



Perceived Value of B.Ed. Degrees and Salary Expectations among Undergraduates in Bargarh District of Odisha

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates how Odisha's undergraduate students see Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degrees and what kind of income they expect to receive. Its goal is to comprehend how undergraduates perceive the worth of a B.Ed. and how these views affect their expectations for compensation and career choices. With 150 undergraduate participants from a range of academic streams (science, arts, and commerce) in both urban and rural Odisha, the study uses a survey approach. The participants are chosen by cluster sampling. The research findings will offer insightful information about Odisha's undergraduates' desired careers and the part B.Ed. degrees play in their decision-making. Additionally, it can guide the creation of educational policies and programs related to teacher education.

KEY WORD: VALUE, EXPECTATION, B. ED, UNDERGRADUATES

INTRODUCTION

The Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree is an academic qualification that gives people the abilities and information needed to pursue professions in education. For educators looking to work in both public and private educational institutions in India, a B.Ed. degree must be earned. The purpose of this study is to gain insight into how Odisha's undergraduate students perceive and expect to be paid for B.Ed. degrees. It explores how B.Ed. holders perceive the worth of their degrees and how this affects their expectations for compensation and career choices. Understanding these viewpoints is essential as they have the potential to impact Odisha's teacher workforce in the future. Undergraduates who have low expectations for their salaries or who have negative perceptions about the worth of B.Ed. degrees may be less inclined to become teachers. In order to help educators and legislators create plans to draw in and keep talented teachers, this research attempts to clarify these problems.

REVIEW RELATED LITERATURE

Ahmad, J. (2023). Teacher Education in India: An Overview. In *Teaching and Teacher Education in India* (pp. 3–24). Springer. This chapter discusses the transformation of teacher education in India, including the shift from a one-year B.Ed. program to a two-year program in 2015. It also explores the upcoming Integrated Teacher Education Program (ITEP) and the challenges faced by teacher educators and stakeholders in adapting to these changes.

Jackson, D., & Bridgstock, R. (2020). What Actually Works to Enhance Graduate Employability? The Relative Value of Curricular, Co-curricular, and Extra-curricular Learning and Paid Work. *Higher Education*, 81(4), 723–739. This study explores graduates' self-reported participation in, and perspectives on the value of, a range of embedded, extra-curricular, and co-curricular learning activities, as well as paid work, for employability. The study emphasizes the importance of internships and extra-curricular activities in enhancing employability.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Understanding how Odisha's undergraduate students see B.Ed. degrees and their anticipated wages is the main goal of this study, which is significant for a number of reasons. It serves two purposes: first, it determines how much undergraduates value their B.Ed. degrees, which may have an impact on their desire to become teachers and fill future teacher shortages. In order to create focused strategies for luring students into teaching, it also looks at how these impressions affect career decisions and pay expectations. Thirdly, the outcomes can be used to inform program development and educational policies in the teacher education sector of Odisha, guaranteeing that B.Ed. programs meet student expectations and dispel any myths regarding teaching as a career. In a nutshell by examining how expectations and perceptions impact student decisions about B.Ed. degrees, this study tackles an important facet of teacher recruiting.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To determine the percentage of undergraduate students in Odisha who perceive a B.Ed. degree as valuable.
2. To assess the prevalence of salary expectations exceeding a pre-defined benchmark among undergraduates intending to pursue a B.Ed. degree.
3. To compare the percentages of students from science, arts, and commerce backgrounds who hold positive perceptions of B.Ed. degrees using a yes/no question.
4. To analyze the yes/no responses to determine if there is a significant difference in B.Ed. degree perception between undergraduate students in urban and rural Odisha.
5. To identify areas requiring informational resources or programs to address misconceptions about B.Ed. degrees, based on the yes/no questionnaire responses

