant difference in the awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the prospective secondary teachers with regard to gender, locality, stream of study, type of college, nature of the college and parental educational level.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Method

Survey method has been adopted for the study. The main variable of the study is awareness of RTE Act, 2009 and the demographic variables are gender, locality, stream of study, type of the college, nature of the college and parental educational level.

Population and Sample

The prospective secondary teachers, i.e. B.Ed., student teachers in Salem and Namakkal districts in Tamil Nadu form the population for the study. From the population, 227 prospective secondary teachers have been selected by adopting a convenient sampling technique.

Research Tool

"A multiple-choice questionnaire on RTE Act, 2009" has been developed by the investigator with 36 items to find out the awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the prospective secondary teachers. The minimum and maximum score of the questionnaire is 0 and 36 respectively. The reliability of the questionnaire was found to be 0.87 by KR-20 formula. Content validity and face validity of the test were estimated by the subject experts.

Statistical Techniques Employed

The investigator has employed the statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, percentages,'t'- test and 'F' - test to analyze thedata.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hypothesis - 1: The level of awareness of RTE Act is high among the prospective secondary teachers.

Table - 1
Mean Scores of Awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the Prospective Secondary Teachers

Variables	Sub-Variables	N	Mean	S.D
Gender	Male	65	10.86	3.69
	Female	162	10.33	3.55
Locality	Rural	110	10.94	3.75
	Urban	117	10.05	3.40

Type of College	Government	64	10.84	3.65
	Government Aided	114	9.76	3.76
	Private	49	11.69	2.66
Nature of College	Co-education	70	10.62	3.62
	Single-sex	157	10.42	3.59
Stream of Study	Arts	77	9.98	3.29
	Science	150	10.74	3.72
Parental Educational Level	Higher Education	34	10.17	3.88
	School Education	119	10.43	3.63
	Illiterate	74	10.70	3.42
Average			**10.53**	**3.54**

It is observed from the table - 1 that the total mean score of awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the prospective secondary teachers is found to be 10.53.The median value of RTE Act, 2009 awareness questionnaire is 18. Hence, it is concluded that the level of awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the prospective secondary teachers is low as the obtained total mean score is much lesser than the median value. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

Table - 2
Awareness Level of Prospective Secondary Teachers on RTE Act, 2009

S. No	Group	Score Range	N	%
1	High Awareness	36 - 25	0	0
2	Average Awareness	24 - 13	69	30.40
3	Low Awareness	12 - 0	158	69.60
	Total		227	100

From the table - 2, it is inferred that 30.40% of prospective secondary teachers are in average awareness group, 69.60% of them are in the low awareness group and none comes under the high awareness group regarding the awareness of RTE Act, 2009.

Hypothesis - 2: There is no significant difference in the awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the prospective secondary teachers with regard to gender, locality, stream of study and nature of the college.

Table - 3
Significance of Difference in the Awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the Prospective Secondary Teachers with regard to certain Demographic Variables

Variables	Sub - Variables	N	Mean	S.D	't' - value	Result @ 0.05 Level
Gender	Male	65	10.86	3.69	0.984	Not Significant
	Female	162	10.33	3.55		
Locality	Rural	110	10.94	3.75	1.877	Not Significant
	Urban	117	10.05	3.40		
Stream of Study	Arts	77	9.98	3.29	1.558	Not Significant
	Science	150	10.74	3.72		
Nature of College	Co-education	70	10.62	3.62	0.400	Not Significant
	Single-sex	157	10.42	3.59		

It is evident from the table - 3 that the obtained 't' values are found to be 0.984 (gender), 1.877 (locality), 1.558 (stream of study) and 0.400 (nature of the college). These 't' - values are lesser than the table value of 1.96. Hence, they are not significant at 0.05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. That is, it can be inferred that gender, locality, stream of study and nature of the college does not make any significant difference among the prospective secondary teachers in their awareness of RTE Act, 2009.

Hypothesis - 3: There is no significant difference in the awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the prospective secondary teachers with regard to type of the college and parental educational level.

Table - 4
Significance of Difference in the Awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the Prospective Secondary Teachers with respect to Type of College and Parental Education

Variables	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square Value	F - value	Result @ 0.05 Level
Type of College	Between Groups	139.24	2	69.62	5.60	Significant
	Within Groups	2781.45	224	12.41		
	Total	2920.69	226			
Parental Educational Level	Between Groups	7.018	2	3.50	0.269	Not Significant
	Within Groups	2913.67	224	13.00		
	Total	2920.69	226			

The results of the table - 4 shows that the obtained 'F' - value 5.60 (type of the college) is greater than the table value of 3.04. Hence, it is significant at 0.05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. That is, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference in the awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the prospective secondary teachers with regard to type of the college.The mean scores indicate that the prospective secondary teachers from the private colleges are superior in their awareness of RTE Act, 2009 than the prospective secondary teachers from the government and government-aided colleges.

The remaining 'F' - value is found to be 0.269 (parental educational level) and it is lesser than the table value of 3.04. Hence, it is not significant at 0.05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. Consequently, it is concluded that there is no significant difference in the awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the prospective secondary teachers with respect to their parental educational level. That is, parental educational level does not make any significant difference among the prospective secondary teachers in their awareness of RTE Act, 2009.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- The prospective secondary teachers' awareness on RTE Act, 2009 is low. Majority of them (69.40%) are in low awareness group.
- Male and female prospective secondary teachers do not differ significantly in their awareness of RTE Act, 2009.
- The prospective secondary teachers from rural and urban locality do not differ significantly in their awareness of RTE Act, 2009.
- The prospective secondary teachers belong to arts and science streams do not differ significantly in their awareness of RTE Act, 2009.
- The prospective secondary teachers from co-educational and single-sex colleges do not differ significantly in their awareness of RTE Act, 2009.
- The prospective secondary teachers from the private colleges have a better awareness on RTE Act, 2009 than the prospective secondary teachers from government and government-aided colleges.
- Parental educational level does not make any significant difference in the awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the prospective secondary teachers.

CONCLUSION

The study will be of immense use for the government to take necessary steps to enhance the awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among the B.Ed., student teachers. Based on the findings of the study, the Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University, Chennai may publish manuals, brochures and booklets on RTE Act, 2009 to enhance the awareness level among the prospective secondary teachers. Further, workshops and seminars should be organized in all the colleges of education and a lesson on

RTE Act should be included to the teacher education curriculum so that the prospective teachers may aware of the RTE Act, 2009. Such initiatives are necessary to create awareness among all the prospective secondary teachers, who will give their best to achieve the goals of the RTE Act to make it attainable and successful.

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