



MAPPING EDUCATIONAL POLICY STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES IN TAMIL NADU

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This study was made possible by a grant from the Sir Ratan Tata Trust.

Educational Policy Research Series
Volume I Number 1
April 2009

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SETTING THE CONTEXT

"I say without fear of my figures being challenged successfully, that today India is more illiterate than it was fifty or a hundred years ago, because the British administrators, when they came to India, instead of taking hold of things as they were, began to root them out. They scratched the soil and began to look at the root, and left the root like that, and the beautiful tree perished... ancient schools have gone by the board, because there was no recognition for these schools, and the schools established after the European pattern were too expensive for the people, and therefore they could not possibly overtake the thing. I defy anybody to fulfill a programme of compulsory primary education of these masses inside of a century. This very poor country of mine is ill-able to sustain such an expensive method of education. Our state would (should) revive the old village schoolmaster and dot every village with a school both for boys and girls."

- Mahatma Gandhi in a speech at Chatham House, London, on October 20, 1931

Much water has flown under the bridge since Mahatma Gandhi spoke these words.

Going by the 2001 Census, India's literacy rate is 64.8%, which is a remarkable rise from a mere 12% at the time of Independence. The provision of free, universal and compulsory education for all children in the age group of 6-14, a cherished national ideal that was given overriding priority by incorporation as a Directive Policy in Article 45 of the Constitution, is now seen as a Fundamental Right of every child.¹ Yet, all is not well because the number of illiterates aged seven and above today does

¹ See for a brief overview of the lively public debate, <http://education.nic.in/cd50years/r/2R/I3/2RI30101.htm>, and for details on the Right of Children to Compulsory and Free Education Bill, 2008, in <http://www.educationforallinindia.com/right-to-education-bill-2008.pdf>.

14 States and UTs have Compulsory Education Acts, but few of them enforce it effectively. Under the Tamil Nadu Compulsory Elementary Education Act, 1994, the duty of the government to provide the necessary infrastructure (schools and teachers) for ensuring UEE and the duty of parents to send every child of school going age to school has also been categorically declared. The Act is in force with participating community institutions like VECs, without invoking penal provisions on parents.

exceed the population of the whole country at the time of its independence, and India still holds the largest segment of the world's illiterates.²

Since Independence, India's population has more than doubled. Tamil Nadu's population stood at 62,110,839 during 2001, making it the sixth most populous State in India. Although the rise in literacy rate is also remarkable, the increase in sheer numbers of illiterates (300.14 illiterates according to the 2001 census) creates an acute problem. An advantage of Tamil Nadu is that it is one of the few States which shows decline in decadal percentage change in population in every decade since 1971, and the trend of decline is seen among practically all its districts, which means that there is a reduction in the target of school-age population over time.³

In this context, the position of Tamil Nadu is relatively better. In terms of the Education Development Index (EDI), Tamil Nadu is ranked third among all States in the country in elementary education, with 100 % retention rate in primary level. Concerted efforts towards the goal of Universal Elementary

Year	Primary			Upper Primary		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1991-92	4.5	3.6	8.2	1.9	1.4	3.3
1995-96	4.4	3.8	8.2	2.1	1.7	3.8
2000-01	2.9	2.8	5.7	1.8	1.7	3.6
2001-02	2.9	2.8	5.7	1.8	1.7	3.5
2002-03	3.3	3.0	6.3	1.9	1.7	3.6
2003-04	3.4	3.2	6.6	1.9	1.7	3.6
2004-05	3.3	3.1	6.4	1.9	1.8	3.7
2005-06	3.3	3.1	6.4	1.9	1.7	3.6

Source: Policy Note, School Education Department for various years.

Education (UEE) during the last decade have effected rapid increase in the number of institutions, teachers and students in Tamil Nadu.

² As Govinda and Biswal mention, who are the illiterates in India is a difficult proposition to examine, as they are found across all demographic, socio-economic and age groups, showing that inefficiency in primary education continue to be a major factor for continuation of illiteracy. (UNESCO Background paper prepared for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2006, *Literacy for Life, Mapping literacy in India: who are the illiterates and where do we find them?*, R. Govinda, and K.Biswal, 2005. (<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001460/146016e.pdf>))

³ See R. Akila and R. Vidyasagar, SSA Mid-Term Assessment of Education for All Goals in Tamil Nadu, Commissioned by NUEPA, 2008.

At present, millions of children attend close to 45,000 primary and middle (also called upper primary) schools in Tamil Nadu. Looking at the enrolment data over the recent years (Table 2), one might worry that between 1991-92 and 2005-06⁴, enrolment in primary schools has come down from 8.2 million to 6.4 million, but this is due to the gradual reduction in the proportion of young children in the population. At the upper primary level, the absolute number of children has gone up marginally and the participation of girls at all levels of school education is on the increase.

Tamil Nadu has achieved near universal access at both primary and upper primary levels, with its net enrolment rate at primary levels marking 99.4 and at upper primary 98.6. Attendance rates are reported to be over 97%, and pupil-teacher ratios are satisfactory, despite the many multi-grade classrooms in single-teacher schools. Some other indicators of progress, collected by the annual District Information System on Education (DISE) data of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), namely completion rate, retention rate and drop out rate have also been showing that children are progressing well at the lower primary level, although the transition between class 5 and 6 needs to improve. Both social and gender gaps are closing but cannot be neglected.⁵

The fact that children are in schools is not adequate to indicate that all is well in school. For one, the SSA figures of 2007-08 suggest that there are a little more than 1 lakh poor, migrating and working out-of-school children in the State. And for another, it is important that schooling must be meaningful and purposeful. Thus, the task of public education is a huge one.

⁴ See for a detailed discussion of status of Tamil Nadu under all EFA goals, R. Akila and R. Vidyasagar, SSA Education For All Mid-decade Assessment Reports (2007), commissioned by the National University of Education, Planning and Administration, New Delhi; and P. Radhakrishnan and R. Akila for EFA analysis in Tamil Nadu during the 1990s in 'Progress Towards Education For All: The Case of Tamil Nadu', in India Education Report: A Profile of Basic Education, R. Govinda (ed), Oxford University Press, 2002.

⁵ R. Akila, Reaching Global Concerns in Primary Education: Some Gender concerns in Tamil Nadu, Economic and Political Weekly, V32(25), June 2004.

The National Policy on Education (1992) emphasises three objectives, namely: (i) universal access and enrolment, (ii) universal retention of children up to 14 years of age; and (iii) a substantial improvement in the quality of education to enable all children to achieve essential levels of learning. The policy underscores that education needs to be managed in an atmosphere of utmost intellectual rigor, seriousness of purpose and, at the same time, of freedom essential for innovation and creativity.

This paper is primarily a descriptive exercise of mapping structures and functions salient to education in the Tamil Nadu setting. It is an attempt to understand the administrative patterns of public education in India, particularly school education in Tamil Nadu. An in-built objective is to explore the labyrinth of powers and functions in understanding the jurisdiction for educational policy, the issues of management and affiliations of schools, the state agencies for converting policy into action, and the processes at the level of schools and classrooms which make education meaningful to children. Further, the paper discusses the kind of classroom processes at work in the State, and thereby indicates the scope and direction for introducing peace education to children.

The following section outlines the educational administrative system in India with focus on the existing scenario in Tamil Nadu. Section III presents a case study of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan which functions in a “mission mode” in the State. The purpose of this case study is to explore the possibility of NGO-Government partnership there and also in other Directorates like the Directorate of Teacher Education and Research Training (DTERT). Section IV focuses on the issue of quality in education, exploring the way forward.

II

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

The Framework

The Constitution of India provides the basic legal framework for the legislative authority between union and constituent States. The 42nd Amendment of the Constitution has placed education in the concurrent list, making it a joint responsibility of the Centre and the States. Education in India is administered at three levels, namely by the Central government at the national level, by the State government at the state level, and by the local bodies at the district level. In order to implement educational policies and plans effectively, both the Central and State governments enact laws from time to time.

The engagement of local government bodies like Corporations, Municipalities and Panchayats makes the administrative system sensitive to local demands and conditions, and facilitates participation of local communities. The role of Local Bodies is, however, considerably small beyond primary or middle levels of education. In the case of higher education (colleges and universities), State Governments are required to follow the norms of the University Grants Commission. Thus while school education is primarily the responsibility of State governments and Local Bodies, higher education is a shared responsibility of Central and State Governments.

The Centre

The Department of Education (along with its agencies) is the key actor to ensure that education functions as an integrated system. It is a part of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), which is headed by a Cabinet Minister in turn assisted by a Minister of State directly in charge of the Education portfolio.

The MHRD was formed in 1985 through an Amendment to the Government of India Rules, 1961 and is in charge of two departments namely Department of School Education and Literacy, and Department of Higher Education. Under these departments, a number of divisions or units deal with policy making in various aspects of educational development. The Secretariat of the Department of Education is headed by a Secretary and is helped by Special Secretaries and Education Advisors for academic, policy and legal matters concerning education. Certain national or regional institutions are created from time to time and controlled under this body. MHRD provides guidance and direction to State Governments and Union Territories (UTs) for formulating and implementing plans, monitoring progress, and compiling statistical information.

The Planning Commission also plays a crucial role in that the Centre and State draft their 5-Year Plans and also Annual Plans based on the guidelines issued by the Commission, defining the phases in which they should be implemented, assigning their priorities and resource allocation. The Commission's Education Division coordinates the education plans of the States, UTs and the central agencies including the University Grants Commission and the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). It also coordinates the national-educational plan with the development plans in other sectors, assessing and indicating adjustments needed in the plan.⁶

Besides these, planning and policy making at the central level are also guided by the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE), whose members include Ministers of Education of different States and UTs, and eminent educationists. National level institutions like the National University of Education Planning and Administration (NUEPA) and the NCERT are some key advisory bodies for strengthening and

⁶ Tamil Nadu Human Development Report, 2003 an important contribution of the State Planning Commission, notes that Tamil Nadu's Human Development Index is 0.657 compared to 0.571 for India as a whole. (http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/stateplan/sdr_pdf/shdr_tn03.pdf)

improving the educational administration and in formulating and implementing policies and programmes⁷.

