

3

Aptitude Test in the Entrance Examination of Teacher Education Programme: a Pre-requisite

Pratima Singh*

Kalpana Gupta*

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan of the Indian government paved the way for opening countless primary schools to provide education to all children up to 10 years. This initiative has resulted into a high demand of teachers to teach in these schools. After the enforcement of recommendations of Sixth Pay Commission, salaries of teachers have improved, better salaries and better chances of placement in government jobs has pulled attention of students towards teaching profession. Therefore students' interest has increased in BTC/B.Ed. courses which open the gateway for government jobs. This is undoubtedly a matter to be pleased. But if we look at the other side of the coin we find that the students pursuing these teacher training programmes or who aspire to do B.Ed., actually do not possess the right aptitude for teaching profession. Either they enter in this profession by force or by the charm of job security and good salaries or may be due to

rejection or inadequate qualification for other professional courses. Lack of correct aptitude ultimately results in their unsatisfactory performance, injustice with their students and injustice with the noble profession of teaching.

Aptitude Test

Usually the terms intelligence, ability, and aptitude are used synonymously to refer to behaviour that is used to predict future learning or performance. However, slight differences exist between these terms and therefore significant difference lies in the specific tests which are designed to measure these attributes.

Aptitude is not knowledge, understanding, learned or acquired abilities (skills) or attitude. It refers to one of many different characteristics which can be independent of each other, such as aptitude for military flight, air traffic control or computer

* Assistant Professors, Dayalbagh Education Institute, Agra

programming. Aptitudes may be physical or mental. An aptitude is a component of a competency to do a certain kind of work at a certain level, which can also be considered 'talent'. Aptitude is different from achievement which represents knowledge or ability that is gained or acquired.

Under the larger umbrella of psychological tests, ability tests assess what a person is capable of doing. Abilities are then further broken down into two areas:

1. **Achievements** – What has the individual learned to do in the past?
2. **Aptitudes** – What can the individual learn or develop in the future?

Like intelligence tests, aptitude tests measure a student's overall performance across a broad range of mental capabilities. Aptitude tests include items which measure more specialised abilities of an individual. Aptitude tests are tests of special abilities that are required in specific jobs, which help to predict aptitude for a particular job or type of training. Aptitude tests are often used for weighing occupational success.

Understanding a person's development potential for the future, however, offers some exciting opportunities to find the best candidates for organisation's long-term well-being. Researchers suggest that aptitude tests are valid for virtually all jobs. In fact, it is often said that one of the most important applications of such

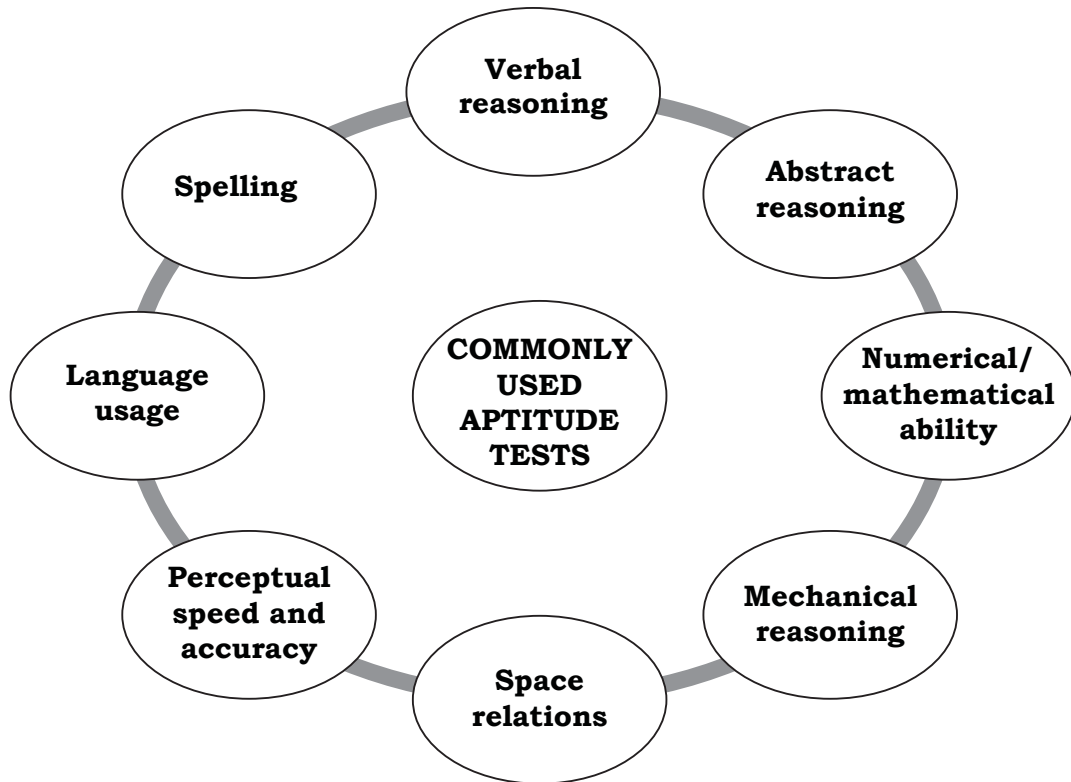
tests is their ability to predict student achievement and future outcomes (Brown, Reynolds, and Whitaker, 1999; Weiss and Prifitera, 1995).

What is the Value of Aptitude Testing?

