

Opinion of the B.Ed. Students about Teacher Eligibility Test (TET)

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Abstract

The implementation of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 requires the recruitment of a large number of teachers across the country in a time-bound manner. It is, therefore, necessary to ensure that persons recruited as teachers possess the essential aptitude and ability to meet the challenges of teaching at the school level. The National Council for Teacher Education had, therefore, directed that the essential qualifications for a person to be eligible for appointment as teacher in any of the schools referred to in clause (n) of section 2 of the RTE Act will be that he/she should pass the Teacher Eligibility Test. In the present study, an opinion of B.Ed. students from self-financed and Government colleges has been taken to see what is their view about the Teacher Eligibility Test. The study reveals that the majority of the B.Ed. students want TET be made compulsory, for this will help in controlling the quality of teachers in the schools and will ensure appointment of competent teacher.

The crucial role of universal elementary education for strengthening the social fabric of democracy through provision of equal opportunities to all has been accepted since inception of our republic. The directive principle of state policy enumerated in our Constitution lays down that the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all

children up to the age of fourteen years. As evident, even after 60 years, universal elementary education remains a distant dream. Despite high enrolment rates of approximately 95% as per Annual State of Education Report (ASER, 2009), 52.8% of children studying in 5th grade are lacking the reading skill expected in 2nd grade. The idea of 'Right

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to Education' as a fundamental right was hammering the minds of several social reformers and educationists. Article '21 A' inserted in Constitution by 86th amendment in 2002 provides for free and compulsory education for all children in the age group of 6 to 14 years as a fundamental right. Consequently The 'Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education' bill was proposed to be enacted which seeks to provide that child has right to be provided full time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school which satisfies certain essential norms and standards.

In translating the 86th amendment into action the draft bill of 2005 was revised and it became an Act in 2009, and India became one of the countries to make education a fundamental right. The 'Right to education has come into force from April 1, 2010. Some of the observations about Right to Education are as follows:

The World Bank education specialist for India Sam Carlson has observed:

"The RTE is the first legislation in the world that puts the responsibility of ensuring enrolment, attendance and completion on government. It is parent's responsibility to send the children to schools in the U.S. and other countries".

The Indian representative of UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) Karin Hulsof said:

"It serves as a building block to ensure that every child has the right to guaranteed quality elementary education. The state, with the help of families and communities, has a legal obligation to fulfill this duty".

The implementation of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 requires the recruitment of a large number of teachers across the country in a time-bound manner. In spite of the enormity of the task, it is desirable to ensure that quality requirement for recruitment of teachers is not diluted at any cost. It is, therefore, necessary to ensure that persons recruited as teachers possess the essential aptitude and ability to meet the challenges of teaching at the primary and upper primary level. In accordance with the provisions of sub-section (1) of Section 23 of the RTE Act, the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) had vide Notification dated 23rd August, 2010 and 29th July 2011, laid down the minimum qualifications for a person to be eligible for appointment as a teacher in Classes I to VIII. It had been inter alia provided that one of the essential qualifications for a person to be eligible for appointment as a teacher in any of the schools referred to in clause (n) of section 2 of the RTE Act is that he/ she should pass the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) which will be conducted by the appropriate Government in accordance with the Guidelines framed by the NCTE.

The rationale for including the TET as a minimum qualification for a person to be eligible for appointment as a teacher are:

- (i) It would bring national standards and benchmark of teacher quality in the recruitment process.
- (ii) It would induce teacher education institutions and students from these institutions to further improve their performance standards.

- (iii) It would send a positive signal to all stakeholders that the Government lays special emphasis on teacher quality.

The direct benefit of TET would be that teachers will be recruited at the national level and there will be uniformity in the appointment of qualified teachers as well. Qualifying the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) is now mandatory for all existing and aspiring primary and middle school teachers in the country, with the passing of the Right to Education Act.

Though many researches have been conducted in the field of National Education Policies, Right to Education and other amendments the topic of Teacher Eligibility Test is altogether new. And, therefore, the researchers have tried to take the opinion of the B.Ed. students from both, self-financed and Government colleges to see what

they have to say about the Teacher Eligibility Test. Do they feel that TET should be made compulsory? Will it help in appointing qualified teachers and improving the quality of education?

Objectives of the study

1. To study the opinion of the students of government and self-financed B.Ed. colleges towards TET.
2. To compare the opinion of the students of government and self-financed B.Ed. colleges towards TET.

The Population and the Samples

The population of the present study is 'the students of B.Ed. training colleges' of the Allahabad city. From the population, a 'purposive' sample of 200 students has been drawn from Kali Prasad Training College, S.S. Khanna Degree College and Ewing Christian College of Allahabad city which is diagrammatically represented in Fig. 1.