The State

State governments have practically complete responsibility for administration of school education. 98% of the personnel engaged in education are under the control of State Governments and 90% of the total expenditure on education from public revenue passes through State budgets.⁸

While each State may have its own machinery for administration under a Department of Education, the following description details the status of Tamil Nadu in particular.

Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu has a well-conceived social sector vision: all children should be well-nourished, educated and gain equal access to economic, social and political opportunities for development, including those who do not benefit from mainstream social services and development initiatives. This is partly a result of its early beginnings in the field of public education administration.⁹

A brief history

The British wished to create a public education administration that they could control.¹⁰ A Government inquiry into the state of education in the Madras

⁷ The National Council for Teacher Education maintains standards for teacher education programmes, and offers pre-service and in-service training to school teachers through District Institutes for Education and Training (DIETs).

⁸ S.R. Pandya, *Educational Administration In India At The Macro Level*, Himalaya Publishing House, 2001.

⁹ See Appendix I.

¹⁰ The idea was to train Indians to work as clerks for the administration, and this was one argument also for changing the medium of instruction from the vernacular to English.

Presidency, initiated by Sir Thomas Munro in 1822, showed that there was approximately one indigenous school per thousand population. Wood's Despatch (1854) was instrumental in organizing the Department of Education, with a Directorate of Public Instruction and its inspecting staff. It also mentioned a broad system of grant-in-aid for encouraging private participation in primary education in the Madras Presidency.¹¹

As early as the 1870s (under the Elementary Education Act, 1870, to be precise), the British viewed Local Bodies as empowered self-governing bodies to levy local tax for elementary education. Over subsequent decades, their powers were further strengthened under the Madras City Municipal Corporation Act, 1919, the Madras Districts Municipalities Act 1920, the Madras Elementary Education Act, 1920, the Madras Panchayats Act, 1958 and the Madurai Municipal Corporation Act, 1971. Significantly, the Madras Elementary Education Act 1920 (now revised in 1994) gave the responsibility for elementary education to Local Bodies, and also gave them powers to levy special cess towards the same. The Act also directed them to introduce compulsory primary education in select areas based on their financial position. In 1925, the Report of the Elementary Education Survey of the Madras Presidency declared that there were three agencies managing elementary schools in the province: i) private bodies, mission and non-mission including private individuals and teacher managers, ii) local boards and municipal councils, and iii) government. All these legislations empowered Local Bodies to open new schools, manage schools, post and transfer teachers, maintain of buildings, provide school facilities, etc. As a result, the Directorate of School Education was entrusted only to supervise the schools under Local Bodies.

¹¹ For a detailed educational history of Madras Presidency, R. Akila, *'Caste and Gender in Women's Education: A Study of Tamil Nadu, 1854-1996'*, unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of Madras.

However, in 1981,¹² the Government of Tamil Nadu transferred the education-related powers of Local Bodies to the Directorate of School Education, and also absorbed the service of teachers working in the Panchayat Union Schools into its fold. In 1989, the State Government also transferred the education-related powers vested with Corporations and Municipalities to this Directorate and all the teachers working in municipalities and corporations were also absorbed as government servants. However, recognizing the community development role that the Local Bodies were performing, the Panchayat president, being democratically elected, is still a nodal official for all development activities in her/his area of control. Even under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, a Panchayat president is the head of the Village Education Committee (VEC), and has authority to discuss and approve financial budgets and operate the joint account with the head-master for all VEC expenditure. Only in terms of direct conduct of schools, the powers of Local Bodies were altered, and they are vested mainly with responsibility to maintenance of school buildings that were originally under their control. School buildings in Corporation and Municipal areas are maintained from the fund collected in the form of educational cess.

Tamil Nadu has thus witnessed early involvement of Local Bodies in the administration of education in general and that of primary education in particular.

Structural Foundations

Having said that, it is relevant to consider the structural foundations of the educational administration in the State in more detail. Thanks to the importance of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in the efforts of Education For All (EFA), a child begins to get attention for education from age 3, through provision of

¹² Personnel and Administrative Reforms (per.p) department, G.O.Ms.No.188, Dated the 28th December, 1976. <http://www.tn.gov.in/gorders/par/par-e-188.htm>

two years of pre-primary education¹³. The structure of education in the State is based on the mandatory national level pattern with 12 years of schooling (10+2+3), consisting of eight years of elementary education, that is, with entry age in class 1 at 5+, five years of primary and three years of upper primary or middle school education for the age groups of 6-11 and 11-14 years respectively, followed by secondary and higher secondary education of two years each.¹⁴

At the end of completing high school, a student can join the Industrial Training Institute (ITI) and Polytechnic or other diplomas. At the completion of higher secondary school, s/he can pursue studies either higher education in general academic streams in universities/ colleges or in technical and professional courses such B.E., MBBS, Teacher Training etc. After higher secondary or the +2 stage, the first University degree takes three years to complete followed by Post Graduation course of two years. Students can also join Courses like B.Ed., and B.L. after completion of graduation, and on completion of Post Graduation, a student may work for M.Phil/Ph.D degree.

Figure 1: The Education Ladder in Tamil Nadu

<p>STEP 7: POSTGRADUATE After completing graduation, a student may opt for post-graduate studies up to the doctoral level.</p>
<p>STEP 6: UNDERGRADUATE Higher education, which is completed in college. The course may vary from 3 years to 5 years according to the subject pursued by the student.</p>

¹³ ICDS is the major public provider of ECCE. Despite its success in Tamil Nadu, it is seen that early childhood care is better addressed than pre-primary education per se, which continues to be its weakest link. Although private nurseries function, the State covers almost 5 times more children than the private (R. Akila and R. Vidyasagar, SSA Mid-Term Assessment of EFA Goals in Tamil Nadu, Commissioned by NUEPA, 2007) .

¹⁴ It is true that very few students who enter Class 1 successfully reach up to Class 12, owing to the numerous reasons that cause their dropping out. Recently with the efforts of the SSA, drop out is being well contained in the lower primary classes, but the transition from lower to upper and later is still a matter of concern for EFA.

STEP 5: HIGHER SECONDARY Students studying in classes 11 and 12 (also called +2).
STEP 4: SECONDARY Students in classes 9 and 10.
STEP 3: UPPER PRIMARY / MIDDLE Children studying in classes 6-8.
STEP 2: PRIMARY Children aged 5+ enter primary level and continue until they are 11 years, studying in classes from first to fifth.
STEP 1: PRE-PRIMARY Children of 3-5 years of age studying in nursery, lower kindergarten and upper kindergarten.

A number of institutions are engaged in the process of taking students up this ladder. School-level institutions may be categorized as public or private. The former includes the State Government, Corporation, Municipality and local schools which function with public money and are managed by the government. The other category in public institutions, namely government-aided (also called aided) schools are those which are run by private management with funds from the government for meeting teachers' salaries, etc, but cannot charge tuition fees or other charges like the unaided schools do. The majority of schools that dot the rural areas are run by the Panchayat Unions, and are also called Local Body Schools or District Board Schools in earlier parlance.

There are 385 Community Development Blocks and 27 Urban Blocks across Tamil Nadu. Community development blocks are administered by a Block Development Officer (BDO), while urban wards or zones fall under Municipalities or Corporations. These blocks contain the many panchayat union primary and middle schools, or Local Body Schools. Government investments have financed a tremendous growth in the number of such schools and in schooling infrastructure,

so that Tamil Nadu has a primary school within a radius of 1 km distance in every habitation with more than 300 people.¹⁵

Contrarily, private schools may or may not be aided (funded) or recognized by the government, and are managed by private bodies or trusts.¹⁶ They are often the Matriculation schools in Tamil Nadu. It is seen that in the last two decades, the role of the private unaided sector has grown from a mere 0.2% share to 4% of all schools in the State¹⁷. It is debated whether quality differences across various types of schools is a consequence of the fact that the government has been shifting its financial burden — caused by huge enrolments — to the unaided sector which impose fees and other charges to households.

The fact remains that there are three types of management namely government, government-aided and unaided, the last category being either recognized or unrecognized by the government. By the most recent District Information System on Education(DISE) data of SSA for 2008-09 (see Appendix Table), Tamil Nadu has 34,180 primary schools, of which about 68% are run by government, inclusive of local bodies,¹⁸ 14% are private aided and 17% are private unaided. It has 9,938

¹⁵ Among others, Anjini Kochar has explored (Centre for Research on Economic Development and Policy Reform, Working Paper No. 97, Emerging Challenges for Indian Education Policy - <http://scid.stanford.edu/pdf/credpr97.pdf>) the role of public schooling expenditures by the government for initiatives intended to improve schooling infrastructure and school quality. These include Operation Blackboard, District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) and recently SSA.

¹⁶ Non-government organisations also manage a substantial number of primary and middle schools, although majority of them are government aided private schools receiving cent percent grants from the state government towards salaries. Apart from some of the leading Christian missionaries, the Ramakrishna Mission, the organisation of Muslim educational institutions and various welfare associations and educational trusts also run educational institutions in the state.

¹⁷ Malathy Duraiswamy, 'Cost Quality and Outcomes of Primay Schooling in Rural Tamil Nadu: Does School Management Matter?' in Neelam Sood (ed) Management of School Education in India, NIEPA, 2003.

