

A case study on National Recruitment Agency (NRA): How it can strengthen the recruitment and selection process of Government of India and the reasons for its stagnation

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This case study reviews the reasons behind the National Recruitment Agency (NRA)'s prolonged dormancy, examining administrative, logistical, political, and external factors. It also analyzes the substantial costs incurred since the inception of NRA, drawing on official reports, parliamentary proceedings, and media investigations.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The official reports, parliamentary proceedings, detailed demands for grants for NRA, and media investigations were studied and analysed. The analysis is based on a comprehensive review of government documents, news reports, and public discourse up to 2025, revealing a pattern of bureaucratic inertia, policy reversals, and unmet promises that have left millions of aspirants in limbo.

Findings: The results reveal a sharp contrast between the policy announcement and policy implementation of the government. By exploring the timeline, challenges, and implications in the context of the NRA, the study underscores broader systemic issues in India's governance reforms, where ambitious announcements often outpace implementation.

Originality/value: This study is one of the first case studies on policy decision vis-à-vis policy implementation taken in the context of the NRA. This study also delves in detail into the benefits of combined examinations studied in the context of Common Eligibility Test (CET).

Paper Type: Case Based Study

KEYWORDS: National Recruitment Agency (NRA) | Common Eligibility Test (CET) | Government Reforms | Public Recruitment

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Introduction

With a view of transformative initiative in India's public sector recruitment landscape, and aimed at streamlining the hiring process for non-gazetted Group B and C posts across central government organizations, the National Recruitment Agency (NRA) was set up in the year 2020 with the purpose of streamlining the Central Government Recruitment through the conduct of the Common Eligibility Test (CET), which was to be conducted twice a year (DoPT OM, 2020). The CET examination was supposed to be conducted at three levels, i.e., at the graduate level, higher secondary level, and matriculation level, and the scores were to remain valid for three years (PIB 19.08.2020). The Agency was established with headquarters at New Delhi, and six of its regional offices were set up in other metropolitan cities in the North, East, West, South, Central & Northeast, each headed by a director/deputy secretary-level officer. The marks of CET were to be considered by recruiting bodies like Staff Selection Commission (SSC), Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS), Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs), etc. There would be no restriction on the number of attempts to be taken by a candidate to appear in the CET. The candidates who qualify for the CET will further be eligible to apply for different exams of the recruiting bodies like SSC, RRBs, IBPS, etc., and these recruiting bodies, if deemed fit, can directly conduct tier-II exams in respect of these candidates. The CET exam is to be conducted in 12 Indian languages, and the examination center is supposed to be set up in each district headquarters. Thus, the potential benefits of conduct of CET by NRA are as follows:

- i) The candidates do not need to appear in tier-1 exams of different recruiting bodies. Instead, they need to appear only in CET, and the scores will be valid (for 3 years) in respect of different exams conducted by SSC, IBPS, and RRBs.
- ii) The exam center for CET will be in the home district of the applicant, thus reducing the logistics cost for candidates.
- iii) The CET Exam will be conducted in 12 Indian languages, potentially benefitting the candidates who have their academic backgrounds from regional boards.

Evolution and Present Organizational Structure of National Recruitment Agency:

The NRA's formal inception occurred on August 19, 2020, when the Union Cabinet approved its establishment. Union Minister Jitendra Singh described it as a "historic decision" to ease the recruitment burden on youth. The agency was registered as a society under the Societies Registration Act, ensuring operational autonomy while remaining under the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT).

The formation phase was marked by optimism. In the 2020-21 Budget, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman highlighted the NRA as a reform to "bring ease of living" for job seekers. Press releases emphasized multilingual support and Aadhaar-based authentication, authorized in May 2025, to enhance security (The Economic Times, 2025).

