



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' AWARENESS OF THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS IN KURNOOL DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH

Noah George

Noah George: PhD Research Scholar, Department of Political Science & Public Administration, Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapuramu, Andhra Pradesh.

Abstract

Education has significant importance, not alone as a tool to achieve other objectives, but as an inherent trait highly esteemed by most humans. Moreover, it is imperative to acknowledge that this tool is crucial in facilitating the political, economic, and social inclusion & integration of individuals who have been marginalized within a given community. The initiation of “the Right to Education (RTE) Act” has played a significant role in advancing education. This study investigates the level of awareness of the Right to Education (RTE) among elementary school teachers in the Kurnool district. The significance of elementary “school teachers' awareness of the Right to Education” is of great relevance for the well-being of society and the country. The research findings indicate that many primary school educators know about the right to education.

Moreover, there is no substantial disparity in the understanding of this right among teachers, regardless of whether they work in government or private institutions or urban or rural settings. There is a notable disparity between male & their level of understanding of the Right to Education Act. Consequently, it is imperative for the government to actively advocate for disseminating information on the Right to Education Act, as this would effectively enhance the enrolment ratio in educational institutions, thereby fostering advancements in education.

Keywords: Awareness, Education, Economic Development, Elementary School Teachers and Right to Education.

1. Introduction

When people have access to better educational opportunities, the society benefits. In addition to industrialization and urbanization, education has played a crucial role in shaping modern society. The need for skilled labour grows as the economy expands. Improving basic education would provide a solid foundation for meeting this requirement. Getting a good foundational education is crucial. Life expectancy, infant mortality, and child nutrition indicate how basic education may boost human well-being. Universal primary education has considerably advanced human development. ^[1]

Under “Article 21A of the Indian Constitution, all children in India between the ages of 6 and 14 are entitled to a free and compulsory education. This right was codified in the Right to Education Act (RTE), also known as The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, which the Indian parliament passed on August 4, 2009. The legislation took effect in India on April 1, 2010, making education a basic human right in India and 135 other nations. On July 2, 2009, the cabinet gave the measure its blessing. The Rajya Sabha approved the law on July 20, and the Lok Sabha on August 4.” The Children's “*Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act*” was signed into law by the President on August 26, 2009, and it went into effect the next day. On April 1, 2010, for the first time in India's history, a law entered into force due to a speech by the Prime Minister. The legislation applied to “*the whole of India, except the state of Jammu and Kashmir.*”



The first amendment to India's constitution since independence guarantees all children the right to a free and obligatory education. According to the law, every child between the ages of 6 and 14 must be "ensured compulsory admission, attendance, and completion of elementary education."

A kid's access to elementary school should not be contingent on their family's ability to pay for it, and this legislation seeks to ensure that every child has that opportunity, regardless of where they reside. Successful implementation of "the Right to Education Act might position India as a world leader in meeting the UNESCO-set millennium development target of ensuring that all children finish primary school by 2015." Teachers are the backbone of any educational system thus they must understand the significance of "*the Right to Education.*" Only an informed educator can ensure that kids get the advantages of the Right to Education and inspire them to register for school. Only when a teacher has a complete understanding of the Right to Education will he or she not risk exploiting a student.^[2]

2. Key elements of the 2009 Right to Education Act

1. All children between the ages of 6 and 14 must attend school for free.
2. Students in class VIII and below must succeed in school.
3. Students who do not have a diploma must be admitted to the school.
4. Sanctions for demanding payment.
5. Sanctions for imposing a parental screening on a minor.
6. Having a child or parent undergo a screening process has severe consequences.
7. Sanctions for curricula that violate the Indian constitution.
8. 8 Consequences for failing to fulfil academic obligations.
9. Underprivileged groups are allocated 25% of seats in private schools.
10. Not fully certified teachers have to become so until the end of their fifth year in the classroom.
11. Including kids at a disadvantage due to a physical or mental impairment.

3. Objectives of the Study

The current research aims to examine elementary "*school teachers' awareness of the right to education.*" The following is a list of the precise goals of the current study:

1. To research primary school teachers' knowledge of the right to education.
2. To assess the degree to which public and private elementary school instructors are aware of the right to education.
3. To assess how much teachers at primary schools in rural and urban areas are aware of the right to education.
4. To determine if male and female teachers in primary schools have different levels of knowledge on the right to education.

