



Consensus key for education

Fulfilling local needs will make policy more meaningful.

Need for State education policy

1. Tamil Nadu constituting a committee to draft its own State education policy may be construed as a challenge to the national education policy, though it may actually do good for States to draft their education policy.

2. It may guide them to give effect to the national

educational policy in a considered, well thought out manner.

3. State, district, block and even village level policies could enable a more meaningful implementation of the national policy as it may lead to a policy stack that serves the goals of national growth grounded in the local contexts.

4. The aspirational districts' programmes show the possibilities of local meshing with the whole.

National Education Policy 2020

TRANSFORMATIONAL REFORMS IN EDUCATION SYSTEM

School Education



- **Universal Access from pre-primary school to Grade 12**
Target to achieve 100% Gross Enrollment Ratio in school education by 2030
- **Early Childhood Care Education**
Education for all children between 3-6 years by 2025
- **Replacing 10+2 with 5+3+3+4**
After five years in pre-primary, students to aim at enhanced skills in new pedagogical system
- **National Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy**
Focus on early language and mathematical skills from Grades 1-3 by 2025
- **Multilingualism and the power of language**
Medium of instruction till Class 5, preferably till 8, to be home language/mother tongue
- **Reforms in exams**
Board exams to be broken into two, to test core capabilities
- **New National Assessment Centre PARAKH**
A standard-setting body for assessment of students pan-India
- **Equitable and inclusive education**
Emphasis on socially disadvantaged, girls, socio-cultural identity children for education
- **Teacher recruitment and career path**
National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) to be developed by 2022 for teachers
- **Standard-setting and Accreditation for School Education**
State School Standards Authority to be set up in all States/UTs
- **Vocational Education**
By 2025, at least 50% of students to have exposure to vocational education



Supplementing each other

1. There will inevitably be differences between the education policies devised for the nation, a State, a district and a school since each level has a distinct purpose.
2. There will always be regional priorities and constraints compelling the States to serve education in a different way. This only means that the national and state policies need to supplement each other.
3. Education is in the concurrent list since 1976 and is a joint and shared responsibility of the Union and the State governments.
4. Coordination and maintenance of standards may vest in the Union government, but it applies to higher education only. Education policy, on the other hand, deals with all levels of education.

Alarming changes

1. Many a change in the education system, particularly in higher education, introduced before and after the policy may have alarmed the States.
2. The given impression that the common university entrance test (CUET) is the first step toward a 'one nation, one examination' system as envisaged by the policy even though the text of the policy clearly declared that it should be up to the individual universities to use CUET scores or not, is the latest example.
3. Making the undergraduate national eligibility test (NEET-UG) mandatory for admission to all medical colleges is yet another example. States like Tamil Nadu feel that the centralised admission test caused a monetary burden and inconvenience for students.

CBSE Dominance:

1. Data lends credence to their concerns that the national level tests favour students coming from the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).
2. In 2021, the percentage of students qualifying for the UG NEET was as high as 73.9% for CBSE students, whereas only 33.2, 37.1, 44.8, 44.4 and 47.5 percentage from M.P., U.P., Bihar, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu Boards respectively could qualify.

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3. So has been the case with the IIT JEE exams. Close to 59% of the shortlisted students were from CBSE Board alone.
4. These statistics are often used to berate them for the poor quality of their school education. A closer look, however, suggests that this may be due to the differences in the syllabus and examination methods of the State boards and the CBSE.
5. Indeed no one could argue that the State boards must make their syllabus completely compatible with the CBSE, for it would be tantamount to suggesting that there should only be a single school board for the whole country, 'one nation, one school examination'.

Policy engagement is an essential part of its implementation. It may be wise to mitigate the trust deficit, made evident by recent statements, between the Union and the States in key areas such as education. If some States feel they are falling behind, this is an opportunity to move forward for better quality education.