

Exploring the Awareness of RTE Act 2009 Among D. El. Ed. and B.Ed. Teacher Trainees A Study in Patiala District

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Abstract

Education is essential for both personal and societal growth, and the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009, ensures every child has access to free and compulsory education. For teacher trainees, understanding the provisions of the RTE Act is crucial for its effective implementation and for promoting inclusive education. This research highlights the importance of RTE awareness among teacher trainees, who play a key role in bringing the Act into practice within classrooms. The study explores the awareness level of teacher trainees in Patiala District regarding the RTE Act, 2009. A comprehensive analysis was conducted to assess their knowledge of key provisions, including the rights of children, the responsibilities of teachers, and the role of the education system. Using a quantitative design, the study evaluated the awareness of 160 teacher trainees (80 Diploma in Elementary Education [D.El.Ed.] and 80 Bachelor of Education [B.Ed.]) through a self-developed tool, the RTE Literacy Evaluation Tool. The findings revealed that teacher trainees have a moderate level of awareness of the RTE Act, with some differences in awareness across the groups. However, no significant differences were observed between the B.Ed. and D.El.Ed. trainees.

Keywords: Education, Awareness, RTE Act 2009, Teacher Trainees, D.El.Ed. and B.Ed.

INTRODUCTION

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, is a transformative legislation in India, ensuring free and compulsory education for all children between the ages of 6 and 14 years. This Act represents a significant step toward bridging educational disparities in the country, aiming to make education accessible to children from all social, economic, and cultural backgrounds. By recognizing education as a fundamental right, the RTE Act strives to provide every child the opportunity to learn, grow, and develop essential skills, while promoting inclusivity and reducing the educational gap between different communities.

One of the core objectives of the RTE Act is to provide quality education. It recognizes that access to education alone is not enough; the quality of that education is equally important. To achieve this, the Act emphasizes the need for well-trained educators who are not only proficient in their subject matter but also equipped with skills in pedagogy, child psychology, and classroom management. In India's diverse classrooms, teachers must be able to address a wide range of learning needs, abilities, and backgrounds. For teacher trainees, the implementation of the RTE Act highlights the importance of comprehensive

teacher training. This includes equipping teachers with knowledge about children's rights, fostering inclusive teaching practices, and developing strategies for managing a varied classroom environment. Teacher training programs must be designed to ensure that educators can effectively engage with students from different socio-economic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds, providing all students with equal opportunities to succeed.

The successful implementation of the RTE Act, however, depends not only on legislative action but also on awareness and education regarding children's rights and the significance of education. Teachers, as the key stakeholders in the education system, must be well-versed in the provisions of the Act and understand their role in promoting the right to education. It is crucial that teachers receive continuous professional development to stay updated on new educational practices and policies, ensuring that they can apply the principles of the RTE Act effectively in the classroom.

Additionally, the active involvement of local communities plays a vital role in the success of the Act. Communities must support educational initiatives, help create a conducive learning environment, and ensure that children are enrolled and regularly attending school. Awareness campaigns can educate parents and community leaders about the importance of education and the rights of children, encouraging them to actively participate in their children's education. In conclusion, while the RTE Act provides the legal framework for universal education, its success hinges on a holistic approach that includes strong teacher training, community involvement, and continuous professional development for educators. By working together, we can ensure that every child in India receives their right to quality education.

This study is significant as it aims to assess the level of awareness regarding the RTE Act, 2009, among teacher trainees in the Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.) and Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programs in Patiala District. Understanding how well teacher trainees are acquainted with the provisions of the RTE Act is essential, as it will directly influence their approach to teaching and their ability to uphold the principles of inclusive and equitable education. Teachers play a vital role in the implementation of the Act, and their awareness of its key aspects ensures that they can create an environment that adheres to the Act's mandates. Additionally, the study will compare the awareness levels between D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. trainees, providing a deeper understanding of how teacher training programs in these two distinct courses address the RTE Act. The results of this study can inform curriculum development and help in enhancing teacher training programs, ensuring that future educators are better equipped to support the goals of the RTE Act in their classrooms. Therefore, this research is crucial for improving teacher readiness, policy implementation, and the overall quality of education in line with national educational standards.

Review of Related Literature

S. Nithya (2013) investigated gender-based differences in the awareness of the RTE Act (2009) among student teachers, finding that male student teachers had better awareness than female student teachers.

