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RESEARCH ARTICLE

SENSITIZATION OF TEACHER EDUCATORS ON RIGHT OF CHILDREN TO FREE AND COMPULSARY EDUCATION (RTE) ACT, 2009

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ABSTRACT

The Government has the responsibility for giving free and compulsory education to all children. The aim of education is to produce educated people. Education is considered as 'fundamental right' across the globe and essential for the exercise of all human rights. In this context, the Government of India has implemented the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 for ensuring education for all. Exploring the literature review, the study is conducted with a view to understand teacher educator's perception towards the efficacy of RTE Act 2009. In this study, the investigator used a survey method by which Coimbatore District in Tamil Nadu was taken as a population. By using random sampling, a total of 100 teacher educators were selected from the population. Likert type 5 point perception scale was used for data collection. The dimensions of the scale taken for data analysis were Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Adaptability of RTE Act 2009. The result of the study revealed that there is a significant difference in teacher educators' perception towards Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 and its dimensions with respect to their gender, domicile, and medium of instruction

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INTRODUCTION

Education makes a man a right thinker and a correct decision-maker. It achieves this by bringing his knowledge of the external world, teaching him to reason and acquainting him with past history, so that he can be a better judge of the present. With education, he finds himself in a room with all its windows open to the outside world. A well educated man is a more dependable worker, a better citizen, a centre of wholesome influence, pride in his community and honour of his country. A nation is great only in the proportion of its advancement in education. Education is not mere a tool for development, but it is a weapon to educate or even literate. 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. In this scenario, one such exemplary effort is Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act of 2009. This is believed to be an effort to meet those unfulfilled dreams of education to all.

However, 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.

Rationale for the Study

As per RTE Act 2009, all children between the ages of 6-14 shall have the Right to Free and Compulsory Elementary Education at a neighborhood school. There is no direct (school fees) or indirect cost (uniforms, textbooks, midday meals, transportation) to be borne by the child or the parents to obtain elementary education. The government will provide schooling free of cost until a child's elementary education is completed. An equal educational opportunity for all students is emphasized in the RTE act 2009. On that part, the teachers are required to know about their responsibility and their role towards the society. Students are deeply affected by the teacher's love and affection, his character, his competence and his moral commitment. Teachers are founts of experience. They have already been where their students are going, undergone what they will go through and are in a position to pass along lessons, not only regarding subject matter, but lessons on life. Teachers are required to know about their responsibility and their role towards the society as per the act.

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This study throws a light on the perceptions of prospective teachers towards the Right to Education Act, 2009 with regard to its dimensions of Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Adaptability.

Operational Definitions of Key Terms

Right to Education Act, (RTE) 2009 : The Right to Education Act, (RTE) 2009 means that an Act which was passed by the Indian Government in August, 2009 to ensure the free and compulsory elementary education for every child between the age group of 6-14 years throughout the country.

Perception: Perception means sensation +meaningful interpretation. This is the organization, identification, and interpretation of sensory information in order to represent and understand the environment.

Availability: Educational institutions and programmes have to be available in sufficient quantity of safe drinking water, trained teachers receiving domestically competitive salaries, teaching materials, sanitation facilities within the jurisdiction of the State party.

Accessibility: Educational institutions and programmes have to be accessible to everyone, without discrimination, within the jurisdiction of the State party. Accessibility has three overlapping dimensions- Non-discrimination, Physical accessibility and Economic accessibility.

Acceptability: The form and substance of education, including curricula and teaching methods, have to be acceptable to students and, in appropriate cases, parents; this is subject to the educational objectives required by article 13 (1) and such minimum educational standards as may be approved by the State.

Adaptability: Education has to be flexible so it can adapt to the needs of changing societies and communities and respond to the needs of students within their diverse social and cultural settings.