Structurally, the NRA comprises a Governing Body with representatives from SSC, RRB, IBPS, and ministries like Railways, Finance, and Education. The Chairman, equivalent to a Secretary, oversees a multidisciplinary team. Other members of the Agency are: -

1. Secretary, DoP&T or his representative-Member
2. Representative of Ministry of Railways-Member
3. Representative of D/o Financial Services-Member
4. Chairman, Staff Selection Commission-Member
5. Chairman, Railway Recruitment Board-Member
6. Chairman, Institute of Banking Personnel Selection-Member
7. Two experts from the field of academics-Member
8. Secretary and Controller of Examinations, NRA-Member
9. Secretary, DoP&T or his representative-Member
10. Representative of Ministry of Railways-Member
11. Representative of D/o Financial Services-Member
12. Chairman, Staff Selection Commission-Member
13. Chairman, Railway Recruitment Board-Member
14. Chairman, Institute of Banking Personnel Selection-Member
15. Two experts from the field of academics-Member
16. Secretary and Controller of Examinations, NRA-Member

How is CET relevant to combined examinations of recruiting bodies?

Combined recruitment examinations have been in vogue for ages in almost all the countries across the globe following the meritocratic system of recruitment. In combined examinations, different positions/posts having similar educational qualifications are advertised together. The candidates can apply for as many posts as per their choice and arrange them in order of their preference. The candidate is called for appearing in only one examination, but his/

her candidature is considered for all the different posts or positions for whom the examination is conducted. For example, in Civil Services Examination of India conducted by Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), an applicant is considered for selection in as many as twenty-three different types of services starting from the most coveted positions of Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS), and the Indian Police Service (IPS) to the Group-B posts of Armed Forces Headquarters Civil Service (Section Officers' Grade), Pondicherry Civil Service (PONDICS), etc.¹ Similarly, in the Combined Graduate Level (CGL) Examination conducted by Staff Selection Commission (SSC), there are 37 different types of posts for whom a combined recruitment is made through a common examination². Final allocation of posts is made to successful candidates based on their merit-cum-preference.

The benefits of conducting combined examinations:

A] From candidate's perspective:

- i) Increases the chances of final selection: In case different examinations are held for each post, the same successful candidate may figure in the final select list of more than one examination, blocking other meritorious candidates for placement in select list. In combined examinations, based on the combined merit-cum-preference position, each successful candidate is allocated only one post (most preferred possible post according to merit), leaving the scope of other posts being filled up by other successful candidates (Joint Seat Allocation 2018: An Algorithmic Perspective, 2018).
- ii) Economical and time-saving for candidates: Imagine how difficult it would be for a candidate to appear in CGL Examination 37 times if he/she had to appear in separate exam for each post. Conduct of combined examinations not only saves valuable time of candidates but also resources, e.g. the candidate does not have to incur travelling cost to appear in exams again for each post.

B] From department's perspective

- i) Economical and time-saving for departments: Like for the applicants, the conduct of combined examinations is economical and time-saving from the perspective of organizations too. There is substantial amount of cost and time involved in conduct of examinations for recruitment and selection purpose and conduct of combined examinations certainly reduces this cost and time saving the valuable resources of the organization (Government of India, n.d.).
- ii) Reduces the cases of non-joining: In case separate exams are held for each post, there will be substantial cases of non-

joining as the same candidate may be selected for more than one post. In combined examinations, the candidate is finally selected for only one post based on his merit and preference. Accordingly, he/she does not have too much options and is most likely to join the post allocated to him (Thakur, 2019).

However, there are some critics of combined examinations too, which are:

- i) It is sometimes risky from the candidates' perspective because if the candidate misses one combined exam for any reason, he/she loses his/her candidature for all the posts.
- ii) Sometimes, due to limitations of knowledge on profiles of various types of posts, the candidate is unable to make the preference order optimally, resulting in his allocation to a post that is later considered by him not so suitable for him/her.

As the benefits of conducting combined examinations far outweigh the risks, most of the recruiting bodies, like UPSC, SSC, Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs), and Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS), have resorted to conducting combined examinations. The popular combined examinations being conducted by these bodies are as under: -

Table 1
Staff Selection Commission

| Name of examination | Pertains to the posts of |
|--|--|
| Combined Graduate Level Examination (CGL) | Various posts of the level of Assistant Section Officers (ASOs), Inspectors, Sub-inspectors (SIs), Assistant Sub-inspectors (ASIs), Upper Division Clerks (UDCs), Auditors, Accountants, Jr. Accountants, Tax Assistants, in various ministries / departments (more than 30) |
| Combined Higher Secondary Level Examination (CHSL) | Lower Division Clerk (LDCs), Data Entry Operator (DEOs) in various ministries / departments (more than 50) |
| Junior Hindi Translators / Senior Hindi Translators Exam | Junior Hindi Translators (JHTs) and Senior Hindi Translators in various ministries / departments (more than 20) |
| Junior Engineers Examination | Junior Engineers in various ministries / departments (15) |

¹ UPSC Notification of Civil Service Examination, 2025 (accessed on 03.06.2025 on <https://upsc.gov.in/examinations/Civil%20Services%20%28Preliminary%29%20Examination%2C%202025>)

² SSC Notification of Combined Graduate Level Examination, 2025 (accessed on 04.06.2025 on www.ssc.gov.in)



Table 2
Railway Recruitment Boards

| Name of examination | Pertains to the posts of |
|---|---|
| Combined Employment Notice (CEN) Non-technical Popular Categories (NTPC) Graduate Level | Chief Commercial cum Ticket Supervisor, Station Master, Goods Train Manager, Junior Account Assistant cum Typist, Senior Clerk cum Typist etc. in various zones of Indian Railways (17) |
| Combined Employment Notice (CEN) Non-technical Popular Categories (NTPC) Under Graduate Level | Commercial-cum-Ticket Clerk, Account Clerk cum Typist, Junior Clerk cum Typist, Trains Clerk etc. in various zones of Indian Railways (17) |
| Combined Employment Notice (CEN) of Level-1 Categories | Level-1 posts like Pointsman, Trackman, Gangman, Assistant (in various disciplines) etc. in various zones of Indian Railways (17) |
| Combined Employment Notice (CEN) in various ministerial and isolated Categories | Various ministerial and isolated posts (60-70) in different zones of Indian Railways (17) |

Table 3
Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS)

| Name of examination | Pertains to the posts of |
|-------------------------------|---|
| IBPS Clerk | Clerks in 12 nationalized banks and 28 Regional Rural Banks of India |
| IBPS PO | Probationary Officers (POs) in 12 nationalized banks and 28 Regional Rural Banks of India |
| IBPS Specialist Officer (SO) | Specialist Officers (SOs) in 12 nationalized banks of India |
| IBPS Officer Scale II and III | Scale II and III Officers in 12 nationalized banks of India |

In most of the examinations as detailed above, the recruitment and selection process consists of more than one tier of exams, like Tier-1, Tier-2, Skill Test, Aptitude Test, etc. In some examinations, the tier-1 exam is only of a qualifying nature, whereas in other exams, its marks are considered for final merit.

The constitution of the National Recruitment Agency (NRA) is a step forward towards conduct of combined examinations where the scores of a single exam (CET) is valid not only for one recruiting body, but for a pool of recruiting bodies like SSC, IBPS and RRBs. Hence, the CET to be conducted by NRA will act as Tier-I Exam for SSC, IBPS and RRBs and these recruiting bodies will conduct Tier-II exams in respect of candidates

Key Objectives of the NRA:

The NRA was set up with the following objectives:

To reduce the burden on candidates: At present, the aspirants have to apply for and appear in multiple preliminary exams conducted by different agencies like the Staff Selection Commission (SSC), Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs), and the Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS). The CET aims to replace these individual preliminary exams with a single test.

Saving of time and money: A single exam would save candidates the cost of traveling to different exam centers and paying multiple application fees. It would also reduce the time it takes for a candidate to progress from the preliminary stage to the final selection.

Standardize the recruitment process: The CET would use a standardized syllabus and exam pattern across different recruitment agencies, ensuring a uniform and fair process.

Accessibility for all: The CET is proposed to be conducted in 12 major Indian languages and would have an exam center in every district of the country, making it more accessible to candidates from rural and remote areas.