¹⁸ Disaggregated DISE data on government primary schools shows that in the year 2008-09, of the 23395 total schools, a great majority namely 21888 schools are Local Body schools, while 1188 are Welfare schools under Adi Dravida department and only 319 are run directly by the department of education. However, the proportionate share of department of education versus local bodies reverses at the high school higher secondary levels.

middle schools of which 76% are government, 17% are private aided and less than 7% private unaided. Among high schools, the total is 4,574 schools, of which 48% are government, 13% are private aided and 39% are private unaided. Among higher secondary schools, the total is 5,030 schools, of which 42% are government, 21% are private aided and 37% are private unaided.

Management Types

A fair idea of the magnitude of this management structure may be had from the following Table¹⁹:

Table 2: Schools and Enrolment by type of Management in Tamil Nadu, 2005-2006

Type of Schools	Type of Management	Number of Institutions	Enrolment (in lakhs)
Primary Schools	Government	1529	1.73
	Municipal/Corporation	896	1.34
	Panchayat Union	21906	19.75
	Private /Government aided	5255	10.97
	Nursery & Primary Schools	4622	5.03
	Total	34208	38.82
Middle Schools	Government	390	0.92
	Municipal/Corporation	453	1.46
	Panchayat Union	5458	13.13
	Private /Government aided	1716	7.97
	Total	8017	23.48
	Total (Primary+ Middle)	42225	62.30
High Schools	Government	2016	8.33
	Municipal/Corporation	110	0.50
	Private /Government aided	613	3.12
	Unaided	179	0.43
	Anglo Indian(High School)	12	0.10
	Matriculation(High School)	2053	6.17
	Central Board(High School)	63	0.51
	Total of all High Schools	5046	19.16
Hr. Sec. Schools	Government	1696	18.89
	Municipal/Corporation	93	1.33
	Private /Government aided	1062	14.77
	Unaided	139	0.75

¹⁹ For a detailed picture of district-wise number of schools by levels and management, see Appendix Table.

Type of Schools	Type of Management	Number of Institutions	Enrolment (in lakhs)
	Total(State Board)	2990	35.74
	Anglo Indian(Hr. Sec.)	29	0.42
	Matriculation(Hr. Sec.)	1421	11.26
	Central Board(Hr. Sec.)	96	1.32
	Total of all Hr. Sec. Schools	4536	48.74
Total Schools	Government	5631	29.87
	Municipal/Corporation	1552	4.63
	Panchayat Union	27364	32.88
	Private /Government aided	8964	38.01
	Nursery & Primary Schools	4622	5.03
	Anglo Indian	41	0.52
	Matriculation	3474	17.43
	Central Board	159	1.83
	Grand Total	51807	130.20

Source: DISE data, 2005-06, SSA, Tamil Nadu.

As indicated above, there is need to clarify about the different board schools.

Government of Tamil Nadu has set up some advisory bodies and boards for strengthening educational planning and administration in the State, and also allows these different boards to establish and conduct schools.²⁰

Schools that run under the State government or that receive funds from the State are mainly affiliated to the Tamil Nadu Board of Secondary Education, established in the year 1910, and are called State Board Schools. While up to the secondary (class 10) level, the following streams of education are offered by this Board, namely, the Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) stream, the Anglo-Indian stream, the Oriental School Leaving Certificate (OSLC) stream and the Matriculation stream, there is a single unified stream leading to the award of the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC), i.e., through class 11 and 12.

²⁰ For instance, the Matriculation Board is an advisory body to advise the Director of School Education from time to time on all matters relating to matriculation education, namely, the courses of study, syllabus, textbooks for these schools, etc. The Directorate of Matric Schools was started in 2001. The Committee on Nursery and Primary Schools, 2000, State Level Empowered Committee for SSA, 2001-02, Committee on Codification of Education Rules, 2002-03, and Committee on Revision of Syllabus, 2003-04, are some examples of advisory bodies formed from time to time.

In general, apart from the State Board, there are the Central Board, Matriculation and Anglo-Indian Board schools. They are unaided by the State and follow different curricula unlike the State curriculum up to high school, but converge into either State Board or Central Board at the higher secondary level.

Earlier while Kendriya Vidyalayas, funded by the Centre, were the major Central Board schools, during the recent few decades a number of schools affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) have been started. While the Central Board conducts exams and looks after the functioning of schools accredited to the central education system, they are financed and managed by private trusts and societies. The CBSE prepares the syllabus for Class 9 to Class 12 to schools affiliated with it, and teaches in English or Hindi medium. Most of the private schools in Tamil Nadu are either affiliated to the CBSE, Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) Board, or Matriculation Board.

Ango-Indian schools fall under ICSE. The ICSE works in accordance with the recommendations of the New Education Policy 1986 and teaches through the medium of English. Private candidates are not permitted to appear for this examination. In all subjects other than Science and Computers (for which lab work is tested), students must submit compulsory coursework assignments, which are counted at 20% to 50% of overall marks.

Matriculation Schools are also English medium self-financing institutions and follow a curriculum and syllabus framed by the Board of Matriculation Schools.

Matriculation Schools were originally under the University but as they began to mushroom in great numbers they were brought under the control of the School Education Department in 1976. The Code of Regulation of Matriculation Schools drafted during 1978 is still in force; however for the sake of granting recognition, the

Government has prescribed definite norms with regard to provision of infrastructure facilities, keeping in view the safety of children.²¹

A Summary Table is presented to recapitulate the governance aspects:

Figure 2: Education Governing Bodies in Tamil Nadu

<p>THE STATE GOVERNMENT BOARD Schools are either directly run by government department or mostly run under Local Bodies, or under private bodies with government aid.</p>
<p>THE CENTRAL BOARD OF SECONDARY EDUCATION (CBSE): This is the main governing body of education system in India. It has control over the central education system.</p>
<p>THE COUNCIL OF INDIAN SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION (CISCE) It is a board for Anglo Indian Studies in India. It conducts two examinations 'Indian Certificate of Secondary Education' and 'Indian School Certificate'. Indian Certificate of secondary education is a class-10 examination for those Indian students who have just completed class 10th and Indian school certificate is a class-12 public examination conducted for those studying in class 12th. In Tamil Nadu, it merges with the State Board after class 10.</p> <p>MATRICULATION BOARD: It is a board with curriculum and syllabi formed until Class 10, after which the schools under it merge with other Boards.</p>
<p>THE NATIONAL OPEN SCHOOL It is also known as National Institute of Open Schooling. It was established by the Government of India in 1989, to help those who cannot attend formal schools.</p>

That brings one to recount that there are different types of management with different types of funding, and also different types of curricula under different boards. So, what is the State control on these, and how is the structural administration of public education designed in Tamil Nadu?

²¹ The Kumbakonam fire incident in a private school with thatched roof and kitchen killing 83 young children in 2004 is well-known. Although civil society has been demanding more stringent inspections for recognition, still a number of ill-kept private schools are found across the State. Despite the poor physical and learning conditions, people clamour to get admission into these fee-paying schools, often for the charm of English medium education. Considering the exponential growth of private nursery schools in the state, the Justice K Sampath Commission of Inquiry into the Kumbakonam fire incident recommended that a separate Directorate for nursery schools must be constituted.

School administration in Tamil Nadu

There may have been some apprehension from the earlier discussion that a chief objective of school organisation seems to be to prepare students for certification through examination. From a development perspective, schooling is a dynamic process which maintains the historical continuity of a society by securing its past achievements, consolidates its spiritual strength and guarantees future progress. As any system management, this too involves optimum use of human resources, money, materials, machines and methods, guided by clear vision and careful application of skills in planning, organising, motivating and controlling.²² As Education is a vital sub-component in the overall development plan of a State, it is relevant to start from the state advisory body, namely the State Planning Commission.

The Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission was constituted on 25th May 1971 under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister to help the Government to implement its policies by more efficient utilisation of the material, capital and human resources within the State and outside. Education is one of its major thematic areas of focus, and the technical division of the Commission undertakes analytical work on contemporary development issues and provides issue-based notes and briefs, showing trends of human development indicators, millennium development goals (MDGs), poverty, employment etc. Further, the Commission prepares Annual and 5-Year Plans. The Commission was last reconstituted on 19.05.2006, and is at work on the 11th Five Year Plan, besides the preparation of the second Tamil Nadu State Human Development Report with the theme 'Ensuring Equity'.

A cursory glance at the 10th Plan would show that the role of the Commission in advising the government on maintaining and strengthening progress in education is crucial. Keeping the objectives of the government in the different levels of education,

²² J.C. Aggarwal, *Organisation and Practice of Modern Indian Education*, Shipra Publications, 2002.

it states the requirements for continuing existing schemes, and provides pointers for improvement. To take an example, under the scheme of 'Teaching Quality Improvement Fund' by which government provides financial assistance to all Government Panchayat Union Primary and Middle Schools to meet the expenditure for purchase of chalk-pieces, dusters, pointer maps etc, it calculates that Rs.46 lakh is anticipated to be spent during 2007-08 and proposes Rs.50 lakh for the Annual Plan 2008-09. Projecting the future needs, it recommends an amount of Rs.3.50 crore for the Eleventh Five Year Plan. Such guidance is vital in terms of the variety of welfare schemes that the Government of Tamil Nadu has been providing to children.

One of the most important and innovative schemes of the Tamil Nadu government is the noon meal scheme. It was introduced in 1982 for children in classes 1 to 5 and extended in 1984 up to class 10, with the objective of not only providing nutritional support but also achieving universal enrolment and retention in primary school.²³

The government also distributes free text books to children through various departments including Education, Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare, Backward Classes (BC) and Most Backward Classes (MBC), and the Directorate of Rehabilitation. There are also other welfare schemes like free distribution of uniforms, bus passes and even bags and slippers, etc which aim to reduce the opportunity cost of education on parents thus ensuring attendance and retention of children at least up to class 8. These schemes involve huge costs. For instance, in the year 2007-08:²⁴

- It cost about Rs. 25 crore to supply free text books to all children from classes 1 to 8 in Government, Local Body, Aided and Self-financing recognized schools adopting State syllabus irrespective of enrolment in Noon Meal Programme; and

²³ Data in the Human Development Report for Tamil Nadu, 2003, shows 40,437 school meal centres which feed nearly 6.4 million children in the age group 5 to 14.

