



Need for an Action Plan in the Education Sector

What is the issue?

\n\n

\n

- A committee has been constituted under the chairmanship of K Kasturirangan to formulate a new education policy.

\n

- But its time that India assesses the need for an action plan instead, given the challenges and differences in school education.

\n

\n\n

How is the education sector at present?

\n\n

\n

- The infrastructure (school buildings) has certainly shown remarkable improvement in the last few decades.

\n

- Also, the mid-day-meal scheme has made it possible to get the child to the school.

\n

- Besides, enormous amount of investments has gone into the school education sector.

\n

- Also, the number of teachers has gone up substantially and the average pupil-teacher ratio is close to the required levels.

\n

- However, the poor quality of education imparted in most of the government schools is the most worrying scenario.

\n

- Evidently, the learning outcomes have actually come down during the past decade.

\n

\n\n

What are the drawbacks and challenges?

\n\n

- \n
 - **Teachers** - A large number of teachers are not qualified to teach, yet they are teaching.
- \n
 - Roughly, out of 8 million teachers, around 1.4 million fall in this category.
- \n
 - Politics has played a key role, resulting in a skewed distribution of teachers in most of the states.
- \n
 - It's because the tendency is to hang in and around urban areas.
- \n
 - **RTE** - The Right to Education Act did little to address the quality issues.
- \n
 - In some cases, like the no-detention policy and the mandatory provision on qualification and number of teachers, it only created more problems than it solved.
- \n
 - A tedious process of amendment had to be resorted to correct some of the wrongs in the Act.
- \n
 - **Diversity** - Most of the action relating to education lies with the states.
- \n
 - In States like Kerala, a teacher not going to school would invite public criticism.
- \n
 - On the other hand, in some of the states of northern India, teachers consider it their right not to go to the School.
- \n
 - There are instances of these regular teachers employing a “substitute” to represent them and even teach on their behalf.
- \n
 - In any case, the country is too diverse to consider a single mandate by way of policy for the entire country.
- \n

\n\n

What is desired?

\n\n

\n

- Given the regional differences, a national policy is less likely to be effective.
- \n
- The sector actually requires an **action plan** clearly outlining what, how, who and when things should be done.
- \n
- The roles of respective entities should be clearly defined so as to assess their performance.
- \n
- The entire value chain needs to be looked at, understood, and its interventions be clearly outlined.
- \n
- The action plan needs to focus on the teacher who plays a pivotal role in imparting education, including:
- \n

\n\n

\n

- i. the selection process
- \n
- ii. pre-service and in-service trainings
- \n
- iii. transfer and posting
- \n
- iv. engagement of teachers in non-educational activities
- \n
- v. promotional avenues and morale
- \n

\n\n

\n

- An action plan for each state is essential, clearly outlining the roles of the Central government and the respective state government.
- \n
- There will have to be sufficient flexibility in the central schemes to accommodate differences amongst states.
- \n
- The whole approach has to be outcome-based rather than input-based as has been the case so far.
- \n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: Financial Express

\n



IAS PARLIAMENT

Information is Empowering

A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative