

AWARENESS OF RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT AMONG THE COLLEGE STUDENTS OF PERIYAR E.V.R. COLLEGE, TIRUCHIRAPPALLI

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Abstract: The Right to Information refers to the right of every citizen of the state to access information under the control of public authorities consistent with public interest. The main objective of providing information is not only to promote openness, transparency and accountability in administration but also to ensure participation of people in all the matters related to Governance. This paper examines the awareness of information act among the college students.

Keywords: transparency, accountability, democratic governance, fundamental human right.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Right to information Act 2005 in India is one of the most advanced information legislation in the world. The Act is based on the principle that all government information is the property of people. Due to this, democracy has taken to gross root level and it is a step for ensuring the participation common people in governance in the country. RTI refers to the right of every citizen to access information held by or under the control of public authorities. It is necessary that people should know about what is happening in their society. If the actions of the ruling government are hidden then the people cannot take a meaningful part in the affairs of the society. Access to information not only promotes openness, transparency and accountability in administration, but also facilities active participation of people in democratic governance process.

In this direction the union government recently enacted the Freedom of Information Act 2002. Despite the right to information bill having received presidential approval seven months ago, citizens may have to wait some time, before they can exercise their right to access government files, as the concerned authorities are yet to set a timeframe for framing the rules. Some states like Goa, Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Delhi and Maharashtra have also passed Right to information laws; however there is criticism that the working has not been satisfactory.

Objective of the Study:

The primary objective of the study is to study the awareness about RTI Act among college students and to offer valid suggestions based on the study.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research study is descriptive survey method with the help of both primary and secondary data. Primary data collected through structured questionnaire. Secondary data has been collected from published and unpublished reports, records, publications, books and journals.

Sample:

A sample comprised 100 college students’ studying in Periyar EVR College in Tiruchirappalli city were selected by following stratified random sampling method and med simple percentage analysis.

Analysis and Interpretation:

The collected data was distributed among various tables and them mean standard deviation of subgroups were measured the analysis and interpretation have given.

Table 1: Profile of the Respondents

Profile	Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Age	Below 20	80	80
	Above 20	20	20
Gender	Male	50	50
	Female	50	50
Qualification	BA	30	30
	B.Sc.	60	60
	B.com	10	10
Locality	Rural	98	98
	Semi Urban	20	20
	Urban	12	12
Parent’ s Income (Rs.)	Less than 50000	72	72
	50000-100000	16	16
	100000-200000	8	8
	Above 200000	4	4

Source: Primary Data

The above table 1 show that the general profile of the respondents, the majority of the respondent belongs to the age group of below 20 (80%) and remaining 20% of the respondent belongs to the age group of above 20 categories.

50 percent of the respondents are male and remaining 50 percent of the respondents are female. 30 percent of the respondents are B.A. students. The majority of the respondents are B.Sc. students (60%) and 10% of the respondents are B.Com. students.

The majority of the respondents (68%) are from rural area and remaining 20% of the respondents are from semi urban area. Below 12% of the respondents are from urban mass area.

It may be observed from the above table that 72 per cent of the respondent’s family income range is below Rs. 50,000-1, 00,000. 8 per cent of the respondents are having an income in the range of Rs. 1, 00,000-2, 00,000. Remaining 4 per cent of the respondents are having an income of Rs. 2, 00,000 and above.

Table 2: Awareness about RTI

Profile	Category	No .of Respondents	Percentage
Awareness about RTI	Yes	87	87
	No	13	13
	Total	100	100
What is RTI	Able to say	87	87
	Not able to say	13	13
	No comments	0	0
	Total	100	100
Source of Information	News paper	64	64
	T V	18	18
	Teachers	5	5
	Public	13	13
	Total	100	100
Subject relates to RTI	Yes	82	82
	No	18	18
	Total	100	100

Teacher discussed about RTI in classroom	Yes	48	48
	No	52	52
	Total	100	100
Do you aware about RTI	Yes	80	80
	No	20	20
	Total	100	100
Level of awareness	Very high	15	15
	High	25	25
	Average	20	20
	Below average	40	40
	Low	20	20
	Total	100	100
Do you use RTI	Yes	85	85
	No	15	15
	Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the awareness about RTI among the respondents. Majority of the respondents (87%) have RTI awareness. Remaining 13 per cent of the respondents do not have awareness about RTI.

The above table clearly shows that 87 per cent of the respondents were able to say about RTI and remaining 13 per cent of the respondents were not able to say. Zero percent of the respondents have no comments.