²⁴ State Planning Commission, Annual Plan 2008-09, Government of Tamil Nadu.
http://www.tn.gov.in/spc/annualplan/ap2008_09/2_22_GENERAL_EDUCATION.pdf

- It cost about Rs. 46.5 crore to supply free uniforms to all students in classes 1 to 8 who are enrolled in the noon-meal scheme, an ongoing scheme since 1985.

The State Planning Commission not only guides the government in matters of finance but also in terms of overall vision and direction. For instance, improving the quality of elementary education, and reaching the un-reached are the thrust areas for the Eleventh Plan. Now that the State has achieved near universal enrolment and retention in the primary sector, its challenge lies in making the teaching-learning process more effective and child-friendly, and in reaching out to the out-of-school children, children with special needs, SC/STs, and also girls in certain backward pockets.

The government of Tamil Nadu has 34 Ministerial Departments headed by 29 Ministers, under the Chief Minister.²⁵ Instead of a single Department of Education, headed by a single Minister, Tamil Nadu has a Department of School Education and a Department of Higher Education, under different Ministers. Policy Notes presented by each department in the Legislative Assembly every year provide a comprehensive account of government vision, policies and schemes under implementation, issues and strategies, financial budgets and plan outlays.²⁶

The departments of education perform regulatory, operational and directive functions through the Secretariat, Directorate and Inspectorate²⁷. The Secretariat performs the functions of policy-making and co-ordination, the Directorate performs the functions of direction, regulation and operation, and the Inspectorate supervises the whole of the schooling process as it is expected to happen.

²⁵ Data is as on February 2009.

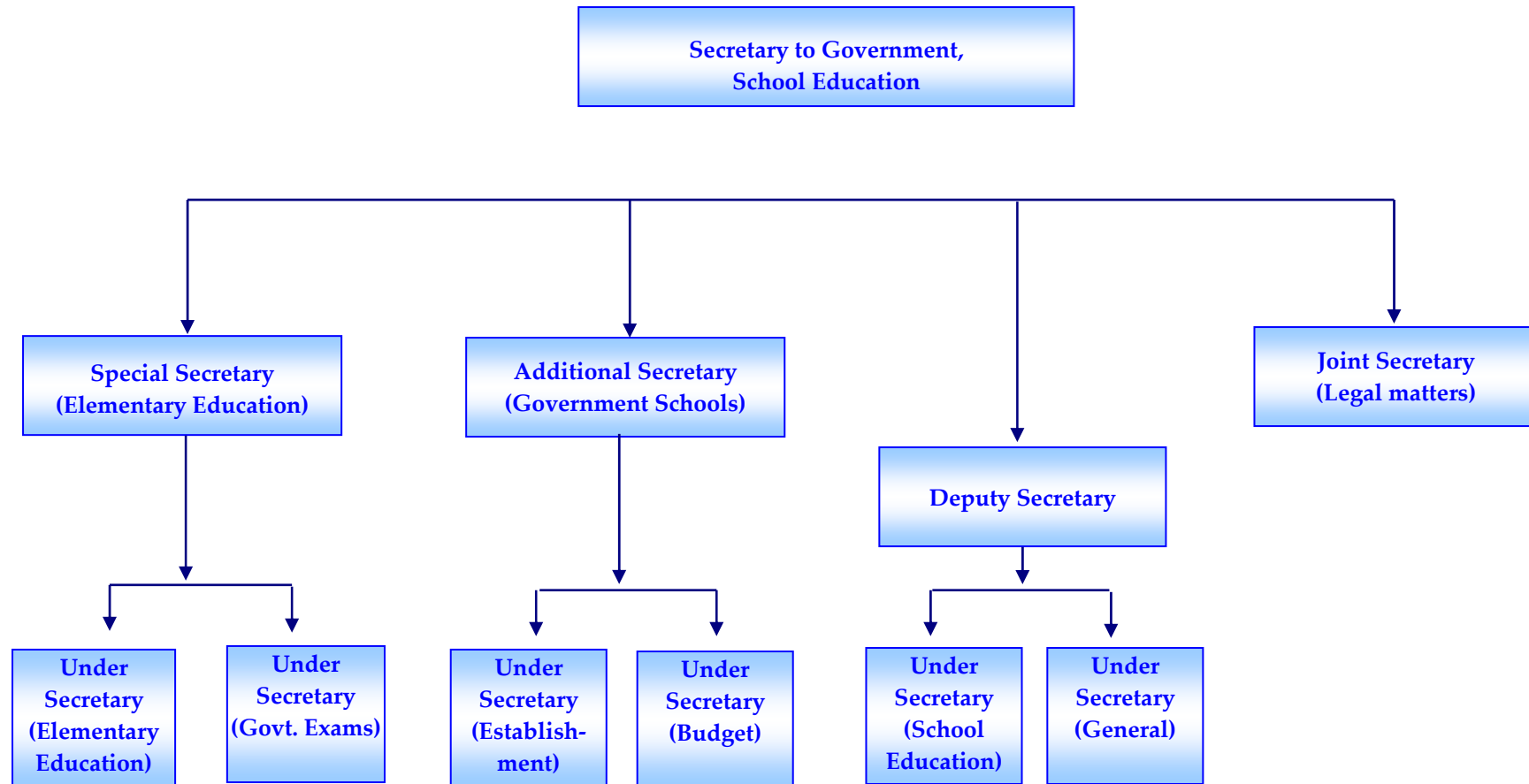
²⁶ School Education Department, *Policy Note On Demand No. 43. School Education 2008-2009*, Government Of Tamil Nadu, 2008. http://www.tn.gov.in/policynotes/pdf/school_education.pdf.

²⁷ For a national understanding of education administration at the macro level, S.R.Pandya, *Administration and Management of Education*, Himalaya Publishing House, 2001.

The Secretary (who may also be called Principal Secretary depending on her/ his years of service), School Education Department, is the Chief Executive Officer who assists the School Education Minister in all functions related to school education in the State including planning, budgeting and administration. It is an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) posting, and may be occupied by a person without technical knowledge on education. S/he is assisted by a Special Secretary (Elementary Education), an Additional Secretary (Government Schools), both of whom are also IAS officers, a Joint Secretary (Legal Matters), a Deputy Secretary (Private Schools) and six Under Secretaries. Although the Under Secretaries are assigned with specific tasks related to School Education (including high and higher levels), Elementary Education (meaning primary and middle levels), Establishment, Budget, Legal matters and General, they basically take care of all key activities pertaining to the ten Directorates which function under the umbrella of School Education Department.

The functions assigned to the School Education Department include overall control of the education department, policy formulation, and finalisation of the annual budget relating to school education, administrative sanctions for various projects and programmes, and guidance to other departments in education and training aspects.

Figure 3 Organisation of Secretariat – School Education



The ten Directorates under the control of School Education Department²⁸ are:

1. Directorate of Elementary Education
2. State Project Directorate, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA²⁹)
3. Directorate of School Education
4. Directorate of Matriculation Schools
5. Directorate of Government Examination
6. Directorate of Teacher Education Research and Training
7. Directorate of Non-formal and Adult Education
8. Directorate of Public Libraries
9. Teachers Recruitment Board
10. Tamil Nadu Text-book Corporation

Of these, while the Directorate of School Education covers High and Higher Secondary schools, but looks after all administrative matters related to all classes from 1 to 12, if these schools may be conducting from Class 1 onwards. The Directorate of Elementary Education and State Project Directorate, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan deal with Primary and Middle schools, reaching to children until class 8 with special focus on children aged 6-14. The Directorate of Matriculation Schools directs all matric schools, i.e., upto class 10 level, while the Directorate of Government Examination is concerned with board exams of class 10 and 12, covering all boards. Teachers Recruitment Board and Tamil Nadu Text-book Corporation provide teaching personnel and teaching material for the entire school education department. The CBSE is outside of this system as it is centrally administered.

²⁸ See Appendix IV for a directory listing each Directorate's address and functions.

²⁹ District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), a World Bank funded project was in function in a few districts prior to SSA. SSA is basically a project under the Elementary Education Directorate, as both are concerned with children until Class 8. It covers all districts.

The following flow-chart attempts to show the way the Directorates are structured in the bureaucracy, such that government mechanisms for implementation and administrative control are available at State, District, Block and School levels (next page). For the sake of clarity, the design of SSA is also presented separately later.

In the context of the present discussion, it is relevant to look at the administrative divisions under i) Directorate of Elementary Education, ii) Directorate of School Education, and iii) SSA.

To begin with, Tamil Nadu presently has 32 districts³⁰, headed by District Collectors. Districts are divided into Taluks for the purpose of Revenue Administration, and headed by Tahsildars. Taluks consist of a group of Revenue Villages, coordinated by the Panchayat Unions (also called as Blocks) for the rural areas. Panchayat Unions consist of one or more panchayat villages and rural habitations headed by a Union Chairman with political leadership. In the case of urban areas, the development administration is taken care by urban Local Bodies, either called as Corporations, Municipalities, or Town Panchayats³¹ depending on the size of the urban area.