Can the NRA really be a game-changer in Government Recruitment in India?

India's public sector recruitment system has long been criticized for inefficiencies, redundancies, and inequities (Tiwari & Gautam, 2021). The job aspirants for central government positions face multiple examinations conducted by different agencies. The SSC handles recruitment for Group B and C posts in ministries and departments, the RRB manages railway jobs, and the IBPS oversees banking sector hires. Each agency operates independently, leading to overlapping syllabi, varying difficulty levels, and frequent scheduling conflicts.

This fragmented approach imposes significant burdens on candidates. Aspirants often appear for 10-15 exams annually, incurring costs of Rs 500-1,000 per application, plus travel expenses to distant centers. Rural and economically disadvantaged youth are particularly affected, as exam centers are concentrated in urban areas (Government of India, n.d.).

With nearly one out of every four persons between the ages of 15 and 29, India has an enviable youth population.

Currently, they are estimated to constitute more than 34% of the total population. While these numbers are expected to decline in the coming years, youth will still account for almost 24% of India's population, or 346 million people, in 2036 (National Youth Policy 2025, n.d.). Compared to countries like China, Japan, and the USA, where they face the challenge of an aging population, India has the advantage of being in a position of strength with the potential to drive economic growth.

Despite the sheer numbers of the youth coupled with their dynamism and energy, there is a growing problem of unemployment and underemployment the world over. According to the ILO Report, the generative AI is disrupting the labor market fast, and youth unemployment is also likely to be affected significantly (*World Employment and Social Outlook 2025*, n.d.). India is no exception to this global trend, which has accelerated due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Moreover, the system is also not free from instances of malpractice. Paper leaks, cheating scandals, and delays in result declarations have been occurring from time to time. The Vyapam scam in Madhya Pradesh (2013-2015) exposed systemic corruption, leading to deaths and arrests. Similar issues plagued SSC exams in 2018, prompting Supreme Court interventions (Mullick, 2015). Recently, the West Bengal School Service Commission (WBSSC) has also been in the controversy for the alleged paper leak and recruitment scandal (Telegraph, 2025). The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these problems, causing widespread cancellations and backlogs. In 2020, amid rising unemployment—peaking at 23% during lockdowns—the government recognized the need for reform (Gupta et al., 2024).

The idea of a centralized recruitment body wasn't new. It traced back to the National Policy on Education 1986, which advocated national-level common entrance tests (National Policy on Education, 1986, n.d.). In 1992, the Programme of Action proposed a similar framework. By 2010, a committee of IIT directors recommended an autonomous agency modeled after the U.S. Educational Testing Service for transparency and efficiency. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (now Education) formed a task force in 2013, but progress was not much.

The NRA emerged as a response to these longstanding issues, aligning with the Government of India's "Minimum Government, Maximum Governance" motto. It promised to save time and money for both candidates and recruiters. For instance, a single CET could eliminate the need for preliminary exams by SSC, RRB, and IBPS, allowing agencies to focus on mains and interviews. The score's three-year validity would enable multiple applications without retesting, reducing logistical costs estimated at Rs 500-600 crore annually for conducting separate exams (Saraswathy, 2020).

Demographically, India's youth bulge—over 60% of the population is under 35 (PIB Report, 2025). With private sector job growth sluggish post-COVID, government jobs remained a primary aspiration. The NRA was positioned as a game-changer, potentially impacting 2.5 crore aspirants by standardizing opportunities across regions and languages (CET in 12 major Indian languages).

The conduct of a combined examination of the NRA can surely enhance the economies of scale of the government in conduct of recruitment examinations while also ensuring the efficiency level of recruitment and selection. More broadly, in earlier studies of general "merit recruitment" and selection efficiency, it is evidenced that well-designed, transparent, standardized recruitment and selection processes help reduce the costs of processing unqualified applicants and improve the pool quality—which supports the general logic that a common standardized exam coupled with a transparent evaluation method can enhance efficiency (Kassim & Han, 2025).

Current status of NRA

As of June 2025—almost five years since its inception—the NRA remains non-functional in its core mandate. Not a single CET has been conducted, despite repeated announcements of "imminent" notifications and exam dates. This stagnation persists amid India's youth unemployment crisis.

The NRA's journey has been a chronicle of announcements, partial progress, and repeated setbacks. The timeline of different important events since the formation of NRA is as under: -

2020: Cabinet approval was accorded on August 19. DoPT notified the structure and initial funding was released. However, the site surveys for centers was delayed due to Covid-19.

2021: The registration of NRA gets completed and its headquarters became operational. Tenders for CBT platform issued, but no CET was conducted due to pandemic backlogs.

2022: Parliamentary panel questions delays, noting "not seen light of day" (The Economic Times, 2022). MoUs signed with SSC, RRB; pilot tests planned but deferred.

2023: Standing Committee reports NRA "not fully functional." Syllabus finalized; notifications for CET "expected soon." Integration challenges with existing agencies surface.

2024: Amid NEET/UGC-NET leaks, NRA tasked with drafting anti-paper leak guidelines under new law. Reports highlight four years without exams. Opposition critiques in Parliament; Aadhaar integration approved.



2025: Young Professionals recruited; CET notifications “soon” for graduates/12th pass. However, as of December, no exams held. Meanwhile National Testing Agency (NTA), another sister concern mainly focussed to conduct entrance exams for admission to educational institutions but assigned the additional task of conducting some recruitment exams also, shifts focus to its core mandate i.e. entrance exams (Livemint, 2024), indicating that recruitment CETs are to be conducted by NRA only.

Meanwhile, the budgetary figures in crore ₹ (budgetary estimate, revised estimate, and actual expenditure) already incurred by the agency in these five years is as under: -

Table 4
Budgetary figures of NRA for last five years

| Year | Budgetary Estimate | Revised Estimate | Actual |
|---------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 2021-22 | 129.61 | 58.32 | 58.32 |
| 2022-23 | 396.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 2023-24 | 101.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 2024-25 | 10.00 | 10.00 | yet to be published |
| 2025-26 | 14.20 | yet to be published | |

Table 4 indicates that while sufficient budget has been allocated to NRA every year, especially during first three years, it has not been able to spend the allocated budget. The only substantial expenditure incurred by NRA was in the year 2021-22 when ₹ 58.32 crore was spent mainly on setup of NRA. However, without any substantive activity or conduct of a single CET in the subsequent years, i.e. during 2022-23, 2023-24 or even in 2024-25, the question is raised on the policy implementation. The lack of output also raises questions about accountability and resource utilization. As India grapples with exam irregularities, paper leaks, and demands for fair employment opportunities, the NRA's fate serves as a cautionary tale of how structural reforms can falter without robust execution strategies.

Potential reasons for NRA being non-functional

Despite being formed with a clear mandate, the NRA has not yet become fully functional or conducted its first CET. The delay can be attributed to several complex factors, including:

Setting up a new organizational structure: As a new entity, the NRA had to establish its own organizational framework, hire staff, and create its own operational policies and procedures from scratch. This process of institutional setup takes time. However, the logic of being new entity is not very much sustainable considering the extraordinary delays in

conduct of first CET (more than 5 years) by NRA (Purewal, 2024).

Administrative and Bureaucratic Hurdles: Central to the delays is bureaucratic inertia. Establishing an autonomous body required harmonizing with entrenched agencies like SSC and RRB. MoUs took years to finalize due to disputes over score validity and syllabus alignment. Parliamentary reports in 2022 and 2023 criticized DoPT for slow progress, noting the agency couldn't “take another two years” to become functional (The Economic Times, 2022). Staff recruitment lagged; as of 2024, key positions remained vacant, with only ad-hoc hires like Young Professionals in 2025.