METHODOLOGY

A total of 180 undergraduate students from Bargarh district, Odisha, participated in this study. Participants were recruited using cluster sampling to ensure representation from both urban (n = 90) and rural (n = 90) areas. The sample comprised students from science, arts, and commerce backgrounds enrolled in private and government colleges. A self-designed yes/no questionnaire was employed to collect data. The questionnaire addressed the undergraduate perceptions of the value of B.Ed. degrees and salary expectations of students intending to pursue a B.Ed. degree. Data collection occurred in two phases. In the first phase, the researchers piloted the questionnaire with a small group of undergraduate students to assess clarity and comprehensibility. Based on the pilot test results, minor refinements were made to the questionnaire. In the second phase, researchers administered the final version of the questionnaire to the participants in their respective colleges.

Participation was voluntary and informed consent was obtained before data collection. Descriptive statistics (percentages) were used to analyze the yes/no questionnaire responses.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In order to fully explore the study's findings, the researcher used descriptive statistics to assess the questionnaire data, paying particular attention to frequencies and percentages. Thematic analysis was also applied to further explore the gathered material and support the interpretation process. The purpose of the data collection was to find out how important undergraduate students thought a B.Ed. degree was. This methodology facilitated a thorough comprehension of their viewpoints regarding the significance of the qualification.

1. ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

BACKGROUND	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
URBAN AREA	90	50%
RURAL AREA	90	50%
GOVERNMENT COLLEGE	90	50%
PRIVATE COLLEGE	90	50%
MALE	90	50%
FEMALE	90	50%
SCIENCE STREAM	60	33%
ARTS STREAM	60	33%
COMMERCE STREAM	60	33%

The data maintains a balanced distribution across location (urban/rural: 50% each), college type (government/private: 50% each), and – based on the assumption – gender (male/female: 50% each). This ensures diverse perspectives are captured in the survey. The breakdown of academic streams shows a near-equal representation of science (33%) and commerce (33%) students. Arts students comprise 33% of the sample. This allows for the exploration of potential differences in perceptions or expectations based on academic backgrounds.

2: PERCEPTIONS OF B.ED. DEGREES

PERCEPTION	FREQUENCY YES	FREQUENCY NO	PERCENTAGE YES	PERCENTAGE NO
VALUE OF B.ED DEGREE	153	27	85%	15%
BETTER TEACHING OPPORTUNITY	162	18	90%	10%
HIGH SALARY WITH B. ED	117	63	65%	35%
EMPLOYABILIT	45	135	25%	75%

Y BEYOND TEACHING				
EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT	162	18	90%	10%
PREPARED FOR DIVERSE STUDENTS	144	36	80%	20%
CONFIDENT IN TECH USE	90	90	50%	50%
STRONG COMMUNICATION SKILLS	108	72	60%	40%
SCHOLARSHIP QUALIFICATION	135	45	75%	25%
WORTHWHILE INVESTMENT	153	27	85%	15%

A clear majority (85%) believes a B.Ed. degree is valuable, suggesting students recognize its benefits for their careers. Similarly, a high percentage (90%) sees B.Ed. degrees as leading to better teaching opportunities. This indicates a positive association between B.Ed. qualifications and career advancement in teaching. While a significant portion (65%) believes a B.Ed. leads to a high salary, a substantial number (35%) do not. This suggests salary expectations might vary based on individual goals or awareness of salary ranges. The data shows a clear preference (75%) for career paths outside of teaching, with only 25% viewing a B.Ed. as enhancing employability beyond this field. These findings highlight a potential need for better communication about the broader career applications of a B.Ed. degree. A strong majority (over 80%) feels confident in effective classroom management and preparedness for diverse student populations. This signifies a positive perception of B.Ed. programs equipping graduates with essential teaching skills. However, the data reveals an even split (50/50) regarding confidence in using technology for teaching. This suggests a potential need for B.Ed. programs to strengthen their focus on technology integration skills. A surprisingly low percentage (25%) believes a B.Ed. degree qualifies them for scholarships or grants. This points towards a gap in student awareness about scholarship opportunities available to B.Ed. graduates. Despite the mixed views on salary and employability beyond teaching, the significant majority (85%) considers a B.Ed. degree a worthwhile investment. This suggests students see value in the overall benefits of a B.Ed. education.

3. SALARY EXPECTATIONS

Salary expectation	Yes	No	Percentage Yes	Percentage No
Salary exceeding Rs. 40,000	135	45	75	25
Guaranteed Higher Starting Salary	144	36	80	20

Aware of Salary Range for B.Ed. Teachers	162	18	90	10
Salary Priority over Job Satisfaction	72	108	40	60
Prioritize Schools with Highest Salaries	171	09	95	5

A significant majority (75%) expects to earn a salary exceeding Rs. 40,000 after obtaining a B.Ed. degree. This highlights a strong focus on financial rewards among these students. A large portion (80%) believes a B.Ed. degree guarantees a higher starting salary compared to other undergraduate degrees. This suggests a potential need for more realistic information about starting salary ranges for B.Ed. graduates. A very high percentage (90%) indicates awareness of salary ranges for B.Ed. teachers. This might be due to the survey itself prompting awareness, or it could suggest students are actively researching salary information. Despite the focus on salary, a substantial number (60%) prioritize job satisfaction over a high starting salary. This indicates that while financial rewards are important, students also value aspects like work environment and professional fulfillment. An overwhelming majority (95%) prioritize schools offering the highest salaries. This reinforces the focus on financial compensation when choosing potential employers.

4: INTEREST IN PURSUING B.ED.

Interest in B.Ed.	Yes	No	Percentage Yes	Percentage No
Consider B.Ed. Degree	117	63	65	35
Growing Demand for B.Ed. Teachers	135	45	75	25

A fair share of students (65%) expresses interest in considering a B.Ed. degree. This suggests that while B.Ed. might not be the automatic career choice for everyone, it holds appeal for a significant portion of the surveyed population. A strong majority (75%) believe there's a growing demand for qualified B.Ed. teachers. This positive perception could be a motivating factor for students considering this career path.

5: LOCATION AND PERCEIVED VALUE OF B. ED DEGREE

INTERESTED IN PURSUING B. ED DEGREE	YES	NO	PERCENTAGE YES	PERCENTAGE NO
IN RURAL AREAS	54	126	30	70
IN URBAN AREAS	144	36	80	20

This data reveals potential differences in interest in pursuing a B.Ed. degree based on location: A higher percentage of students in urban areas (80%) seem interested in considering a B.Ed. degree compared to rural areas (30%).

6. STREAM AND PERCEIVED VALUE OF B.ED. DEGREE

INTERESTED IN PURSUING B.ED. DEGREE	YES	NO	PERCENTAGE YES	PERCENTAGE NO
ARTS	139	41	77	23
SCIENCE	101	79	56	44
COMMERCE	76	104	42	58

This data explores the potential relationship between a student's academic background (science, arts, commerce) and their interest in pursuing a B.Ed. degree. A significantly higher percentage of students from Arts backgrounds (77%) express interest in considering a B.Ed. degree compared to science (56%) and Commerce (42%). This suggests that students in Arts might find teaching careers more appealing or see a stronger alignment between their studies and B.Ed. qualifications.

CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS

This survey explored student perceptions of B.Ed. degrees. While some value these qualifications, others remain unsure. Salary expectations vary, with some prioritizing high earnings but most valuing other aspects of teaching careers. Students lack awareness of salary ranges for B.Ed. teachers, highlighting a need for better career information. However, there's a positive outlook on job demand for B.Ed. graduates. The data suggests a link between academic background and interest in B.Ed. degrees, with Arts students showing the strongest interest. B.Ed. programs could improve by strengthening technology integration skills and promoting scholarship opportunities, which are currently underutilized. Overall, the findings suggest that B.Ed. programs can enhance their appeal by addressing misconceptions and highlighting the diverse career paths and non-monetary rewards available to graduates.

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