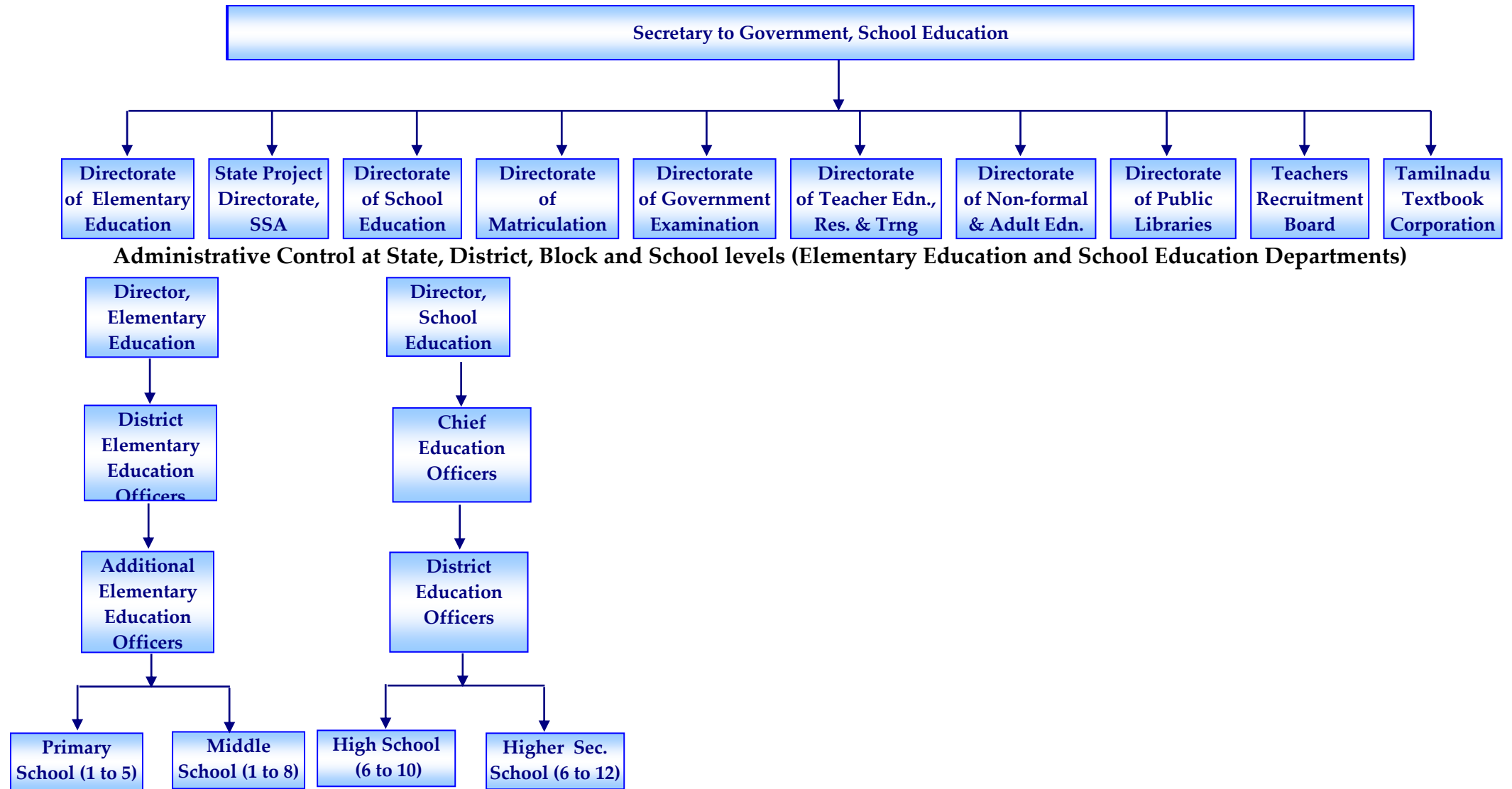
Against this background, the administrative set up under the Directorate of Elementary Education is such that all primary and middle schools in the state fall under the Director of Elementary education. There is a Chief Education Officer (CEO) for each district, under whom 2 or 3 District Education Officers function to control schools that fall under their district. Inspectors who visit schools take care of the teaching-learning aspects in the schools that fall under their jurisdiction.

Government teachers who hold the direct link between the government and the children convert classroom policy into action.

³⁰ With Tirupur district newly formed in October 2008, the major administrative units of the state constitutes 39 Lok Sabha constituencies, 234 Assembly constituencies, 32 districts, 10 municipal corporations, 145 municipalities, 561 town panchayats and 12,618 village panchayats.

³¹Town Panchayat is a transitional body between Rural and Urban Local Bodies.

Figure 4 Administrative Structure of School Education in Tamil Nadu



Similar to the Directorate of Elementary Education, the administration under the Directorate of School Education (as already shown in flow-chart) goes on from the Director, School Education (DSE) on top to each Chief Education Officer (CEO) posted in the districts, to the one or more District Education Officers (DEO) posted in every block of a district depending on the size of the blocks, who then in turn directly deal with the primary and middle schools in their district with the help of school inspectors, head teachers and teachers.

In each of these bureaucratic set-ups routed through the districts, the District Collector holds a key position. S/he is the overall authority for all educational activities in the district, as the CEOs and DEOs report to her/him and participate in the various review meetings conducted from time to time in the Collectorate. The Collector is a gateway for welfare from the State to the people at the grassroots, in terms of both introducing policy and implementing existing schemes, and can dynamically bring changes through innovative approaches.

In comparison to the above two, SSA has a less bureaucratic and more open scope for partnership activities with NGO. For this reason, some more discussion on SSA seems relevant.

III

GOVERNMENT – NGO PARTNERSHIPS: THE WAY FORWARD

While in general, NGOs or other associations for that matter have freedom to open schools, with or without even recognition from the government, relatively fewer curricular or extra-curricular activities are actually done in cooperation between government and NGOs. The Integrated Education for the Disabled (IED) is one component where both Elementary Education and School Education departments allow NGO contribution. For any such scope of NGO participation, however, the initiation has to be from the government side. When certain programmes may be available for which the government may need technical or logistic support through registered NGOs, the government announces them and collects application of expression of interest. Unlike this, SSA has wider open doors for NGOs to approach it with their proposals for innovation, enrichment etc, besides offering certain components like IED for NGO management.

The SSA structure is unique in Tamil Nadu unlike most other States of the country in that it has parity along with State Directorates. Further, being not fully dependant on State funds, SSA has greater freedom to policy and programmes. It is headed by the State Project Director, an IAS officer, under whom District Project Offices function in each district headed by CEOs and Additional District Project Coordinators. Within the districts, Block Resource Centres (BRCs) are a hub of activity³², as they facilitate the support of Block Resource Teacher Educators (BRTE) supervised by a BRTE Supervisor. These centres may cluster a few schools together for better functioning in the form of Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs), thus addressing all class 1 to 8 children

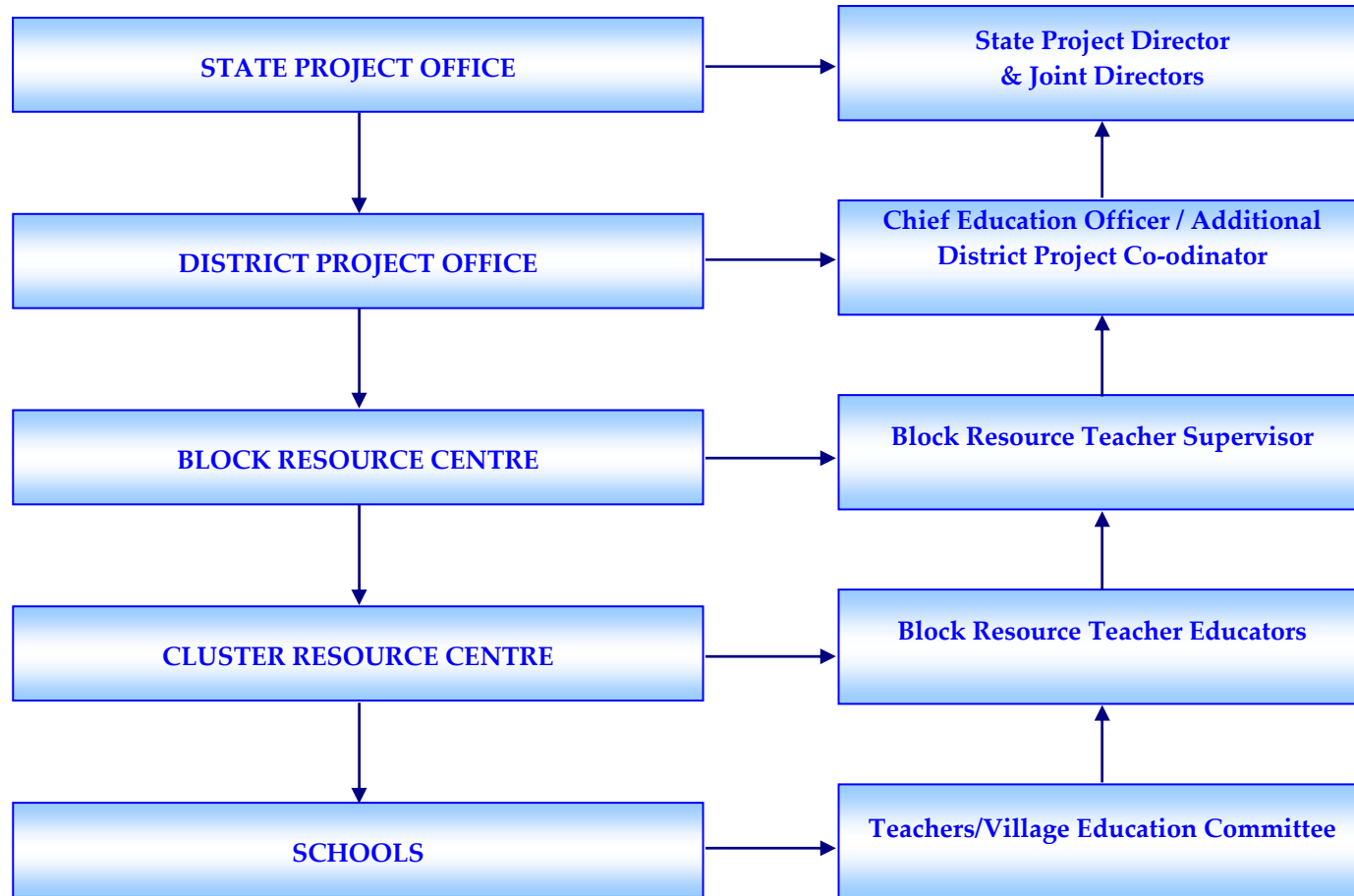
³² BRCs have been supplied with computers and have also been connected with Satellite Interactive Terminals (SITs), which is helpful for conduct of State level training programmes through EDUSAT. Resource Books have been provided to all BRCs and remain as permanent resource materials for BRTEs and Teachers.

in the State. The administrative design is such that each BRTE has not more than 10 schools under her/his personal attention for improvement, and as subject experts they support the teacher to enhance the quality of education in every specific subject of study in the primary and middle levels. Teachers are trained by the DIETs which function under the Directorate of Teacher Education, Research and Training, and also by the Resource Persons invited by SSA. In facilitating participatory management of education by the community itself, each village has a Village Education Committee (VEC), and in bigger villages with more schools there are also more than one VEC. UNICEF works closely with SSA in most of its components, particularly in ensuring quality education and equity.