Literature Review

Lohani, S., Singh, R., and Lohani, (2010), studied 'Universal primary education in Nepal: Fulfilling the right to education'. The article examined the status of universal primary education in Nepal in the light of legal provisions, enrollment and completion trends, and the quality, and management, of education, including financing. Kamalakar, G., and Bhojanna, (2012) together made a study on 'Reservation in Private

Schools under the Right to Education Act: Model for Implementation'. The study reported that people are not aware even about their fundamental rights. Devaraj and Parthiban, (2013) conducted a study titled as 'Right to Education (RTE) Act: The missing aspects (gaps) of RTE Act with reference to persons with disabilities.' Major recommendation of the study that, the responsibility of bringing children to schools and providing them quality education is not only of the central and state government, but the nation as a whole should take the responsibility in this regard. Gadam, (2013) conducted a study entitled as '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. Kumar, and Agarwal, (2013) investigated 'Study of measures adopted by schools for implementing inclusive education with respect to Right to Education Act'. The qualitative and descriptive study analyzed the measures adopted by schools for implementing inclusive education with respect to right to education act.

Objectives of the study

- To study elementary teachers perception towards RTE Act, 2009 with regard to its dimensions of Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Adaptability.
- To find out the significant difference if any, in the perception of RTE Act among prospective teachers with respect to their background variable; gender, educational qualification, type of management, locality and medium of instruction.

Methodology

The investigator has adopted descriptive survey by which, stratified random sampling techniques were employed in the study. The investigator randomly selected 200 prospective teachers, by giving proper representation from Govt. and Govt. Aided Training centres with equal representation of demographic variables from Coimbatore District. 'Teachers Perception Scale', a self constructed likert type 5 points summated scale is used as tool for collecting data. Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis and differential statistics of t-test were used for data analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Prospective teachers' perception about RTE Act 2009 with regard to its dimensions of Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Adaptability.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
Availability	200	39.35	4.709	-.110	-.107
Acceptability	200	48.76	5.451	-.467	.324
Adaptability	200	32.03	4.035	-.606	-.166
Accessibility	200	42.20	5.798	-.208	-.185
Valid N	200				

Table 2. Difference between Prospective teachers perception towards RTE Act, 2009 with respect to the variable; Gender

Dimensions	Male		Female		t-value	5% level of significance
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Availability	39.23	4.68	39.46	4.75	0.35	NS
Acceptability	47.26	5.81	50.30	4.59	4.11	S
Adaptability	30.95	4.04	33.13	3.73	3.96	S
Accessibility	41.39	5.68	43.03	5.82	2.02	S

(S-significant, NS-not significant)

Table 3. Difference between Prospective teachers perception towards RTE Act, 2009 with respect to the variable; Educational Qualification

Dimensions	UG		PG		t-value	5% level of significance
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Availability	38.60	4.85	39.89	4.54	1.90	NS
Acceptability	48.82	5.76	48.72	5.24	0.12	NS
Adaptability	32.27	3.78	31.85	4.21	0.73	NS
Accessibility	42.05	5.43	42.31	6.07	0.32	NS

(S-significant, NS-not significant)

Table 4. Difference between Prospective teachers perception towards RTE Act, 2009 with respect to the variable; Type of Management

Dimensions	Govt.		Aided		t-value	5% level of significance
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Availability	38.47	4.75	40.20	4.52	2.62	S
Acceptability	48.13	5.93	49.39	4.88	1.63	NS
Adaptability	31.47	4.12	32.57	3.88	1.93	NS
Accessibility	41.54	5.72	42.85	5.82	1.61	NS

(S-significant, NS-not significant)

Table 5. Difference between Prospective teachers perception towards RTE Act, 2009 with respect to the variable; Locality

Dimensions	Rural		Urban		t-value	5% level of significance
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Availability	37.69	4.78	41.83	3.31	7.21	S
Acceptability	48.02	5.72	49.89	4.83	2.48	S
Adaptability	31.33	4.24	33.08	3.46	3.17	S
Accessibility	41.13	5.62	43.81	5.71	3.28	S

(S-significant, NS-not significant)

Table 6. Difference between Prospective teachers perception towards RTE Act, 2009 with respect to the variable; Medium of Instruction

Dimensions	Tamil		English		t-value	5% level of significance
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Availability	38.45	5.22	40.82	6.10	2.91	S
Acceptability	48.01	5.67	49.22	5.28	1.48	NS
Adaptability	31.08	4.11	32.60	3.89	2.58	S
Accessibility	40.99	6.00	42.93	5.56	2.27	S

(S-significant, NS-not significant)

It is seen from the above table that majority of the prospective teachers perception scores lies in below the medium category, which indicates that perception of RTE Act among the prospective teachers of Coimbatore District lies in below average.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of perception among prospective teachers with respect to the variable; gender.