The above table shows that source of information for the respondents. Out of 100 respondents, 64 per cent of the respondents have their source of information as Newspaper, 18 percent as TV, 5 per cent as Teachers and 13 per cent as Public.

The above table shows the subject relates to RTI. 82 per cent of the respondents are saying yes and remaining 18 per cent of the respondents are saying no.

The above table clearly shows that out of 100 respondents, 48 students are saying yes and remaining 52 students are saying no. This is represented with help in classroom.

The above table shows the percentage of respondents having excellent awareness 80 per cent of the respondents yes below 20 per cent of the respondents no.

The above table shows that level of awareness. 15 per cent level of awareness very high. 25 per cent of respondents are having accepted. 20 per cent of respondents average level. Below 40 per cent of respondent's average level and remaining 20 per cent low level

The above table shows that usage of RTI. Majority of respondents (85%) use RTI and remaining 15% have not used RTI.

Table 3: Do you know the process of RTI

Process of RTI	No .of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	75	75
No	25	25
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 3 shows about the process of RTI. Majority of respondents 75% knows the process of RTI and remaining 25% of respondents do not know about RTI among the 100 respondents.

Table 4: Do you know Your College Information Officer

Your College Information Officer	No .of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	90	90
No	10	10
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 4 shows that 90 per cent of the respondents are in 'Yes' category and remaining 10 per cent are in 'No' category.

Table 5: Who is College Information Officer

Who is College Information Officer	No .of Respondents	Percentage
Principal	40	40
Assigned Faculty	20	20
NSS Officer	30	30
HOD	10	10
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 5 shows about the college information officer. 40 per cent of respondents in RTI as Principal, 20 per cent are for other faculty member 30 per cent for NSS officer and remaining 10 per cent of respondents for HOD.

Table 6: How to be explained

How to be explained	No .of Respondents	Percentage
By class teacher	40	40
By Meeting	20	20
By experts	30	30
By notice	10	10
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 6 shows the How to be explained for the no. of respondents out of 100 respondents, 40 per cent of the respondents have their how to be explained by class teacher, 20 per cent as meeting, 30 per cent as experts, 10 per cent as notice.

3. FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

This paper provides a bird's eye view of the project report with Major findings, Suggestions and Conclusion.

Findings:

The following are the Major findings of the project Report:

- Majority of respondents (80%) belongs to the age group of below 25
- Majority of the respondents (50%) are Male
- Majority of the respondents (60%) are B.Sc., students
- Most of the respondents (98%) are from rural areas
- 16% percent of the respondents have Family Income
- Majority of the respondents (87%) have RTI awareness
- Most of the respondents (87%) were able to say in RTI
- Out of 100 respondents, 64% of the respondents have their source of information of newspaper
- 82% of the respondents are saying RTI
- Majority of respondents (52%) students discuss in classroom are saying no in RTI
- Most of the excellent awareness (80%) of the respondents
- Majority of respondents (85%) use RTI
- Most of the respondents (33%) of respondents are family
- Majority of respondents (75%) know the process of RTI
- 90% of the respondents are in 'Yes' category
- Out of 100 respondents, (40%) respondents have their how to be explained by class teacher
- The use of RTI in future among the respondents (85%) RTI uses

Suggestions:

Right to Information Act is one of the emerging Act which provides easy of information from government officials. Hence, it should be informed to all the part of the society.

Awareness about RTI among the college students is one of the important aspects of the educational system.

College students are not aware about the RTI due to lack of interest. Therefore, RTI should be a part of the curriculum of all the under graduate programmes.

Teachers in the Educational Institutions are responsible to promote the awareness of the RTI among the college students. Hence, the Educational institutions should organised a special awareness programme to the college teachers.

Every educational institution must display the RTI Information Board on the inner front side, which shall easy to reach the students as well as the needed persons.

Students themselves must be actively participating in the awareness programme of RTI and its related programmes.

Conclusion:

Right to Information Act is one of the most powerful weapons to the citizen of the country which make the transparent administration and democracy. If the Act must be effective and more useful, it should be properly utilized and enforced in a systematic manner. As a student community understand this Act in a detailed manner which help to guide their parents, relatives and villagers. With the help of this Act, anyone can claim any kind of information from Rastrabathi Bhavan to Panchayat Union Office. To create awareness about the RTI Act among the college students is one of the important efforts of the educational system. Hence, our educational system must provide an opportunity to include the RTI Act as a compulsory subject to all the undergraduate courses in colleges.

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