SSA covers all rural and urban blocks, with 385 BRCs in rural areas, and 27 urban BRCs. In Chennai, 10 CRCs in the Corporation Zones play the role of BRCs. In each BRC (except urban), one Supervisor in the cadre of High School Headmaster or Post Graduate Teacher, and Teacher Educators in the cadre of High School Teachers (B.Ed Teachers) are working. There are also 4088 CRCs, through which teachers share their experiences and innovative practices in teaching learning processes.

Besides this official set-up, community participation in education is viewed as a key component in SSA. The VEC plays an important role in discussing issues of importance to schooling, enrolling more children, providing help for acquisition of land to construct schools and play-grounds, providing infrastructure facilities and also maintenance of school buildings. Besides the VECs, each school in the State also has a Parent Teacher Association (PTA). Although aimed since 1964, the PTA has gained greater presence in the recent times at school, district and state levels.

Figure 5 Structure and Functionaries in SSA



It is in this context that the role of NGO partnership in SSA also gains importance. As already mentioned, certain components like Integrated Education for the Disabled (IED) and Alternative Innovative Education (AIE) (which are akin to bridge courses) are entirely run by NGOs with SSA funds for support. Besides that, it is possible for NGOs to bring up innovative ways of conducting the programme, and also to initiate discussion on other possible avenues of involvement. For instance, an erstwhile Padippum Inikkum programme which was tested out in a few districts as a reading skill improvement programme was initiated by a NGO, Aid India. In this case, SSA allowed the pilot implementation based on its conviction about the need and outcomes of the proposal of this NGO to address much needed quality improvement in reading among primary level children in Tamil. SSA allowed use of the NGO's material in its classrooms, and supported it to expand the programme in 5 districts. The initial results were also remarkable. However, later when the government upscaled the Activity Based Learning Method (ABL)³³ as a state policy to be implemented across the state, the Padippum Inikkum had to be wound up because ABL had the in-built reading improvement also in its method.

The ABL was basically a model from the Rishi Valley School which the Chennai Corporation found it to be of interest for implementation in the Corporation schools. After observing the success from pilot-testing ABL in Chennai Corporation schools, SSA wished make it fully operational in the State. Thus, ABL was initiated out of SSA's own interest towards quality improvement in a big way. It had some initial funding and technical support from UNICEF. Implementing the ABL in model

³³ It is a learning methodology that incorporates learning by doing, and combines child-centred learning methods, age-appropriate materials and classroom management through group and individual activity in one package. Originally tested by the Chennai Corporation in a few schools, it is now State Policy for all class 1 to 4 under state management. Competencies meant to be learnt from textbooks are presented in the form of learning cards arranged in a ladder, which facilitates individually paced learning with guidance from the teacher and also peers. A number of sensory inputs are given for each competency to aid mastery over them in every child. Ideally it aims to leave no child behind.

schools across districts, it was expanded as a state-wide method for all children in government and government aided schools in classes 1 to 4.

Take the recent case of the successful G-NGO partnership which resulted in the teaching of conversational English to primary level students through CDs distributed all across the State. The SSA visited NGOs outside Tamil Nadu to learn from their experience and later placed media advertisements inviting NGOs to pool their resources.

NGOs also approach the State Project Director and other Joint Directors of SSA to discuss the scope for various innovative ideas that they may have. Such a direct approach is not possible in any other Directorate of Education, as the government is the sole initiating authority for all programmes. The only other Directorate which may encourage relatively more scope for NGO discussions and partnership activity is the Directorate of Teacher Education, Research and Training (DTERT).

The State Institute of Education formed in 1965, and upgraded as the State Council of Education Research and Training in 1970, became the Directorate of Teacher Education, Research and Training (DTERT) in 1990 in Tamil Nadu. Early childhood education, open schools for dropouts, adolescent education in high school classes and computer education to teachers are some popular programmes of the DTERT. The DTERT controls 29 District Institute of Education and Training (DIETs) in Tamil Nadu. The 2 year diploma that it offers on teacher education is widely sought. The new present curriculum of this course has a paradigm shift from the teacher to the learner and from the focus on traditional teaching methods to innovative ways and means of facilitating and enhancing learning by children. 7 courses are taught during each year of this programme, and practical training is also included.

The DIETs are the main agencies for in-service training to teachers in the government and government-aided schools across the State. They also have freedom to pass on the training content into the classrooms by mooted the

integration of promising programmes into the curriculum. The TANSACS and UNICEF supported 'School Aids' programme in adolescent education is one such instance.

Similarly, the DIET in Perunthurai, Madurai has been lately engaged in a peace education programme. Based on an initiative of the National Council of Teacher Education, an integrated curriculum on life-skills has been introduced in training B.Ed and diploma trainee teachers. A module on peace education with 10 components has been prepared for the syllabus in diploma in teacher education, which includes how a 'peace teacher' could integrate discussion in the class on matters related to democracy, religion, etc even when s/he teaches language, social science or even science and math. Story-telling is also an important tool to engage children in peace discussion. The DIET Perunthurai is open to NGO participation on how to integrate this content in the curriculum of children rather than designing a separate curriculum on peace education, and on effective development of a model package of teaching-learning material for peace education.

IV

THE QUEST FOR QUALITY

Tamil Nadu's quest for quality education takes the form of initiatives to improve infrastructure and human resources for primary education, curriculum and teaching-learning material; to enhance the quality of the teaching-learning process through the introduction of child-centered pedagogy; and to draw attention to teacher capacity building and measurement of learner achievement levels. While many of these are qualitative indicators, SSA does show annual results of children's performance in Tamil, English, Maths and overall reading skills as a pointer.

Who decides what children learn and what is their rationale, are interesting questions. The DIETs are entrusted with developing curriculum, syllabus and textbooks. They are expected to act as vibrant District Level Resource Centres, catering to the diverse training needs of teachers, BRTes, NGOs and SSA's educational volunteers. Syllabus-related innovations and revisions are determined by the Secretary of School Education in consultation with the Director of School Education, DTERT and eminent educationists. Once approved, textbooks are printed by the Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation and supplied to all children on time, at an affordable price or even free of cost, to all those studying under the State Board Syllabus from class 1 to 12.

Recently, India's education scenario took a refreshing turn. The draft National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2005, emphasised creative learning rather than examinations.³⁴ In its words:

³⁴NCERT set up the National Steering Committee under the chairmanship of Prof Yashpal with 35 scholars, principals, teachers and senior officials in the area of school education to draft the NCF. 21 national focus groups prepared position papers on teaching of Sciences, Mathematics, Languages, Social Sciences, art, dance, music, etc and they also covered areas for systemic reform like syllabus and textbooks, teacher education for curriculum renewal, examination reforms, physical education, etc. NCF is available in <http://www.ncert.nic.in/html/pdf/schoolcurriculum/framework05/prelims.pdf>.

“...the fact that learning has become a source of burden and stress on children and their parents is an evidence of a deep distortion in educational aims and quality.”

The NCF proposed five guiding principles for curriculum development: (i) connecting knowledge to life outside the school; (ii) ensuring that learning shifts away from rote methods; (iii) enriching the curriculum so that it goes beyond textbooks; (iv) making examinations more flexible and integrating them with classroom life; and (v) nurturing an overriding identity informed by caring concerns within the democratic polity of the country.

On teaching, the NCF noted:

“...the fact that knowledge is constructed by the child implies that curricula, syllabi and textbooks should enable the teacher in organising classroom experiences in consonance with the child’s nature and environment, and thus providing opportunities for all children. Teaching should aim at enhancing children’s natural desire and strategies to learn. Knowledge needs to be distinguished from information, and teaching needs to be seen as a professional activity, not as coaching for memorisation or as transmission of facts. Activity is the heart of the child’s attempt to make sense of the world around him/her. Therefore, every resource must be deployed to enable children to express themselves, handle objects, explore their natural and social milieu, and to grow up healthy. If children’s classroom experiences are to be organized in a manner that permits them to construct knowledge, then our school system requires substantial systemic reforms, re-conceptualisation of curricular areas or school subjects, and resources to improve the quality of the school ethos.”

The NCF served as a wake-up call (see Appendix III for some key NCF guidelines). At much the same time, the Tamil Nadu government, for instance, had already formed a syllabus revision committee for Matriculation and also State Board, covering all classes. Earlier the CBSE had also revised its syllabus by including new subjects like disaster management, life skills and environmental studies.