4. Hypothesis of the Study

The following hypothesis, which may justify the critical research variables, has been developed to achieve the goals stated:

1. The vast majority of teachers in primary schools are familiar with "the right to education."
2. The awareness of the right to education is not significantly different across public and private elementary school teachers.
3. There are no significant differences between "rural and urban" primary "school teachers regarding" their knowledge of the right to education.



4. There are considerable differences between male & female teachers in terms of their knowledge of the right to education.

5. Review of Literature

According to Patel (1958)^[3], education should be free and required for seven years, with the mother tongue as the primary instructional medium. The federal government should be responsible for primary education. Tiwari (1964)^[4] carried a research to track the evolution of primary education in the state of Uttar Pradesh. His analysis showed that providing little grant-in-aid to indigenous schools and creating departmental schools had slowed the advancement of primary education. The difficulties with Kerala's basic education were noted by Kamalamma^[5] in 1969. According to the results of his investigation, this is the only state to have 100% enrolment in students between the ages of 6 and 11. However, the state should lower the expense of schooling. In Assam, Das (1979)^[6] examined primary education's administrative problems. His analysis showed several issues with how basic education was managed in Assam. Research on basic education in the state of Calcutta was carried out by Dutta in 1985. His research sought to understand the situation of primary education in the state. His investigation results showed issues with the curriculum and its coverage, students' backgrounds, the ratio of females to boys enrolled in classes, etc. Research on the expansion of educational facilities and enrolment at the primary level was carried out by Bhargava in 1990. His research's conclusions revealed that the number of primary school educational facilities had been steadily increasing. The girls and SC, however, continued to have a lower enrolment percentage. Therefore, the government should visit the nation to support the education of girls and SC. Regarding school development, teacher development, student enrolment, spending, and other factors, Bimlesh (1992)^[7] examined the expansion "and development of elementary education in Punjab from 1947 to 1987." In his investigation, he found that even if the enrolment ratio has increased, overall education spending is still quite low. According to Baldacci et al. (2002)^[8], there is a strong association between government expenditure and elementary education. The research also recommended that the government increase spending on primary education if it wants to meet the millennium objectives of universal primary enrolment. According to Rena (2007)^[9], India's educational system needs to be reformed. According to the survey, children quit school to help out around the family and on the farm. The research suggested that budgetary allocations be increased to promote participation in basic education and provide financial aid to the students. Sonal (2010)^[10] said that primary education changes are necessary, so the financial allocation for primary education has to be increased, and suggested that the research sheds light on the unfair circumstances and pervasive politics surrounding educational accountability relationships. It challenges the idealized view of the social agreement in school reform by arguing that statements "of mutual responsibility are likely to achieve little more than perpetuate injustice" if the power and dominance relationships through which 'contracts' are signed are left unresolved. It contends that to address structural disparities and how they emerge in education, policy discourses must acknowledge and consider the socially placed variables of responsibility connections. According to Rawal, D. M. (2023)^[11] suggested that long hours, not being recognized for their efforts, a lack of desire, and stress are the most common complaints from Indian women in the workplace. The new normal, though, is working from home, which was previously unheard of. Women's work-life balance in higher education in underdeveloped nations needs additional research. WLB has gained more attention in the commercial and academic worlds as the number of working women has risen. More women are leaving their roles as stay-at-home mothers and entering the professional labour sector as a result of rising educational opportunities.^[12]



It is clear from the literature evaluation that research has yet to be attempted to determine the level of RTE Act awareness. Thus, the current research seeks to investigate the awareness of the RTE Act.

6. Research Methodology

This research aims to provide a detailed account of the materials & phenomena under examination. As a result, the current study is classified as descriptive research since it includes the description, analysis, and interpretation of data. The sample was chosen using a purposive sampling strategy in the current research. There were 200 teachers from Kurnool district primary schools included in the sample. A self-made questionnaire was employed to gauge elementary school teachers' knowledge of the Right to Education Act.

Statistical Techniques Used-

1. Descriptive statistics: The data were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation.
2. Inferential Statistics: The 't' test was used to compare the outcomes from descriptive statistics.