Sudha Kumari and Mohammad Allam (2014) found that even after more than three years, the level of awareness remained slightly above average. They reported no significant difference in awareness between male and female primary teachers.

Nabin Thakur (2014) explored the general lack of awareness regarding the RTE Act, noting that there was no significant difference in the level of awareness between male and female trained teachers, though a significant difference was observed between urban and rural trained teachers.

Simardeep Kaur (2017) conducted a study on parental awareness of the RTE Act (2009) in Patiala city,

finding that parental awareness was low. The study indicated a need for interventions to improve awareness and increase school enrollment. While parents were aware that free elementary education was offered in government schools, many noted that schools lacked basic infrastructure, such as boundaries and adequate classrooms.

Objectives of the Study

- To assess the level of awareness of RTE Act, 2009 among teacher trainees of D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. Programs.
- To find out the difference in awareness level of RTE, 2009 between D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. teacher trainees.

Hypotheses of the Study

- Teacher trainees in Patiala District have a moderate level of awareness about the RTE Act, 2009.
- There is no significant difference in the level of awareness about the RTE Act among teacher trainees of B.Ed. and D.El.Ed.

Research Methodology

Universe of the Study and Sample

The sample for the present study consisted of 160 teacher trainees from the Patiala district, selected through random sampling. This sample included 80 trainees from the D.El.Ed. program and 80 trainees from the B.Ed. program.

Table 1: Distribution of the Sample

Total	Students	
	D.El.Ed.	B.Ed.
160	80	80

Research Tool used

A self-designed and standardized tool 'RTE Literacy Evaluation Tool', was developed to assess the level of awareness of the RTE Act, 2009, among teacher trainees. The reliability of the tool was calculated by Cronbach's alpha and it was found to be .76, suggests tool has adequate reliability. This shows that tool is functioning adequately for the research. The tool consists of 46 multiple-choice questions that teacher trainees can choose the most appropriate option out of 4 options i.e. A, B, C and D and if teacher trainee not sure about answer they can select option 'E' which is NA (not answered).

Statistical Techniques used

To achieve the objectives of the investigation, the collected data was organized in tabular form for statistical analysis. Various statistical techniques were used to analyze and interpret the data, including Mean, Mode, Median, Standard Deviation (SD), and t-test.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The present study was conducted to examine the level of awareness among D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. teacher trainees. Descriptive statistics such as mean, median, mode, and standard deviation were calculated. Additionally, T-tests were applied to find out significant difference between D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. Teacher

Trainees.

The Level of Awareness of RTE, 2009 among D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. Teacher Trainees of Patiala District

Data were collected from 160 teacher trainees of D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. in Patiala district to assess the level of awareness about RTE, 2009. To evaluate the level of awareness of RTE, 2009, the mean, median, and standard deviation were calculated first for the entire dataset, and then separately for D.El.Ed. government, D.El.Ed. private, B.Ed. government, and B.Ed. private groups. The values are presented in Table 2 and 3

Table 2: Overall Descriptive Statistics of the RTE, 2009 Awareness Score for D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. Teacher Trainees

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS	VALUES
TOTAL	3308
MODE	19
MEDIAN	20
MEAN	20.675
STANDARD DEVIATION	7.56

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for RTE, 2009 awareness among D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. teacher trainees. The total value of RTE, 2009 awareness across all data points was 3308. The median score was 20, signifying that 50% of the data points fall below this value, while the remaining 50% were above it. The mean of RTE, 2009 awareness was 20.675, indicating the central tendency of the dataset. The mode value was 19 indicating that certain specific awareness levels were more common among D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. teacher trainees. Additionally, the standard deviation was 7.56, reflecting the degree of variability or dispersion in RTE, 2009 awareness among the teacher trainees.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Smartphone Dependency among D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. Teacher Trainees in Patiala District

	D.El.Ed.	B.Ed.
Mean	20.51	20.84
Median	20	19
Mode	20	16
Standard Deviation	7.68	7.48
Sample Variance	58.96	55.91
Kurtosis	-0.04	-0.36
Skewness	-0.32	0.54
Range	35	31
Minimum	0	6
Maximum	35	37
Sum	1641	1667

Count	80	80
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Table 3 presents the mean scores of level of the RTE, 2009 awareness among D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. Teacher trainees. The mean RTE awareness for D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. teacher trainees were 20.51 and 20.84 respectively. The standard deviation of level of the RTE awareness for D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. teacher trainees were 7.68 and 7.48 respectively, indicating varying degrees of variability in level of the RTE awareness across the groups. The median values for the RTE level of awareness were 20 for D.El.Ed. and 19 for B.Ed., suggesting that 50% of the data points fall below these values, while the remaining 50% were above these among different groups. The mode values were 20 for D.El.Ed. and 16 for B.Ed. Teacher Trainees, indicating that specific awareness levels were more common among different groups.

Additionally, the range of level of awareness was wider for D.El.Ed. Teacher trainees (35) as compared to B.Ed. Teacher Trainees (31) reflecting larger variability in the RTE level of awareness within group. The skewness values suggest the asymmetry in the level of awareness of RTE: D.El.Ed. Teacher trainees exhibited a slight negative skew (-0.32), suggesting that most teacher trainees in this group have awareness levels slightly below the mean. Whereas B.Ed. Teacher trainees showed a positive skew (0.54), indicating that most teacher trainees in this group tend to have higher levels of awareness. The kurtosis values ranged from -0.04 for D.El.Ed. Teacher trainees, which suggests a distribution that is nearly normal and B.Ed. teacher trainees showed a kurtosis of -0.35, indicating a slightly flatter distribution.

Table 4: Norms for Interpretation of Level of RTE, 2009 Awareness

RANGE OF SCORES	INTERPRETATION
0-2	Unaware
3-11	Limited awareness
12-18	Familiar
19-28	Moderate awareness
29-34	High level of awareness
35-40	Very high level of awareness
41-46	Expert level of awareness

Based on the data in Table 2 the median score is 20, the mean score is 20.67, and the mode is 19. According to Table 4, this indicates that most teacher trainees demonstrate a moderate level of RTE, 2009 awareness. Both the median and mean fall within the range of 19-28, which corresponds to the "Moderate Awareness" category. Furthermore, the mode of 19 shows that this score occurs most frequently among the teacher trainees, further confirming that a substantial number of teacher trainee's exhibit the RTE awareness around this value.

Based on the descriptive statistics in Table 3, it can be concluded that teacher trainees from both the D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. programs demonstrate moderate levels of RTE awareness. D.El.Ed. Teacher trainees have a mean of 20.51, a median of 20, and a mode of 20, indicating a moderate level of awareness, with a standard deviation of 4.88, suggesting consistency within the group. B.Ed. Teacher trainees have a mean of 20.83, a median of 19, a mode of 16 and exhibit the almost same variability (standard deviation = 7.48)

placing them in the ‘marginally moderate awareness’ category due to mode of 16.