From the above table, it is inferred that there is significant difference among prospective teachers perception towards RTE Act (dimensions of Acceptability, Adaptability and Accessibility) with respect to the variable; gender.

Female teachers' have more perception towards RTE Act than that of male teachers. No significant difference is found

between those teachers perception scores of Availability towards RTE Act.

H₀₂ : There is no significant difference in the mean scores of perception among prospective teachers with respect to the variable; Educational Qualification

From the above table, the obtained 't' value for the variable, educational qualification are 1.90, 0.12, 0.73 and 0.32 lesser than the table value and the obtained 't' value is not significant at 0.05 levels. Hence, it is inferred that there is no significant difference is found between UG qualified and PG qualified prospective teachers perception towards RTE Act (dimensions of Availability, Acceptability, Adaptability and Accessibility).

H₀₃ : There is no significant difference in the mean scores of perception among prospective teachers with respect to the variable; Type of Management.

From the above table, it is inferred that there is no significant difference is found among prospective teachers perception towards RTE Act (dimensions of Acceptability, Adaptability and Accessibility) with respect to the variable; type of management. Government Aided training centres prospective teachers' have more perception towards RTE Act than that of Government training centres prospective teachers. Significant difference is found between those teachers perception scores of Availability towards RTE Act.

H₀₄ : There is no significant difference in the mean scores of perception among prospective teachers with respect to the variable; Location of the Institution.

From the above table, the obtained 't' value for the variable, locality are 7.21, 2.48, 3.17 and 3.28 greater than the table value and the obtained 't' value is significant at 0.05 levels. Hence, it is inferred that there is significant difference between Rural and Urban area prospective teachers perception towards RTE Act (dimensions of Availability, Acceptability, Adaptability and Accessibility).

H₀₅ : There is no significant difference in the mean scores of perception among prospective teachers with respect to the variable; Medium of Instruction.

From the above table, it is inferred that there is significant difference is found among prospective teachers perception towards RTE Act (dimensions of Availability, Adaptability and Accessibility) with respect to the variable; medium of instruction. English medium prospective teachers' have more perception towards RTE Act than that of Tamil medium prospective teachers. No significant difference is found between those teachers perception scores of Acceptability towards RTE Act.

Findings of the study

- There is significant difference among prospective teachers perception towards RTE Act (dimensions of Acceptability, Adaptability and Accessibility) with respect to the variable; gender.
- No significant difference is found between UG qualified and PG qualified prospective teachers perception towards RTE Act (dimensions of Availability, Acceptability, Adaptability and Accessibility).
- No significant difference is found among prospective teachers perception towards RTE Act (dimensions of Acceptability, Adaptability and Accessibility) with respect to the variable; type of management.
- There is significant difference between Rural and Urban area prospective teachers perception towards RTE Act (dimensions of Availability, Acceptability, Adaptability and Accessibility).
- There is significant difference is found among prospective teachers perception towards RTE Act (dimensions of Availability, Adaptability and Accessibility) with respect to the variable; medium of instruction.

Conclusion

The development of the country depends on the quality of education and the educational system for a country depends on its planners, administrators, educationists, community participation, learning resources and client education. Every society has the responsibility to protect the well being of the child in the context of universal elementary education. The Right to Education (RTE) Act plays an important role in achieving universal elementary education in the state. The act was passed in 2009, but after three years, no tremendous changes occurring in the elementary education. More insight is needed for creating framework, action plan, experiments as well as creating the structures for enabling 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. The result of the study revealed that there is significant difference in teacher educators' perception towards Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 and its dimensions with respect to their gender, domicile, and medium of instructions.

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