While educational content is important, the way it is imparted is equally important. The government and SSA in particular, hence sharpened their focus on quality

improvement in schools. Although quality is a complex question, and there is no single panacea, SSA's innovative ABL at the lower primary level and Active Learning Method (ALM)³⁵ at the upper primary level offer much promise for the State. Unlike the traditional system of teaching-learning, ABL offers more scope for introduction of life-related, co-curricular activities as part of classroom activity. Creating a democratic physical and learning space in classrooms, it enables children to freely and effectively take part in individual and group activities of learning. There is supposedly less fear in children but at the same time there is more scope for developing self-discipline. Some far-reaching changes have been attempted in the philosophy and practices of school organisation through child-centred classroom practices in ABL, and these could be further strengthened to improve not just the quality of education but the quality of life of children and their neighbourhood.³⁶

SSA also has a separate component of life skills education, covering personality development, enhancement of confidence and self-esteem among children. Rightly, the school of today cannot work just for the intellectual development of the child, but it must train her/ him in the art of living together in peaceful settings in the present and future.

As the National Policy of Education 1992 correctly states, education refines sensitivities and perceptions that contribute to national cohesion, scientific temper and independence of mind and spirit, thus furthering the goals of socialism, secularism and democracy enshrined in our constitution. Is schooling in Tamil Nadu well-g geared towards that?

³⁵ Building on the competencies of reading and writing acquired at primary level, ALM provides each student at the middle school level with opportunities to use his/her own capacities to understand, query and to explain a concept. Both ABL and ALM follow the constructivist learning rubric advocated in the National Curricular Framework, 2005, emphasising on concept clarity and higher order skills rather than rote learning.

³⁶ SSA, Tamil Nadu has anecdotal evidence to the value-additions for children's personality through ABL. But, a systematic evaluation of ABL in SSA, in terms of the pedagogy in practice, has been long due. The author of this paper is currently engaged in one such state-wide exercise.

The annual vision document of the State, namely the Policy Note of the School Education Department, shows that while the state objectives are still heavily engaged with issues of access, retention and achievement in elementary and secondary levels in the years to come, it does aim to ensure harmonious and all-round development of the child's personality. The Note prioritizes providing quality education, empowering teachers, and decentralising educational management through effective community participation. As yet, there is no special attention paid to teaching national values such as secularism and democracy, or to questions of peace in the child's environment. Equity is definitely a concern, but how it is to be ensured and how children should learn to ensure it, is still to be explored. Child rights education was incorporated into the tsunami rehabilitation process in the coastal villages of Tamil Nadu, but is not part of the regular schooling stream.³⁷

Given the well-grounded activity based learning atmosphere, peace education may well be fostered not as a separate curriculum and syllabus, but as an integrated activity with subtle yet long-lasting effect³⁸ to benefit all children of the 6-14 age children covered by SSA in Tamil Nadu, and can then be up-scaled to children in higher classes also through the upcoming Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhiyan. There is now ample evidence that children do love to learn by story-telling, discussion, games, and learning by doing, audio-visual aids and field visits. Training teachers so they have the necessary skills to use such techniques is an essential

³⁷ See R. Akila, UNICEF Education Sector Status Paper of Tsunami Recovery and Rehabilitation programmes in Tamil Nadu; and co-authored UNTRS Evaluation Report on assessing the role of UN organizations in tsunami recovery in India, which discuss child rights programmes taken up by partner NGOs.

³⁸ 'As a tenth-grade student pointed out to the Tamil Nadu Committee on Curriculum Load: "The concept of poverty line has real-life implications. But we are given a 100-word definition of it in the social studies textbook and asked to reproduce that. Instead, if we are asked to do a project on the consequences of living under the poverty line, we internalize the concept in the course of learning research methods. What we see and learn will stay with us lifelong. Textbook-level learning deters meaningful internalization of knowledge." Quoted from R. Aruna, 'Learn Thoroughly': Primary Schooling in Tamil Nadu', *Economic and Political Weekly*, May 1, 1999.

priority. Above all, policy perspective for integrated peace education and political will are imperative to make these changes happen in classrooms across the state.

APPENDIX I Some Important Events in the History of School Education Department in Tamil Nadu

Year	Event
1826	Board of Public Instruction established
1841	First High School opened in Madras
1849	High School for Girls Opened
1854	Directorate of Public Instruction established
1892	Madras Educational Rules enforced
1910	Board of Secondary Education established
1911	SSLC Public Examination conducted for the first time
1921	Madras Elementary Educational Rules enforced
1924	Compulsory and Free Education introduced in some selected places
1953	Directorate of Legal Studies established
1955	Pension Scheme for Teachers introduced
1956	Midday-meal programmes implemented
1957	Directorate of Technical Education established
1960	Scheme for Free supply of Uniforms for School Children organized
1964	Introduction of Free Education upto high school level
1965	Directorate of Collegiate Education established
1969	Tamil Nadu Text-book Society established
1972	Directorate of Public Libraries established
1973	Directorate of Government Examinations and SCERT established
1976	Directorate of Non-formal and Adult Education established

1978	Higher Secondary Education (10+2) introduced
1981	Teachers in Panchayat Union Schools become Government Employees
1982	Nutrition Meal Scheme introduced
1985	Free Supply of Text Books and Uniforms upto VIII Standard extended.
1986	Directorate of Elementary Education established. Implementation of National Policy on Education, Teachers in Municipal/Township/Corporation become Government Employees.
1988- 1990	Introduction of revised syllabus based on National Policy for I -XII standards
1990	Directorate of Teacher Education Research and Training established.
1995- 96	Introduction of revised syllabus for classes I-XIII
2001	Directorate of Matriculation School formed.

Source: Important Events in the History of School Education Department,
Department of School Education, Government of Tamil Nadu,
<http://www.tn.gov.in/schooleducation/statistics/table2-event.htm>

APPENDIX II District-wise Schools by levels and types of management, Tamil Nadu, 2008-09

S. No.	Block	Primary School (I-V)				Middle School (I-VIII)				High School				Higher Secondary School				Others	KGBV	Total
		Govt.	Private Aided	Private Unaided	Total	Govt	Private Aided	Private Unaided	Total	Govt.	Private Aided	Private Unaided	Total	Govt	Private Aided	Private Unaided	Total			
1	Chennai	144	123	341	608	114	73	43	230	46	41	126	215	51	116	277	444	7	0	1504
2	Coimbatore	1222	132	362	1716	449	32	46	529	107	23	138	288	107	51	193	351	5	0	2869
3	Cuddalore	851	179	187	1217	320	64	29	413	72	16	48	136	60	29	46	155	0	3	1926
4	Dharmapuri	802	10	100	912	342	2	10	354	60	4	31	95	75	3	27	106	1	3	1471
5	Dindigul	923	199	132	1254	220	57	11	268	40	27	40	116	56	41	47	144	0	0	1602
6	Erode	1227	111	151	1489	348	16	25	386	63	15	76	161	66	23	91	202	11	6	2255
7	Kancheepuram	837	127	354	1318	332	54	66	452	99	30	126	255	93	32	137	252	9	0	2296
8	Kanyakumari	288	105	157	550	106	53	42	201	73	52	60	165	52	73	59	154	5	0	1125
9	Karur	572	41	63	676	132	7	6	145	41	5	39	55	34	9	22	65	2	1	974
10	Krishnagiri	1055	14	124	1206	329	3	28	358	99	4	44	147	70	4	33	107	0	3	1821
11	Madurai	753	156	383	1292	262	73	7	342	70	21	93	184	57	63	90	220	11	0	2049

S. No.	Block	Primary School (I-V)				Middle School (I-VIII)				High School				Higher Secondary School				Others	KGBV	Total
		Govt.	Private Aided	Private Unaided	Total	Govt	Private Aided	Private Unaided	Total	Govt.	Private Aided	Private Unaided	Total	Govt	Private Aided	Private Unaided	Total			
12	Nagapattinam	529	215	138	662	222	66	8	296	60	18	35	113	49	24	22	95	3	0	1389
13	Namakkal	665	59	75	798	178	16	16	210	44	10	45	89	77	6	73	158	0	3	1264
14	Perambalur	547	77	96	720	197	27	7	231	77	8	32	117	61	13	22	96	0	0	1164
15	Pudukkottai	1003	53	164	125	319	27	19	355	90	14	23	127	70	13	26	109	2	0	1628
16	Ramanathapuram	741	163	101	1005	193	3B	24	255	39	21	25	65	45	26	19	90	0	0	1435
17	Salem	1096	75	243	1414	352	1B	37	407	97	13	61	191	104	23	76	203	9	11	2235
18	Sivagangai	726	117	114	959	243	55	11	312	55	27	24	106	46	32	28	106	0	1	1484
19	Thanjavur	359	177	217	1263	247	62	16	327	100	21	64	185	74	38	45	157	1	0	1953
20	Theni	322	130	63	515	87	71	13	161	41	14	22	77	46	23	20	89	3	0	865
21	The Nilgiris	256	97	66	421	91	9	8	108	4S	14	41	100	32	17	34	S3	0	0	712
22	Thiruchirappalli	802	190	248	1230	257	94	15	368	73	22	60	175	67	69	39	175	0	0	1945
23	Thirunelveli	623	841	277	1741	123	291	26	440	46	55	57	150	62	67	70	239	2	0	2582

S. No.	Block	Primary School (I-V)				Middle School (I-VIII)				High School				Higher Secondary School				Others	KGBV	Total
		Govt.	Private Aided	Private Unaided	Total	Govt	Private Aided	Private Unaided	Total	Govt.	Private Aided	Private Unaided	Total	Govt	Private Aided	Private Unaided	Total			
24	Thiruvallur	395	136	338	1409	314	24	43	361	102	16	153	270	72	21	152	245	38	0	2341
25	Thiruvannamalai	1252	128	152	1532	372	15	33	420	136	13	34	183	95	22	26	143	0	5	2283
26	Thiruvarur	587	89	130	756	203	33	11	247	52	8	24	84	52	14	12	78	0	0	1195
27	Thoothukudi	494	549	124	1167	121	186	16	327	23	40	38	101	37	73	32	142	0	0	1737
28	Vellore	1409	207	423	2039	454	54	35	543	146	22	76	244	129	45	70	244	8	0	3078
23	Villupuram	1276	229	235	1740	467	53	33	553	123	24	62	209	124	22	47	193	0	14	2709
30	Virudhunagar	602	347	129	1078	197	64	10	271	39	31	29	99	64	55	28	147	0	3	1598
	Tamilnadu	23395	5MB	5737	34180	7597	1643	693	9938	2176	630	17SB	4574	2100	1067	1863	5030	115	53	53890

Source: DISE 2008-09, Statistics Department, SSA, Tamil Nadu (unpublished yet)

APPENDIX III. National Curriculum Framework Guidelines, 2005

Seeking guidance from the Constitutional vision of India as a secular, egalitarian and pluralistic society, founded on the values of social justice and equality, certain broad aims of education have been identified in this document. These include independence of thought and action, sensitivity to others' well-being and feelings, learning to respond to new situations in a flexible and creative manner, predisposition towards participation in democratic processes, and the ability to work towards and contribute to economic processes and social change.

Some guidelines provided in the NCF were summarized in (<http://www.financialexpress.com/news/a-new-chapter-in-education/141665/0>):

Language skills — speech and listening, reading and writing — cuts across school subjects and disciplines. Their foundational role in children's construction of knowledge right from elementary classes through senior secondary classes needs to be recognised.

- Renewed effort should be made to implement the three-language formula, emphasising recognition of children's mother tongue as the best medium of instruction. These include tribal languages.
- Success in learning English is possible only if it builds on sound language pedagogy in the mother tongue.
- The multilingual character of Indian society should be seen as a resource for enrichment of school life.

Mathematics

- Mathematisation (ability to think logically, formulate and handle abstractions) rather than 'knowledge' of mathematics (formals and mechanical procedures) is the main goal of teaching mathematics.
- The teaching of mathematics should enhance the child's ability to think and

reason, to visualise and handle abstractions, to formulate and solve problems. Access to quality mathematics education is the right of every child.

Science

- Content, process and language of science teaching must be commensurate with the learner's age and cognitive reach.
- Science teaching should engage the learner in acquiring methods and processes that will nurture their curiosity and creativity, particularly in relation to the environment.
- Science teaching should be placed in the wider context of children's environment to equip them with the requisite knowledge and skills to enter the world of work.
- Awareness of environmental concerns must permeate the entire school curriculum.

Social Sciences

- Social science teaching should aim at equipping children with moral and mental energy so as to provide them the ability to think independently and reflect critically on social issues.
- Interdisciplinary approaches, promoting key national concerns such as gender justice, human rights and sensitivity to marginalised groups and minorities.
- Civics should be recast as political science, and significance of history as a shaping influence on the child's conception of the past and civic identity should be recognised.

Work

- Work should be infused in all subjects from the primary stage upwards.
- Agencies and settings offering work opportunities outside the school must be formally recognised.
- Design of Vocational Education and Training (VET) programme is based on the perspective of 10-12 years of work-centered education with in-built features of:

- flexible and modular courses of varying durations
- Multiple entry and exit points
- Accessibility from the level of village clusters to district levels
- Decentralised accreditation and equivalence mechanism for agencies located outside the school system

Art

- Arts (folk and classical forms of music and dance, visual arts, puppetry, clay work, and theatre) and heritage crafts should be recognised as integral components of the school curriculum.
- Awareness of their relevance to personal, social, economic and aesthetic needs should be built among parents, school authorities and administrators.
- Arts should comprise a subject at every stage of school education.

Health and Physical Education

- Health and physical education are necessary for the overall development of learners. Through the health and physical education programmes (including yoga), it may be possible to handle successfully the issues of enrolment, retention and completion of school.

Peace

- Peace-oriented values should be promoted in all subjects throughout school years with the help of relevant activities.
- Peace education should form a component of teacher education.

APPENDIX IV. Directory of Directorates under School Education in Tamil Nadu

Name of the Directorate	Contact Person and Address	Functions in Nutshell
School Education Department	Secretary to Government, School Education Department, Government of Tamil Nadu, Fort St. George, Chennai-9. Phone : Off : 2567 2790 Fax : 2567 6388 Email : schsec@tn.gov.in	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overall control of education department 2. Policy formulation, 3. Finalisation of the annual budget relates to school education 4. Administrative sanctions for various projects and programmes 5. Advice to other departments in education and training aspects
Directorate of Elementary Education	Director of Elementary Education, DPI Campus, Chennai. Phone: Off : 2827 1169 Email: dee@tn.nic.in	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To grant permission for the opening of private nursery, elementary and middle school 2. To control and supervision of all nursery, elementary and middle schools 3. To achieve universalisation of elementary education. 4. To supervise the recruitment of teachers through employment exchange by the DEEO.
Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (Anaivarukkum Kalvi Thittam)	State Project Director, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (Anaivarukkum Kalvi Thittam), DPI Campus, Chennai Phone: Off : 2827 8068 Email: spd_ssatn@yahoo.co.in Web Site: http://www.ssa.tn.nic.in/	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To achieve the aim of Education for All before 2010. 2. To eradicate dropouts by 2010.
Directorate of School Education	Director of School Education, DPI Campus, Chennai.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.To grant permission of the opening of private high & higher secondary school 2. To control and supervision of all high & higher secondary schools.

Name of the Directorate	Contact Person and Address	Functions in Nutshell
	Phone: Off : 2827 8796 Email: dse@tn.nic.in	3. Framing of curriculum & syllabus for standards 6-12 on the basis of recommendations of high level committees. 4. To evaluate other school certificates. 5. To conducting Technical Teacher Training Course like Drawing, Music, Tailoring
Directorate of Matriculation Schools	Director of Matriculation Schools, DPI Campus, Chennai Phone : Off : 2827 0169 Email: dse@tn.nic.in	1. To grant permission of opening and control of Matriculation Schools. 2. Framing of Syllabus on the advise of Board of Matriculation Schools. 3. Control of Matriculation Schools on the advice of the Board of Matriculation Schools
Directorate of Teachers Education and Research	Director of Teachers Education & Training, DPI Campus, Chennai. Phone : Off : 2827 8742 Email: dtert@tn.nic.in	1. Conducting Secondary Grade Teacher Training Course (i.e DTE) 2. Control and Supervision of Teacher Training Institute. 3. Evaluation of other state training Diploma in Teacher certificates. 4. Imparting in service training to elementary and middle schools teachers. 5. Framing of Curriculum & Syllabus for Standards 1-5 on the basis of recommendation of the Committee
Directorate of Government Examination	Director of Government Examination, DPI Campus, Chennai. Phone : Off : 2827 8286 Email: dge@tn.nic.in	1. Conducting of 10th & +2 public examination fool proof manner twice in a year. 2. Conduct of other Government Examinations other than TNPSC. 3. Issue of Migration Certificates 4. Conducting Instant examination within a period of one month for students who failed in one or two subjects for 6-9, 11th at District Level and 10th & +2 at State Level 5. Retotalling and Revaluation of answer papers of annual examination in +2 with supply of Xerox copy of answer paper. 6. Retotalling of mark in 10th & DTE annual examination.
Directorate of Non-formal &	Director of Non-formal & Adult Education,	1. To eradicate illiteracy and remove gender disparity in Literacy.

Name of the Directorate	Contact Person and Address	Functions in Nutshell
Adult Education	DPI Campus, Chennai. Phone : Off : 2827 2048 Email: dnfae@tn.nic.in	
Teacher Recruitment Board	Chairman, Teacher Recruitment Board, DPI Campus, Chennai. Off : 2826 9968 Email: trb@tn.nic.in	1. Recruitment of Teachers of B.T. & P.G. cadre in High and Higher Secondary Schools, Lecturers in Colleges, Junior Professions in Law Collects. by conducting competitive examination with transparent manner.
Tamil Nadu Text Book Corporation	Managing Director, Tamil Nadu Text Book Corporation, DPI Campus, Chennai. Phone : Off : 2827 1468 Email: tbc@tn.nic.in	1. Procurement of paper for printing of school text books. 2. Supply of text books to schools at low cost price. 3. Functions on the advice of Governing Council for which Secretary to Government, is the Chairman.
Directorate of Public Libraries	Director of Public Libraries, Mount Road, Chennai. Phone : Off : 2855 0983 Email: dpl@tn.nic.in	1. Supervision and Control of Libraries. 2. To provide Libraries where the population is 5000 and more. 3. To promote reading habit among the people.

Source: Directorate's Function And Address, Department of School Education, Government of Tamil Nadu,

<http://www.tn.gov.in/schooleducation/contacts.htm>

About Prajnya

Prajnya is a non-profit think-tank in Chennai that works in areas related to peace, justice and security. Prajnya's work embraces scholarship, advocacy, networking and educational outreach and is organized into thematic Initiatives.



About Education for Peace

The Education for Peace Initiative (EPI) hosts Prajnya's pedagogically oriented projects. Its vision is to teach peace by fostering the learning of skills conducive to communication, healing, reconciliation and interaction between people with divergent interests and creating capacity for the resolution of conflict and the creation of a sustainable peace. A citizenry accepting of diversity and difference is a citizenry capable of building and sustaining peace.

Crafting the perfect pedagogical intervention is futile without a clear understanding of the structure, functioning, culture and specific needs of a given system. Educational policy research is also Prajnya's way of nurturing a sustained engagement with educational issues and debates, so that our peace work is not isolated from other educational challenges.

The Educational Policy Research Series is intended to document and disseminate our research into a wider community of educators and educationists.

<i>Visit our website</i>	http://www.prajnya.in/peace.htm
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About this study

This paper is primarily a descriptive exercise of mapping structures and functions salient to education in the Tamil Nadu setting. It charts the administrative patterns of public education management in Tamil Nadu, India. It explores the labyrinth of powers and functions, spells out jurisdictional issues, the management and affiliations of schools and policy implementation. Finally, the paper highlights the processes at the level of schools and classrooms which make education meaningful to children.