

2.22. General Education

Introduction

Education is an important component in the process of human development. Planned efforts have been made from time to time to improve education. Tamil Nadu, through successive Five-Year Plans has made concerted efforts to bring education within the reach of all, and to build not only a literate society, but also a skilled and technologically capable labour force. While the literacy rate of Tamil Nadu was almost comparable to the all-India position in 1941, the State's literacy rate surpassed India's literacy rate in the post-independence period.

Both overall literacy and female literacy rates in Tamil Nadu are higher than the national average. Tamil Nadu is next only to Kerala and Maharashtra in overall and female literacy among the major states in the country. The overall literacy rate is 73.47 %, the female literacy rate 64.55 % and the ratio of male literacy to female literacy 1.27 as per 2001 census.

In Tamil Nadu the plan expenditure on education, which was only, Rs.3.82 crore during the First Five Year Plan has increased to about Rs.1861.06 crore during Tenth Plan. For the Eleventh Plan 2007-12, the outlay for General Education has been increased substantially to about Rs.3149 crore.

Elementary Education

The state has a policy objective of universal elementary education through the enrolment and retention of all children in the age group of 6-14.

Access to school and regular attendance are the important factors that determine the success of the elementary education programme. The state has provided an elementary school in every hamlet with a population of more than 300, within a radius of 1 km. In order to encourage enrolment and attendance, various welfare schemes have been introduced, the most innovative being the free

noon meal scheme introduced in 1982. Further, the Government provides free uniforms, textbooks and bus passes to children studying in Government schools.

Objectives and Strategies

The objectives of the Plan for Elementary education are (1) to achieve universal enrolment and retention, since education is a fundamental right and a constitutional mandate (2) to ensure education of desirable quality that can be monitored through specific indicators (3) to concentrate on the child's overall emotional, social and physical development along with cognitive skills (4) to reach the un-reached and to ensure social inclusion (5) to improve the basic amenities in all schools (6) to bridge all gender and social gaps in elementary education.

Improving the quality of elementary education is one of the thrust areas for the Eleventh Plan. Having achieved near universal enrollment and retention in the primary sector, the challenge lies in making the teaching- learning process more effective and child friendly. The second thrust area is to "reach the unreached" like out-of-school children, children with special needs, girl children and SC/ST children.

Programmes

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was launched in all the districts, covering classes 1 to VIII, with the main objective of increasing the enrolment and retention of children in the age group of 6-14 to 100% by the end of the decade. This scheme is extended through the Eleventh Plan also upto the year 2009-2010 to continue the efforts to universalize elementary education within a definite timeframe. During this period, SSA will concentrate on achieving the Eleventh Plan objectives through improving quality education, bridging the infrastructure gaps, attaining inclusive education and

implementing innovative schemes for well rounded educational development of the children.

A major initiative which has been introduced to improve the quality of education is the Activity Based Learning methodology for primary classes.

New initiatives like Active Learning Methodology for upper primary classes, “Padippum Inikkum” (Tamil Reading Skill Development), Child development training for teachers, Development of Student Learning Materials including story cards and workbooks, and supply of science and mathematics kits for schools will also be taken up under SSA during 2008-09 to improve the overall quality of education.

Under SSA, infrastructure facilities such as buildings for Block Resource Centres, Cluster Resource Centres, Primary schools, Upper primary schools, toilets and drinking water facilities will be provided during 2008-2009.

The National Programme for Education of girls at elementary level (NPEGEL) is being implemented in 37 educationally backward blocks in 11 districts under SSA to encourage girls education and bridge the gender gap. In these areas, Model Cluster Schools are being established to strengthen the weak links. Additional infrastructure such as buildings, teaching learning equipments and computers for e-learning are being provided in the Model Cluster schools, so as to improve the quality of the classroom teaching and encourage more girls to overcome their social and educational obstacles. The Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBV) have also been set up to provide a conducive residential environment in which girl children who would otherwise be deprived of schooling are enabled to complete their education.

An outlay of Rs.889.49 crore is proposed as state share for implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, out of which, Rs.177.90

crore is earmarked for the same under Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP) during the Eleventh Plan period. A sum of Rs.210.00 crore is proposed for the implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan scheme during the year 2008-09, of which Rs.5250 lakh is proposed under SCSP.

Teaching Quality Improvement Fund

Under this scheme, financial assistance is being given to all Government Panchayat Union Primary and Middle Schools to meet the expenditure for purchase of chalk pieces, duster, pointer map etc. An amount of Rs.3.50 crore has been earmarked for the above items in the Teaching Quality Improvement Fund for the Eleventh Plan. A sum of Rs.46 lakh is anticipated to be spent during 2007-08 and Rs.50 lakh is proposed for Annual Plan 2008-09.