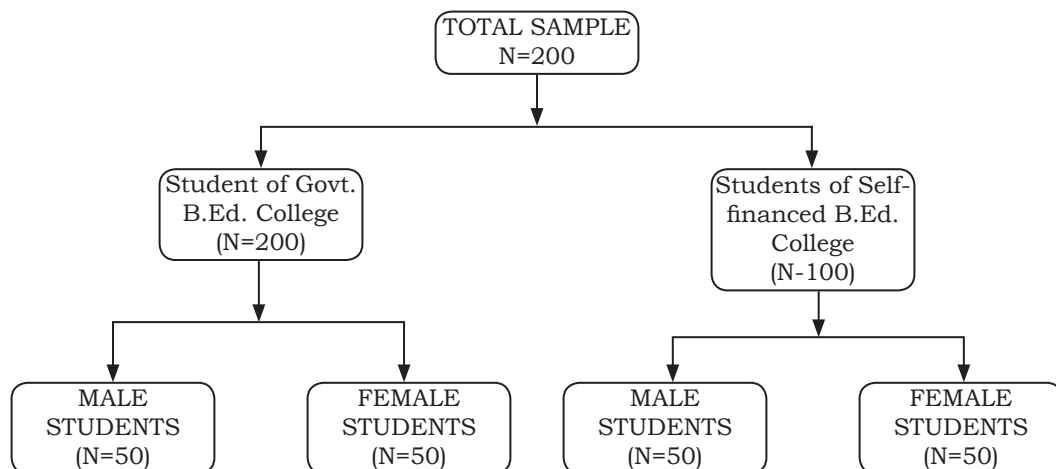


Figure 1

Tool

In the present study a self constructed tool, an 'Opinionnaire Related to TET' has been used. It is a three-point scale having 20 statements. The respondents

have to give their views in the form of agree, undecided, and disagree.

Statistical Method

The analysis of the present study is done by using 'Percentage Analysis'

Table 1
Responses of the B.Ed. students of the Self-financed and Government Colleges (in percentage)

Item No.	Statement	Reaction Groups					
		Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
		Self-financed	Govt.	Self-financed	Govt.	Self-financed	Govt.
1	Candidate's aptitude, experience and previous academic background are sufficient criteria for selection of teachers at the school level.	20	22	14	10	66	68
2	Having a B.Ed. degree should be enough to become school teachers.	30	42	09	08	61	50
3	There should be a compulsory eligibility test for school teachers.	73	58	07	07	20	35
4	B.Ed. entrance tests conducted on the level of training institute and states are sufficient for assessing performance of prospective teachers.	49	81	06	04	45	15
5	TET would bring national standards and benchmark of teacher quality in the recruitment process.	85	82	9	10	6	8
6	TET would ensure appointment of competent teachers.	100	98	0	2	0	0
7	TET will be able to check those incompetent people teachers who got their B.Ed. degree through unfair means.	93	83	02	02	05	22

8	TET would induce teacher-training institutes and students-teachers to further improve their performance standards.	88	93	02	01	10	06
9	TET might be another burden on the minds of the teaching aspirants.	10	7	5	3	85	90
10	TET would increase frustration among teaching aspirants.	9	6	01	00	90	94
11	TET would encourage unhealthy competition	11	13	01	02	88	85
12	TET should be conducted once in a year.	75	78	5	01	20	21
13	There should be no bar on number of attempts in TET.	25	33	04	02	71	65
14	There should be an age limit for appearing in TET.	51	51	04	07	45	42
15	The validity period of TET qualifying certificate should be for seven years.	86	96	01	00	13	04
16	Multiple-choice questions cannot adequately assess teacher's eligibility.	08	04	01	00	91	96
17	TET should also consist of essay type questions along with objective type questions.	64	68	04	03	32	29
18	TET should consist of only objective type questions.	96	98	4	2	0	0
19	TET should also include questions from educational technology, ICT, logic, reasoning and general awareness.	76	83	18	10	6	7
20	Instead of TET there should be a teacher recruitment test which will ensure employment to the B.Ed degree holders.	98	96	2	4	0	0

Finding and Discussion

Table 1 reveals that 66 per cent B.Ed. students belonging to the Self-

financed colleges disagree while only 20 per cent agree with the statement no. 1. From the Government colleges

68 per cent B.Ed. students disagree while 22 per cent agree with the statement no.1. This means that the majority of the B.Ed. students are of the opinion that candidate's aptitude, experience and previous academic background are not sufficient criteria for selection of teachers. The reason behind this may be that as now a days students are scoring high percentages through unfair means and there is so much of favoritism that one cannot trust the genuineness of these criteria.