Technological and logistical challenges: Creating a massive, secure, and nationwide online examination infrastructure that can accommodate millions of candidates simultaneously is a monumental task. The IT systems for registration, conducting the exam, and result processing need to be robust and foolproof. Ensuring every district has a functional and reliable exam center with the necessary technical infrastructure is a significant logistical hurdle. Building a robust CBT system for millions proved daunting. India lacks uniform digital infrastructure; internet disparities in rural areas delayed center setups. Partnerships with vendors for AI proctoring and data security faced tender delays and cost overruns. The 2020-21 pandemic halted site inspections, pushing timelines back by 18 months. Even in 2025, full-scale testing infrastructure isn't ready, with only pilot centers operational.

Legal and Policy Gaps: Without dedicated legislation, the NRA relies on executive fiats, leading to ambiguities. Integration with anti-paper leak laws in 2024 diverted focus from CET conduct to guideline drafting. Concerns over federalism arose, as states demanded inclusion or feared central overreach. Court petitions on reservation policies and score normalization added scrutiny, though no major rulings halted progress.

Political and External Factors: Political priorities shifted post-2020. The government's focus on COVID recovery (Kandpal, 2024), elections (2024 Lok Sabha), and scandals like NEET leaks overshadowed NRA rollout. The government is using the agency for optics without substance. Youth protests over unemployment pressured alternatives but didn't accelerate NRA. Global events, like supply chain disruptions for IT hardware, indirectly impacted.

Coordination with multiple agencies: The NRA needed to integrate its processes with several large, established recruitment bodies (SSC, RRBs, IBPS). This requires aligning their specific recruitment needs, job roles, and final selection procedures with the results of the common preliminary test. This level of inter-agency coordination can be complex and time-consuming (Purewal, 2024).

Developing a common syllabus: While the CET aims to be a common test, the job requirements for different positions (e.g., a clerk in a bank vs. a ticket collector in the railways) can vary. Designing a single syllabus that adequately assesses candidates for such a wide range of roles without compromising the quality of selection is a difficult and ongoing process.

Political and bureaucratic hurdles: Like many large-scale government projects, the NRA's implementation may have faced bureaucratic delays, shifting priorities, or a slow decision-making process, especially in a complex and multi-stakeholder environment.

Impact of Exam Scandals: Recurrent leaks in NTA-conducted exams (NEET 2024) eroded trust in centralized testing, prompting caution. The NRA was roped into anti-leak SOPs, delaying its primary role (*Times of India Article Dated 25.06.2024*, n.d.).

Resource and Coordination Issues: Inter-ministerial coordination faltered. Railways and Finance ministries delayed approvals, fearing operational disruptions. COVID's economic strain reallocated funds, though NRA budgets persisted.

Conclusion

In conclusion, while the NRA was created with a clear vision to simplify government recruitment, and was projected to revolutionize recruitment with multifaceted advantages, its implementation has been significantly delayed due to the immense technological, logistical, and coordination challenges inherent in creating such a large and transformative system from the ground up. The incidence of any entity being run on public funds, and remaining non-functional or sub-functional for a long-time, certainly raises questions on the efficacy of policy implementation. Though the assistance made by NRA to Government in preparing norms, standards, and guidelines for the computer-based tests and to formulate the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 - the first-ever national law against the use of unfair means to rig recruitment exams conducted by various public bodies is substantial and appreciable (*Times of India Article Dated 25.06.2024*, n.d.), the missing part of core-activity. i.e. CET-conduct is certainly objectionable. While the non-conduct of CET by NRA has been criticized on different occasions by different parliamentary panels (The Economic Times, 2022), the timely endeavour to make it fully functional still seems missing. The NRA's stagnation underscores the gap between policy intent and execution in India. To revive it, prioritizing infrastructure, resolving inter-agency conflicts, and conducting pilots by the start of next financial year 2026-27 seem to be practical solutions. Transparent timelines and accountability could restore faith, turning the agency into the reform it was meant to be.