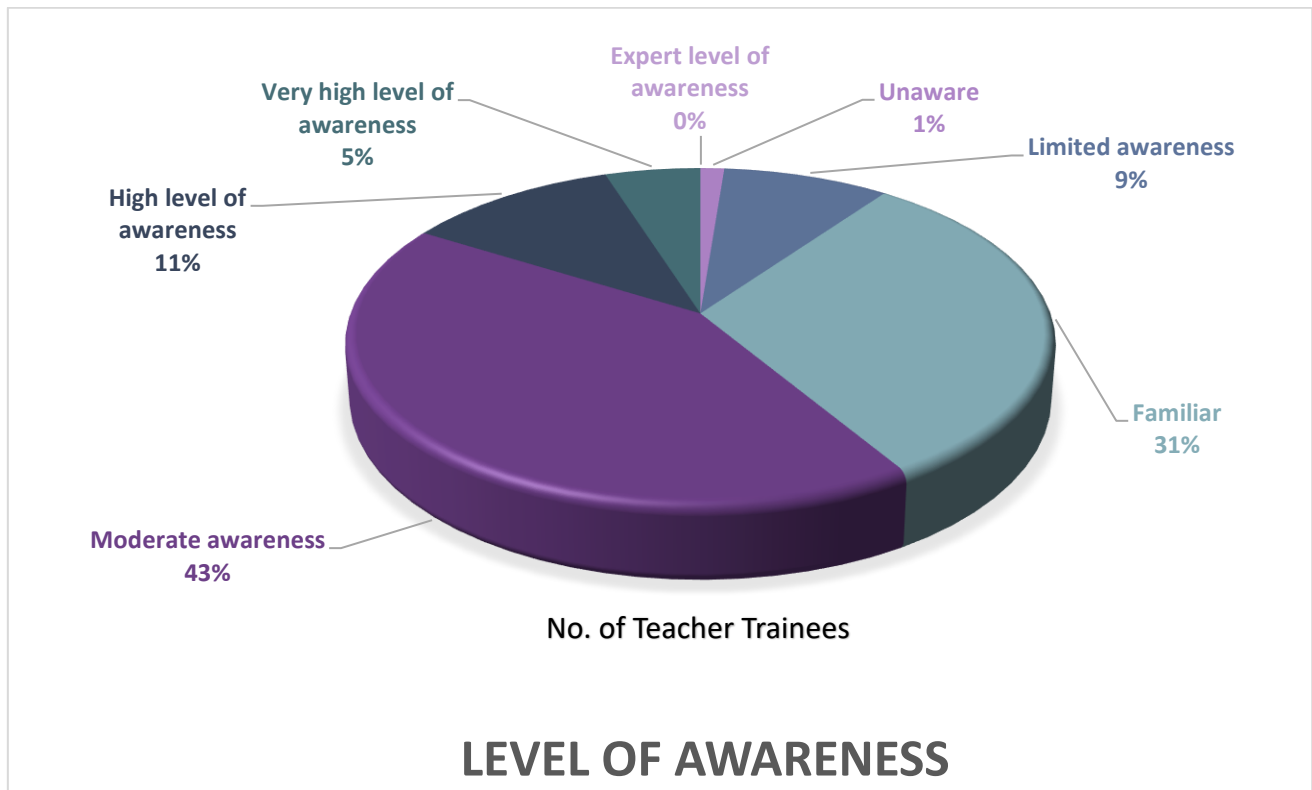


Figure 1: Distribution of Teacher Trainees according to their Level of Awareness

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of teacher trainees according to their level of awareness regarding the Right to Education (RTE) Act. The data reveals that a significant proportion, 43%, exhibit a moderate level of awareness, indicating a general understanding of the topic. Approximately 31% of teacher trainees fall into the 'Familiar' category, suggesting that these individuals are acquainted with the general concept of the RTE Act, including basic details such as the provision of free education, but lack a comprehensive understanding of the RTE 2009. Around 11% of teacher trainees demonstrate a 'High Level of Awareness,' indicating a thorough grasp of the details of the RTE Act. Additionally, 5% of teacher trainees fall into the 'Very High Level of Awareness' category, which signifies a comprehensive understanding of the RTE Act, including the ability to discuss its implementation and associated challenges. Furthermore, 9% of trainees have 'Limited Awareness,' meaning they may have heard of the RTE Act but are unfamiliar with most of its specifics. Only 1% of teacher trainees are classified as 'Unaware,' indicating that they have minimal or no awareness of the RTE Act. Notably, no teacher trainees were found to have an 'Expert Level of Awareness,' which would imply an in-depth, expert-level understanding of the RTE Act. This distribution underscores the varying degrees of awareness among teacher trainees, with the majority exhibiting moderate awareness of the RTE Act.

So, based on the data, the median score is 20, the mean score is 20.67, and the mode is 19. This indicates that most teacher trainees demonstrate a moderate level of RTE, 2009 awareness. Both the median and mean fall within the range of 19-28, which corresponds to the "Moderate Awareness" category.

Therefore, the hypothesis "Teacher trainees in Patiala District have a moderate level of awareness about the RTE Act, 2009." is accepted

The RTE, 2009 Awareness between D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. Teacher Trainees

The sample of 80 D.El.Ed. and 80 B.Ed. Teacher Trainees was taken for the study. To find out the significance of difference in Smartphone usage between D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. students, T- test was applied. The values are as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: RTE, 2009 Awareness between D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. Students

	COURSE	N	MEAN	SD	t- value	df	Level of Significance	Interpretation
Smartphone Usage	D.El.Ed.	80	20.51	7.68	-0.271	158	0.05	Not Significant
	B.Ed.	80	20.83	7.48				

Table 5 shows that the mean scores for RTE, 2009 awareness among D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. teacher trainee were 20.51 and 20.83 respectively. The standard deviations for RTE awareness were calculated as 7.68 for D.El.Ed. and 7.48 for B.Ed. The calculated t-value was -0.271, with 158 degrees of freedom. This value is not significant at the 0.05 level of significance, as the critical value of t at the 0.05 level is 1.97. Since the calculated t-value (1.8392) is less than the critical t-value (1.9751), the null hypothesis fails to be rejected at the 0.05 significance level for a two-tailed test. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the level of awareness about the RTE Act among teacher trainees of B.Ed. and D.El.Ed.