Welfare Schemes

The scheme of free supply of Text Books to the children from I to VIII Std studying in Government, Local body, Aided and Self-financing recognized schools adopting State syllabus irrespective of enrolment in Noon Meal Programme is being implemented with an outlay of Rs.163.30 crore, out of which, a sum of Rs.4000 lakh is earmarked under SCSP during the Eleventh Plan period. In 2007-08, a sum of Rs.25.06 crore is the anticipated expenditure for this scheme. It is proposed to implement the scheme with an outlay of Rs.26.31 crore during 2008-09.

For the welfare of the students studying in Primary and Middle schools, the State has introduced free supply of uniforms to the students enrolled in the noon meal scheme from 1985-86 and this scheme will be continued in Eleventh Five Year Plan period also. In 2007-08 a sum of Rs.46.54 crore has been spent for this scheme. It is proposed to implement the scheme with an outlay of Rs.48.86 crore during 2008-09.

Under assistance to the students for distress relief, a sum of Rs.50,000/- per student is provided to students studying in

Government or Aided schools from 1st to 8th Standard, whose earning parent (either father or mother) is dead or permanently disabled. The amount is deposited in the name of the student and interest from the above deposit is utilized to meet the student's educational expenses. In 2007-08 a sum of Rs.50 lakh has been spent for this scheme. It is proposed to implement the scheme with an outlay of Rs.50 lakh during 2008-09.

Annual Plan outlay

The total outlay for the Eleventh Plan for Elementary Education is Rs.1311.74 crore. For 2008-09 an outlay of Rs. 389.16 crore is proposed to be spent for various programmes in Elementary Education.

Secondary Education

Demand for access to secondary education is growing as our state approaches universal elementary education. It serves as a bridge between elementary and tertiary education. Due to rapid technological changes and growth of knowledge based industries, there is a heightened demand for a skilled labour force which can be provided by quality secondary education. Secondary education is to be improved by equipping schools with all basic amenities, including qualified and trained teachers, developing appropriate curriculum and syllabi and improving teaching techniques to reach the desired learning outcomes.

Objectives

The main objective of the State in respect of secondary education is universalisation of access to and improvement in quality of secondary education. Providing high quality education to all adolescent girls and boys is the urgent need of the hour.

The objectives envisaged during 2008-09 in respect of Secondary Education are: 1) to increase the availability of secondary schools in needy areas 2) to increase the enrolment in secondary

education 3) to improve infrastructure facilities in high and higher secondary schools 4) to enhance the quality of classroom teaching by improving the skills of the teachers 5) to develop language fluency and communication skills.

Strategies

The strategies to be adopted to achieve the above objectives of Secondary Education are by establishing new secondary schools in underserved areas, carrying out special enrolment drives, improving need based infrastructure facilities by availing the financial resources through funding agencies like NABARD, using computer aided techniques and e-learning equipments for improving the quality of the teaching - learning process, improving pre-service and in-service training facilities, giving special emphasis for the vulnerable sections of the society and expanding welfare schemes.

Programmes

Incentive based schemes

The Government of Tamil Nadu prepares standardized text books and supplies to all children in Government schools at free of cost. Free bicycles are being distributed to students studying in higher secondary classes as an incentive to continue their education. An outlay of Rs.106.69 crore is proposed for these schemes, of which, a sum Rs. 24.00 crore is earmarked under Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan (SCSP) during the Eleventh Plan Period. A sum of Rs.28.24 crore is the anticipated expenditure during 2007-08 and the proposed outlay for 2008-09 is Rs 26.00 crore, of which, Rs.7.80 crore is earmarked for SCSP.

Construction of school buildings under NABARD

The infrastructure requirement of schools such as construction of class rooms, laboratories, toilets, drinking water and electrification to all the needy high schools and higher secondary schools will continue to be provided under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund of NABARD. The outlay provided for this purpose

is Rs.600.00 crore during the Plan Period, of which, a sum of Rs.100.00 crore is allocated exclusively under the SCSP. A sum of Rs.150.00 crore is proposed under this scheme for 2008-09, out of which Rs.30.00 crore has been proposed for SCSP.

Provision of computers to Higher Secondary schools

Computer education plays an important role in enabling students to keep pace with scientific advancements and in helping to equip them to use modern technology. A sum of Rs.118.63 crore has been anticipated to be spent during 2007-08, of which, Rs.23.72 crore has been earmarked under SCSP for establishment of computer laboratories.

During the past one and half years, 1,880 Government Higher Secondary Schools and 1,525 High Schools have been provided with computers. In the coming financial year, computers will be provided to the remaining 100 Government Higher Secondary Schools and 606 Government High schools. The Government will provide computers to 6,650 middle schools of the Government and Local bodies during the Eleventh Plan period. In addition, the Government will implement a scheme for providing computers as reward to 1,000 top ranking Tamil medium students in the X standard public examination.