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Annexure 17.3.7

| Submission Date | Submission Id | Word Count | Character Count |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------|-----------------|
| 21-July-2025 | 4981079 (DrillBit) | 4382 | 28886 |

| Analyzed Document | Submitter email | Submitted by | Similarity |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| 4.2 CBS2_Bimal_GJEIS Jul-Sept 2025.docx | gupta.bimalkumar@gov.in | Bimal Kumar Gupta | 06% |

DrillBit Similarity Report

| | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|---|
| 6 SIMILARITY % | 6 MATCHED SOURCES | A GRADE | A-Satisfactory (0-10%) B-Upgrade (11-40%) C-Poor (41-60%) D-Unacceptable (61-100%) |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|---|

| LOCATION | MATCHED DOMAIN | % | SOURCE TYPE |
|----------|-----------------------|---|-------------|
| 1 | homescience10.ac.in | 3 | Publication |
| 2 | mzuir.inflibnet.ac.in | 1 | Publication |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---------------|
| 3 | rrbbilaspur.gov.in | 1 | Internet Data |
| 4 | en.wikipedia.org | 1 | Internet Data |
| 5 | loksabhadocs.nic.in | 1 | Publication |
| 6 | Thesis Submitted to Shodhganga Repository | 1 | Publication |

Reviewers Memorandum

Reviewer’s Comment 1: The manuscript addresses a highly relevant and timely policy issue by examining the gap between policy intent and implementation in the context of the National Recruitment Agency (NRA). The discussion on the rationale and potential benefits of the Common Eligibility Test (CET) is particularly well-articulated and informative. However, the paper would benefit from a slightly sharper conceptual framing early on—specifically by more clearly positioning the case study within broader public administration or policy implementation theories. Strengthening this linkage would enhance the academic contribution while retaining the paper’s strong descriptive richness.

Reviewer Comment 2: The study draws on a wide range of credible sources, including parliamentary reports, official documents, and media investigations, which adds robustness to the analysis. That said, the methodology section could be further strengthened by briefly clarifying how sources were selected, prioritized, and interpreted. Explicitly outlining the analytical lens (e.g., document analysis or qualitative policy review) would improve transparency and help readers better assess the rigor of the findings.

Reviewer Comment 3: The paper provides a comprehensive overview of the evolution, objectives, and current status of the NRA, which is one of its key strengths. At times, however, the narrative becomes quite detailed, particularly in sections describing background information and timelines. A tighter synthesis—especially in the later sections—could help maintain focus on the central research problem of policy stagnation and implementation failure. Minor streamlining would significantly enhance readability without compromising depth.



Bimal Kumar Gupta and Kotaru Ravi Sankar
 “A case study on National Recruitment Agency (NRA): How it can strengthen the recruitment and selection process of Government of India and the reasons for its stagnation”
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Conflict of Interest: Author of a Paper had no conflict neither financially nor academically.

Editorial Excerpt

The article has 6% of plagiarism which is the accepted percentage as per the norms and standards of the journal for publication. As per the editorial board's observations and blind reviewers' remarks the paper had some minor revisions which were communicated on a timely basis to the authors (Bimal and Ravisankar), and accordingly, all the corrections had been incorporated as and when directed and required to do so. The comments related to this manuscript are noticeably related to the theme "**A case study on National Recruitment Agency (NRA): how it can strengthen the recruitment and selection process of Government of India and the reasons for its stagnation**" both subject-wise and research-wise. The manuscript is well-written, clearly structured, and demonstrates a strong command of the subject matter. The logical flow of arguments and the comprehensive treatment of the topic contribute positively to the paper's readability and scholarly value. After comprehensive reviews and editorial board's remarks the manuscript has been categorized and decided to publish under "**Case Based Study**" category.

Acknowledgement

The acknowledgment section is an essential part of all academic research papers. It provides appropriate recognition to all contributors for their hard work and effort taken while writing a paper. The data presented and analyzed in this paper by (Bimal and Ravisankar) were collected first handily and wherever it has been taken the proper acknowledgment and endorsement depicts. The authors are highly indebted to others who facilitated accomplishing the research. Last but not least, endorse all reviewers and editors of GJEIS in publishing in the present issue.

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