Again the Table 1 shows that 61 per cent B.Ed. students belonging to Self-financed colleges and 50 per cent B.Ed. students belonging to Government Colleges disagree with statement no. 2. 73 per cent B.Ed. students belonging to Self financed colleges and 58 per cent B.Ed. students belonging to Government colleges agree with statement no. 3. And 49 per cent B.Ed. students from Self financed colleges and 81 per cent B.Ed. students from Government colleges agree with statement no. 4 This means that majority of the B.Ed. students are of the opinion that having a B.Ed. degree is not enough for becoming a school teacher and that there should be a Compulsory Teacher Eligibility Test. The Self financed college B.Ed. students are found to be more in favour of TET than the Government College B.Ed. students. The reason behind this may be that the merit of the B.Ed. students being admitted in the Government colleges is much higher than those being admitted in the Self financed colleges, and therefore, they believe that B.Ed. entrance tests conducted at the level of training institutes are sufficient for

assessing performance of prospective teachers.

According to Table 1 more than 80 per cent B.Ed. students from both self-financed and Government colleges gave favourable responses for statement no. 5, 6 and 7. This means that majority of the B.Ed. students are of the opinion that TET would bring national standards and benchmark of teacher quality in the recruitment process and would ensure appointment of competent teachers. It will also be able to check those incompetent student teachers who got their B.Ed. degree through unfair means. The finding is supported by Niraj Priya (2010) who reported that NET Exam should be made compulsory for quality control of teachers at the higher level.

Again Table 1 depicts that more than 85 per cent B.Ed. students from both the colleges have given positive response for statement no. 8. But for statement no. 9, 10 and 11 more than 85 per cent B.Ed. students from both the colleges disagree. This shows that majority of the B.Ed. students do not believe that TET would be any kind of a burden on them or it would increase frustration among them. It would also not encourage unhealthy competition among those aspiring for teaching profession. Instead, most of them believe that TET will induce teacher training institutes and student teachers to further improve their performance standards.

Table 1 shows that more than 75 per cent B.Ed. students from both, Self financed and Government Colleges agree the statement no 12 that TET should be conducted once in a year.

Although more than 65 per cent of the students from both the college disagree with the statement no. 13 that there should be no bar on number of attempts in TET, 50 per cent B.Ed. students wants that there should be age limit for appearing in TET (statement no. 14).

Table 1 also reveals that 85 per cent B.Ed. students from both the colleges agree with the statement no 15 that the validity period of TET qualifying certificate should be for seven years.

It is observed from the Table 1 that more than 90 per cent B.Ed students from both Self-financed and Government colleges disagree with the statement no. 16 that multiple choice questions cannot adequately assess teachers' knowledge.

About the type of question to be included in the TET exam, Table 1 reveals that 60 per cent B.Ed. students from both the colleges said that it should include both essay and objective type questions. But more then 96 per cent B.Ed. students said that like the NET exam, TET should also include only objective type questions.(statement no.17,18) The reason behind this is that objective type tests are more fair and reliable than subjective type tests.

Table 1 also shows, that more than 75 per cent B.Ed. students said that questions from Educational Technology, ICT, logic, reasoning and general awareness should also be included in the TET test. (Statement no.19)

Lastly, Table 1 shows that nearly all the B.Ed. students said that instead of TET there should be a teacher

recruitment test which will ensure employment to the B.Ed. degree holders.

Conclusions

On the basis of the findings it can be concluded that the B.Ed students of Self-financed colleges and Government colleges do not differ much in their opinion on the statements given in Table 1, though the B.Ed. students of Self-financed colleges are more in favour of the Teacher Eligibility Test than the students of Government colleges. They all believe that it will check those incompetent teachers who have scored high in the B.Ed. exam through unfair means. They think that this would bring national standards of teacher quality in the recruitment process thus ensuring appointments of competent teachers. The majority of students doesn't take it as a burden but instead believe that it will help them in improving their performance. They prefer objective type questions more than essay type questions. They also want that questions from Educational Technology, ICT, logic, reasoning and general awareness should also be included in the TET. Lastly they are of the view that instead of Teacher Eligibility Test, there should be Teacher Recruitment Test which will ensure employment to the B.Ed. degree holders. The findings of the study conveys a very strong message to the Government that it should make Teacher Eligibility Test compulsory in all the states, for, only this will ensure that each child gets quality education from competent teachers.

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