7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The demographic information of the participants chosen for the research is covered in the table.1 below

Tbale-1: Demographic profile of the Participants

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	100	50
Female	100	50
Total	200	100
Age	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 35	58	29
35-45	130	65
45-55	10	5
55 and Above	2	1
Total	200	100
Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	22	11
Married	178	89
Total	200	100

Source: Filed study

The characteristics of the respondents are shown in the preceding table. An equal number of males and females participated in this investigation. Sixty-five percent of instructors were in the 35-45 age range, while 29% of respondents were in this age range or younger, 5% were in the 45-55 age range, and 1% were 55 or over. Eighty percent of those who participated in the survey were married, while eleven percent were single.

Hypothesis-1: The vast majority of teachers in primary schools are familiar with the right to education. Data from “the 'Awareness Scale of Right to Education Act' completed by elementary school teachers” was used to test Hypothesis I. Scores and percentages of educators were determined based on the frequencies. Table 2 displays the findings of the study.



Table-2: Distribution of the score and percentage of awareness on Right to Education Act

Awareness Scores	Frequencies	Percentage
0-5	16	8.0
6-10	20	10.0
11-15	34	17.0
16-20	122	61.0
21-25	08	4.0
Total	200	100

Source: Filed study

The table above shows that most 122 primary school teachers with average knowledge of the right to education are in the 16–20 age bracket. Sixty-five percent of the overall sample met the criteria. Sixty-five percent of the whole group scored higher than 16 in this study. Thus, 65 percent of primary “school teachers are aware of the Right to Education.”

The above demonstrates that most primary school educators know the Right to Education Act. In the modern day, media like TV, newspapers, and the internet play a crucial role in disseminating knowledge. This makes it simpler for teachers to learn about new programs and rules in the classroom.

Hypothesis-2: The awareness of the right to education is not significantly different across public and private elementary school teachers.

In order to put Hypothesis-II to the test, data were gathered with “the use of a questionnaire, and then the scores were input into the tables. Mean and standard deviation were used to test the hypothesis.” Using a t ‘test, we looked into the idea even further. The data analysis results are shown in table 3.

Table-3: The Government and Private Teachers Awareness Scores on Mean, Standard deviation and t-Value on RTE

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	‘t’	Interpretation
Govt.	100	14.97	4.558	.532	Not significant
Private	100	14.62	4.589		

Source: Filed study

A further examination of Table 3 shows that the derived “t” value of 0.532 is not significant, indicating that there are no appreciable differences between government and private primary schools in terms of their knowledge of the “Right to Education Act.” However, a comparison of the average awareness ratings of the two groups suggests “that both are just little aware of the Right to Education Act.” The fact that newspapers, television, the internet, and magazines are readily accessible both at work and at home may be the cause of these middling awareness ratings.

Hypothesis-3: There are no significant differences between “rural and urban primary school teachers” regarding their knowledge of the right to education.

The “mean and standard deviation were calculated to test the hypothesis.” By using a test, the hypothesis was further investigated. Table 4 displays the findings of the study.



Table-4: The Rural and Urban Teachers Awareness Scores of Mean, Standard deviation and t-Value on RTE

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	't'	Interpretation
Rural	100	14.41	4.627	1.068	Not significant
Urban	100	15.16	4.501		

Source: Filed study

Table 4 shows that 't' has a value of 1.068, “which is less than the table's value. The magnitude of 't' is 1.068, which is not noteworthy.” Comparatively speaking, however, urban primary teachers' mean scores (15.16) for the Right to Education Act are higher than those of rural elementary teachers (14.41). This suggests that, in comparison to instructors in rural regions, primary school teachers in urban areas are better “aware of the Right to Education Act.” Teachers can access additional amenities in urban regions, including computers, the internet, periodicals, magazines, and well-stocked libraries. Since there is rivalry among teachers, they must maintain their expertise. On the other hand, teachers in rural areas need more access to these resources.

Hypothesis-4: There are considerable differences between male & female teachers in terms of their knowledge of the right to education.

Hypothesis-IV was tested using data collected through questionnaire. The standard deviation was computed inside the mean. The 't' test is used to investigate the hypothesis. Table 5 displays the analysis' findings.