- They are brilliant predictors of future academic accomplishment.
- They provide ways of comparing one's performance with others in the same circumstances.
- They provide a profile of strengths and weaknesses.
- They evaluate differences among individuals.
- They help in discovering latent talents in candidates, and thus helps in improving their educational opportunities.
- They are important tools for working with children with special needs.
- They offer efficient, objective comparisons.
- They help 'screen in' aptitudes for key competency areas.
- They are easy and cost-effective.
- They help in revealing the natural talents, strengths and limitations.

Aptitude Test in Teacher Education Programme: present scenario

The prediction of scholastic achievement and future occupational accomplishment remains a common practice in education as a means for guiding decisions related to student



selection, diagnosis and placement. In present times much of our recruitment and development assessment focuses on achievement. What education does the candidate have? What skills does he/she possess? What training has he/she completed? What has he/she accomplished? What is his/her performance record?

A variety of variables have been linked to scholastic achievement; including cognitive ability, academic skills/readiness, language abilities, motor skills, behavioural-emotional functioning, achievement motivation, peer relationships and student-teacher relationships (Tramontana, Hooper,

and Selzer, 1988) in the admission procedures of various higher education courses like engineering courses, medical courses, courses for armed forces. But most aptitude tests have items which measure only cognitive ability and which are easily found in intelligence tests.

As per the teaching profession is concerned, B.Ed. entrance examination is conducted by state governments at state level in some of the states whereas in many states the universities organise their entrance exam separately. There are different provisions regarding the selection criteria. A comparison of B.Ed.

entrance examination in some of the states/universities is shown in the table given below. The table also shows the component of aptitude test in their examination pattern.

From a careful perusal of the study of entrance exam pattern for the B.Ed. course in some of the states or universities, it is evident that aptitude tests are a part of examination, only in some of the states/universities, having very less weightage. Moreover

it is not mandatory to pass this test. It implies that a candidate scoring very low or may be zero in teaching aptitude section, can pass the entrance examination if he/she scores well in other sections which are subject-based. And he/she gets admission in teacher training courses. As a result, candidates having no aptitude for teaching become teachers, which is sheer injustice with the future of the students and such candidates

S. No.	Name of State/ University	Level of Exam	Components of Written Exam	Components of Teaching Aptitude
1.	Uttar Pradesh	Common Entrance Examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General knowledge and current affairs • Subject based 	--
2.	Maharashtra	Common Entrance Examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Ability • Teacher Aptitude • General Knowledge 	Teacher Aptitude
3.	Rajasthan	Pre-Teacher Education Test (PTET)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Ability • Teaching Attitude and Aptitude Test • General Awareness and Language Proficiency 	Teaching Attitude and Aptitude Test
4.	Dayalbagh Educational Institute (DEI)	University level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General knowledge • Subject Competence (any two) 	--
5.	Delhi University	University level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Awareness • Languages and/or Science question paper 	--
6.	IGNOU	University level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General knowledge • Subject Competence (any one) 	Educational Awareness Teaching-Learning and the School

themselves remain unsatisfied and uninterested in teaching profession.

The task of a teacher does not only demand mastery over the content. A teacher needs to be well conversant in the art of teaching, guiding and motivating the students for various aspects of life and imbibe humanistic values in them. Perhaps this thought needs more attention on the part of administrators and policy framers in education sector especially because teacher is said to be the nation builder. He/she holds the responsibility of educating generation after generation and a nation cannot progress in real sense unless we are not selecting competent and deserving teachers in whose hands we leave our future generations. All the other index and aspects of development remain futile and ivory towers if teachers of that nation fail to make its citizens worthy human beings.

It is important to note that any assessment of children's potential strengths and/or weaknesses should consider multiple inputs and sources. There is urgent need to select those candidates for teaching who have the right teaching aptitude. It is suggested that the first section in the written exam should be related to teaching aptitude and if a candidate qualifies it; then only the remaining sections of the written test should be evaluated. Or the aptitude test can be made a qualifying paper in the entrance procedure. In this concern NCTE can play a significant role by recommending aptitude test as a qualifying or mandatory component of entrance examination for all teacher education courses. This system may prove beneficial in the selection of worthy candidates for the world of teaching and learning.

REFERENCES

- KIRKUP, CATHERINE, AND REBECCA WHEATER. 2010. 'Use of an Aptitude Test in University Entrance: A Validity Study'. *BIS Research Paper*. No. 26, September 2010
www.bis.gov.uk
- <http://entrance-exam.net/admission-procedure-for-b-ed-course-in-maharashtra/#ixzz2e2TZoxpD>
- http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMM_43.htm#sthash.7Tjp1fuY.dpuf
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aptitude>
- <http://www.htcampus.com/article/ignous-bachelor-of-education-bed-entrance-test-on-18th-august-2013-4281/>
- <http://www.newstrackindia.com/newsdetails/2013/5/7/296-Delhi-University-B-Ed-admission-Schedule-2013-issued.html>
- http://www.dei.ac.in/dei/files/admission/2013-2014/Prospectus_DEI_13-14.pdf
- <http://cie.du.ac.in/admission/BED/Final%20B.Ed.%20Prospectus%202013.pdf>

<http://www.ignou.ac.in/upload/Announcement/Prospectus%20BED%202013%20English.pdf>

http://www.jbideal.com/2011/04/mh_cet_maharashtra_b_ed_entrance_syllabus_pattern_exam_date.html

MACKLEM, GAYLE L. *Measuring Aptitude*. — Practical Assessment. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED328608...>

UP B.Ed. Entrance Exam Exam Details <http://educationcareer.in/up-b-ed-entrance-exam-15561.html#ixzz2e00yoo54>