Improvement of facilities for Teaching Science

Each high and higher secondary school needs a science laboratory and the necessary equipments to facilitate the teaching of science. An outlay of Rs.50.00 lakh is proposed to implement the scheme during 2008-09 which will cover the requirement of schools not covered under the NABARD RIDF funded school infrastructure scheme.

Establishing Language Teaching Laboratories

The state is adopting a two language formula, i.e., Tamil, the mother tongue and English, the national as well as international link language. There is a compelling necessity to learn English well

with a view to increasing employability. Multimedia language laboratories are being installed in schools to develop English speaking skills in students with a focus on expression and communication. It is proposed to provide computer aided language laboratories to 500 Higher Secondary schools during 2008-09 at a total cost of Rs. 12.5 crore. During 2007-08, a sum of Rs.130.01 lakh is likely to be spent for establishment of language teaching laboratories in 26 schools and the proposed outlay for 2008-09 is Rs.100 lakh.

Training programme for Teachers

As the vision of Secondary Education in providing high quality education to all girls and boys is to be achieved only by the effective and total involvement of the teachers in the classroom, it is highly essential to train the teachers to enhance their performance and commitment. The outlay earmarked for teacher training programmes during 2008-09 is Rs.50 lakh.

Improving school performance in Educationally Backward Districts

Educationally backward districts have been identified based upon their performance in the Government Examinations. Dharmapuri, Villupuram, Erode, Perambalur, Salem, Vellore, Tiruvannamalai and Cuddalore have been identified as the districts with low pass percentage. These districts need special attention in the form of teacher training, special coaching and counselling for students to improve their performance. During 2007-08, it is expected that Rs.2.00 crore will be spent for the above districts and an amount of Rs.0.78 crore is proposed for the Annual Plan 2008-09.

District Institute of Education and Training (DIET)

Setting up of DIETs is a 100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme. There are 29 DIETs in Tamil Nadu. It organizes in-service training programmes for the professional development of teachers. Framing of syllabus and curriculum, revision of textbooks catering to the changing professional needs of teachers in the context of

advancements in the field of Science and Technology, planning, coordinating, conducting and evaluating training programmes are some of the activities of DIETs.

Annual Plan Outlay

The total outlay for the Eleventh Plan for Secondary Education is Rs.1626.69 crore. For Annual Plan 2008-09, an outlay of Rs. 357.27 crore is proposed to implement various schemes in Secondary Education.

Higher Education

Tamil Nadu is one of the most advanced States in the country in the field of higher education. The endeavour of the Government is to make higher education more accessible to the economically weaker sections and rural students and to create a skilled labour force. There are 37 universities and institutions deemed as universities in the State, out of which, 15 universities function under the aegis of the State Government, while the remaining are under the Central Government or in the Private sector. There are 670 Arts and Science and other specific subject colleges in the State, out of which 132 are meant exclusively for women. There are four technical universities in the State to which most of the 251 engineering colleges are affiliated. There are 7 Law Colleges with a Law University, 21 medical colleges with one Medical University and 13 Agricultural colleges attached to an Agriculture University. The aim of the State is to increase the gross enrolment ratio in higher education from the present level of 11.73% to 25% by 2020.

Objectives

The objectives envisaged during the Annual Plan 2008-09 are to increase accessibility to education, improve the quality of education and encourage autonomy in educational institutions.

Strategies

The objectives of the higher education during the Plan period are to be achieved by creating new institutions, introducing new

courses and increasing intake capacity in the existing courses, providing better infrastructure facilities like laboratories and libraries to improve quality of education and encouraging higher enrolment in basic sciences, establishing language laboratories in colleges for imparting the much needed language skills to students and establishing electronic networking of higher educational institutions, academic professional bodies and government departments so as to facilitate e-governance and to facilitate public access to information on higher education.

Programmes

EVR Nagammai Scheme

Under EVR Nagammai scheme, free education is given to Post-graduate girl students studying in Arts and Science colleges and belonging to poor and middle class families irrespective of the community, whose parent's annual income is less than Rs.50,000. The proposed outlay for the scheme is Rs. 3.25 crore during the Eleventh Plan period. A sum of Rs.65 lakh has been anticipated to be spent during 2007-08 and the same is proposed for Annual Plan 2008-09.