Table-4: The Male and Female Teachers Awareness Scores of Mean, Standard deviation and t-Value on RTE

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	't'	Interpretation
Male	100	16.08	3.825	4.057	Significant
Female	100	15.14	4.500		

Source: Filed study

An analysis of Table 4 reveals substantial disparities in “the mean awareness scores of male and female primary school teachers,” as shown by the 't' value of magnitude 4.057. Furthermore, a comparison of the average “awareness scores of male and female primary school teachers shows that men are somewhat more aware than women because they read newspapers and magazines more often and actively, have more time to listen to the news, etc.” They are well-versed in the most recent information. “On the other hand, female primary school teachers” need more time to research the most recent knowledge owing to their commitment to their families and other obligations. Due to the debate above, they need to be made aware of our accepted hypothesis.

8. Findings of the Study

1. The right to education is known by the majority of elementary school teachers (65%).
2. The understanding of the right to education is not substantially different between Government and Private Elementary Schools ($t=.532$). Therefore, it can be said that both public and private elementary school instructors are equally knowledgeable about the Right to Education Act.
3. Elementary school instructors in rural and urban areas are equally “aware of the right to education.” Thus, it can be said that primary school instructors in both urban and rural areas are equally knowledgeable of the right to education.
4. There are substantial differences between “male and female elementary school teachers in their knowledge of the Right to Education Act” ($t=4.057$). Male instructors had a mean score that



was higher (16.08) than female teachers (15.14). It follows that male elementary school instructors are better knowledgeable about the “Right to Education Act than female elementary teachers.”

9. Conclusion

The current research aims to gauge elementary school teachers' knowledge about RTE. The research is significant right now since its conclusions completely apply to the contemporary day. For the wellbeing of society and the country as a whole, elementary school teachers' knowledge of the Right to Education is of utmost significance. Several commissions, committees, and governmental and “non-governmental” organizations have endorsed the significance of the “right to education.” Teachers in primary schools who are familiar with the RTE Act would be better able to implement it. As it was discovered in the current research that teachers of rural primary schools are not very knowledgeable about “the Right to Education Act, they may participate in in-service programs, including seminars, tea-time courses, and refresher courses.” The “right to education” may be taught to female elementary school teachers via in-service and pre-service programs since it was discovered in the current research that they need to be more informed about it owing to their heavy workload. The “Right to Education Act” may be implemented as a component of programs for teacher preparation.

References

1. Shonkoff, J. P., Richter, L., van der Gaag, J., & Bhutta, Z. A. (2012). An integrated scientific framework for child survival and early childhood development. *Pediatrics*, 129(2), e460-e472.
2. Haase, M. (2008). ‘I don’t do the mothering role that lots of female teachers do’: male teachers, gender, power and social organisation. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 29(6), 597-608.
3. Patel H.P. (1958) , Basic Education and its working in the state of Bombay (A Historical Reivew), as quoted in First Survey of Research In Education by M.B. Buch, (NCERT), Delhi, (1974).
4. Tiwari, D.D(1964), Primary Education in Uttar Pradesh, as quoted in First Survey of Research in Education by M.B. Buch, (NCERT), Delhi, (1974), p.80. Buch, (NCERT), Delhi, (1974), pp.80.
5. Kamamma, G.(1969), History and Problems of Primary Education in Kerala, as quoted in First Survey of Research In Education by M.B. Buch, (NCERT), Delhi, (1974), pp.63.
6. Das (1979), A Comparative Study of Educational wastage in urban and rural areas, as quoted in Fourth Survey of Research In Education by M.B. Buch, (NCERT), Delhi Vol.II, pp.1263.
7. Bimlesh, B (1982), A study of the growth and development of the primary education in Punjab from 1947 to 1987, as quoted in Fifth Survey Of Educational Research by M.B. Buch, (NCERT), Delhi, (1988-92), Vol. II, pp.1134.
8. Baldaci, E, Maria T and Luiz D.M. (2002), More on the effectiveness of public spending on Health care and education: IMF working paper, WP/02/09
9. Rena, R (2007), Factors Affecting the Enrollment and the Retention of Student at Primary Education in Andhra Pradesh-A Village level study; Ginea University of technology Essays in Education, Vol. 22, pp. 102-112.
10. Sonal, R (2010), Issues In Education in India since 1950; Published by Jawahar Lal Nehru University, New Delhi (2010).
11. Rawal, D. M. (2023). Work life balance among female school teachers [k-12] delivering online curriculum in Noida [India] during COVID: Empirical study. *Management in Education*, 37(1), 37-45
12. Dyer, C., Sriprakash, A., Jacob, S., & Thomas, N. (2022). The Social Contract and India's Right to Education. *Development and Change*, 53(4), 888-911.