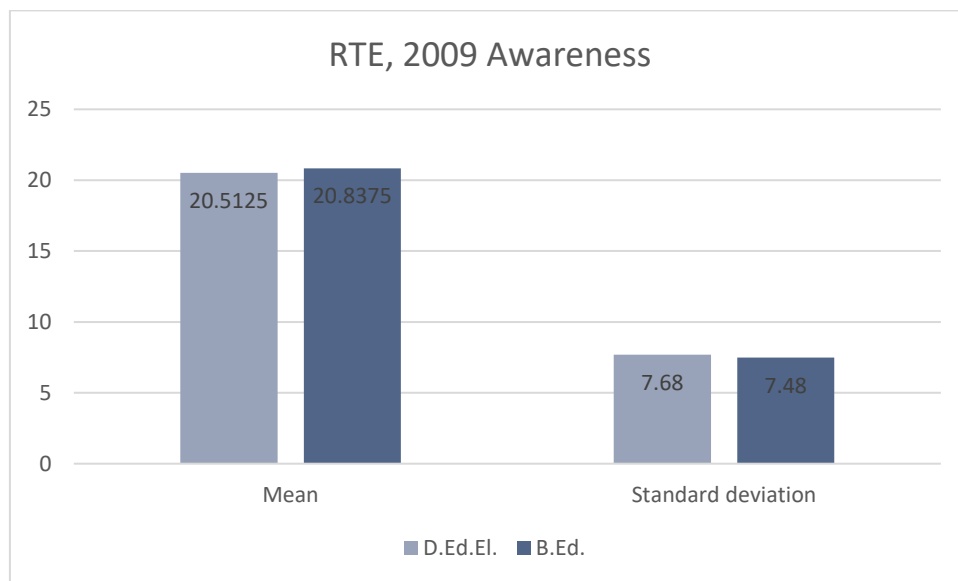


Figure 2: Comparison of RTE, 2009 Awareness between D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. Teacher Trainees

Figure 2 presents a comparison between the mean and standard deviation of RTE, 2009 awareness for D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. teacher trainees. The mean RTE awareness scores for D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. Teacher trainees were 20.51 and 20.83, respectively, while the standard deviations were 7.68 and 7.48, respectively. The graph indicates that there is minimal difference between the RTE awareness of D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. teacher trainees. Therefore, the difference in RTE awareness between D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. teacher trainees is not statistically significant.

Hence, the null hypothesis “There is no significant difference in the level of awareness about the RTE Act

among teacher trainees of B.Ed. and D.El.Ed.” is accepted.

Findings of the Study

The objective of the present study is to investigate the level of awareness regarding the Right to Education (RTE) Act among teacher trainees in the Patiala district. Additionally, the study seeks to assess the awareness of the RTE 2009 among these trainees, with comparisons drawn between different course types, specifically D.El.Ed. and B.Ed. On the basis of the analysis and interpretation of the collected data, the following conclusions are drawn:

- Teacher trainees in Patiala District have a moderate level of awareness about the RTE Act, 2009.
- There is no significant difference in the level of awareness about the RTE Act among teacher trainees of B.Ed. and D.El.Ed.

Educational Implications

- The findings of the study may provide valuable insights into the current level of awareness of the RTE Act, 2009 among teacher trainees in Patiala District, highlighting areas where training programs can be strengthened.
- The study’s findings suggest that teacher training institutions may need to revise their curricula to include more comprehensive and focused content on the RTE Act, ensuring that all teacher trainees, regardless of their course or institution, have a deeper understanding of the Act.
- The findings may inspire educational policymakers to assess and modify teacher training practices to integrate RTE awareness more effectively into teacher preparation programs, fostering better-equipped educators for the future.

Conclusion

The study on the awareness of the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 among teacher trainees in Patiala district reveals that these trainees possess a moderate level of understanding regarding the Act. Furthermore, the analysis indicates that there is no significant difference in the level of awareness between trainees enrolled in the B.Ed. and D.El.Ed. courses. This suggests that both groups have similar exposure to the RTE Act, despite their different course structures. The findings highlight the need for further emphasis on the RTE Act within teacher training programs to enhance awareness and understanding among all teacher trainees.

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