Strengthening and provision for infrastructure facilities

In order to increase enrolment in higher education without compromising on quality, the basic infrastructure in the colleges has to be improved. It is planned to construct additional classrooms and laboratories in Government colleges. Basic infrastructure facilities such as toilets and approach roads will be provided, along with investment for the multifaceted development of the students such as sports facilities and construction of auditoriums etc. A sum of Rs.67.06 lakh was spent for opening of degree courses in Government colleges and development works during 2007-08. A sum of Rs.132.12 lakh is proposed for these schemes for the Annual Plan 2008-09.

Quality Improvement measures

It is proposed to give training in language skills to the students by setting up language laboratories in Government colleges. In addition, the establishment of digital library and audio visual facilities, training for developing communication skills for increasing employability, creation of database on higher education and e-management are proposed to be implemented during the Annual Plan.

Improving Infrastructure facilities and quality of Legal & University Education

In order to provide infrastructure facilities and to increase wider accessibility to legal education, various schemes will be taken up for implementation during the Plan period such as provision of basic infrastructure facilities like construction of hostels, provision of furniture, and construction of examination halls, etc.,

It is proposed to improve the quality of legal education by improving practical training in Clinical Legal Education with the help of part-time lecturers and senior lawyers.

Construction of buildings with the objective of improving the infrastructure facilities in Universities are proposed at a cost of Rs.2.52 crore for 2008-09.

Tamil Development

Recognizing the ancient richness of Tamil language, the Government of India have notified Tamil as a classical language. Many classical languages have become obsolete but Tamil is distinct as one of the few living languages. The State has been taking various measures to improve the usage of Tamil as official language in government administration and various schemes relating to the development of Tamil. The activities carried out by the State regarding the implementation of Official Language Scheme are the conducting of special inspection regarding the implementation of official language scheme in all government offices, conducting seminars in districts to create awareness regarding the official language scheme, imparting

training to the Government staff in the official language scheme, providing financial assistance for the publication of tamil books, for aged Tamil Scholars and Tamil Stalwarts, awarding prizes for best tamil books, nationalisation of books by famous tamil scholars, translation of the best literary works of India and other countries into tamil and translation of tamil literary works into Hindi.

Objectives

The objectives during the Annual Plan 2008-09 are to take special efforts for using Tamil as administrative language in Government offices in a full-fledged manner for the implementation of official language, to make Tamil the medium of transaction in day to day activities in temples educational institutions, business establishments and courts including High Court, pay special attention for the enrichment of the Tamil language to cope with the changes in the era of Science and Technology development, particularly Information Technology, and make available a comprehensive contemporary Tamil dictionary and etymological dictionary, for the use of researchers in linguistics.

Programmes

Grants, prizes etc. for Tamil Development

The schemes such as nationalization of books written by Tamil Scholars, and awards and prizes for implementation of official language scheme will be implemented.

Implementation of official language

In order to strengthen the use of Tamil as the official language in Government offices, an intensive inspection drive will be launched at the district and sub-district level. Further, to enable Government officers to adopt a uniform set of official forms only in Tamil, an e-book will be published. This book, which will contain the standardized Tamil forms will be made available on the computer for easy downloading.

Preserving the glory of Tamil language

It is estimated that there are 2 lakh palm leaves, which are rare treasures with useful information. Hence it is also proposed to bring out the bibliography of these leaves to ensure that this ancient heritage is preserved.

The writings of the best Tamil scholars which are nationalised will be published and disseminated, both in book form and on the website. Special training classes and workshop on translation will be conducted.

Promotion of Tamil Literature among non-Tamils

In order to enlighten the people of other languages to know the ancient richness and literature of the Tamil language, schemes for the supply of pamphlets about Thiruvalluvar and translated copy of Thirukkural to the tourists visiting the Thiruvalluvar statue at Kanyakumari will be implemented. The Tamil language has to be constantly enriched to keep up with the development of Science and Technology. Importance will be given to inputs like preparation of translation software and creation of fonts converter. Digitalisation of Tamil literature will also be taken up.

Schemes for Tamil Etymological Dictionary Project

A special thrust will be given to bring out the remaining parts of the comprehensive etymological dictionary and similarly the compilation and printing of comprehensive contemporary Tamil Dictionary.

The total outlay for the Tamil Development sector for the Eleventh Plan is Rs. 7.26 crore. An outlay of Rs.2.20 crore is proposed for Annual Plan 2008-09.

An outlay of Rs.203.30 crore is proposed for Higher Education during Eleventh Plan. For the Annual Plan 2008-09 an outlay of Rs. 45.39 crore is proposed to implement the programmes of Higher Education.

Plan Outlay for 2008-09

Totally for the General Education sector an outlay of Rs.791.82 crore has been approved for 2008-09. Of this, an outlay of Rs. 204.50 crore and Rs.13.11 crore is earmarked for Scheduled Caste Sub Plan and Tribal Sub Plan respectively.