

CENTRE-STATE RELATIONS IN THE PLANNING  
AND FINANCING OF EDUCATION (1951-1974)

AN ABSTRACT OF THE STUDY

1. The Problem:

The Problem for study is -

"CENTRE-STATE RELATIONS IN THE FINANCING AND  
PLANNING OF EDUCATION DURING THE FOUR PLAN  
PERIODS (1951-1974)"

2. The Need for the Study :

The Indian Constitution is federal in conception. In education, this operationally means that the Central Government and the State Governments have to work together in the area with which this study is concerned, namely, the financing and planning of education. This collaborative endeavour has to find its modus operandi within the ambit and the constraints of the provisions of the Constitution which lays down, in detail, the legislative jurisdictions of both the Centre and the States. In the field of education, that jurisdiction is almost exclusively vested in the states, for, the Seventh Schedule of the constitution places 'Education including universities' on the state list of legislation.

This has given rise to the problem of Centre-State relations in the financing and planning of education since the Indian constitution came into operation and the era of socio-economic planning started shortly afterwards.

Barring one or two political shibboliths of the time, there is no other theme that has attracted more attention and debate in this country during the past quarter of a century than Centre-State relations. One gratifying result of this has been the growth of a large corpus of research literature on the problem in almost all relevant disciplines. Education perhaps is the only conspicuous exception. The Centre of Advanced Study in Education of The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda recently made a survey of doctoral studies done in education in Indian Universities upto 1972. The survey (Survey of Research in Education, 1974) lists and reviews some 343 research studies. Not one of them relates to the problem of Centre-State relations in education or any of its numerous aspects.

There is thus a need for a study like the present one.

### 3. Objectives of the Study :

The study seeks to answer the following questions :

(i) What are the provisions in the constitution regarding education? What is the nature of Centre-State relations in education visualised in these provisions?

(ii) What operative relations have been developed in the field of education between the centre and the states during the period of 1951 to 1974?

(iii) What operative relations, in particular, have been developed in the field of education in the 'nodal' areas of finance and planning?

(iv) What are the major policy-making and consultative devices developed by the Indian federal polity for decision-making in education? How affectively do they operate?

(v) What is the operative 'balance of power' between the centre and the states in education as it has developed during the years under study?

(vi) What are the policy implications of the findings with regard to the above questions?

#### 4. Methods, Scope and Sources :

##### (i) Methods :

Any large politico-social and educational problem like Centre-State relations in education or the selected aspects of

it studied here are open to investigation through a number of methods. Among these methods, the ones most commonly used in education and similar fields vary from large-scale field studies aided by specially devised data-gathering tools and sophisticated statistical devices to simple case studies. But besides these methods, there is also the method sometimes designated as 'aggregate analysis', mainly based on a critical and interpretative study of published and unpublished documents, authoritative reports, proceedings of decision-making agencies, etc. The method is frequently used in political science and sister disciplines. This is the method used in the present study.

(ii) Delimitations :

In the broad area of Centre-State relations in education, the study is confined to two governmental functions in education of a 'nodal' nature, namely, the financing and planning of education. Temporarily, the study is focused on the period of time covered by the four Five Year Plans, that is, from the year 1951 to 1974.

(iii) Source :

The analysis is based on both primary and secondary sources. Data from these sources are supplemented by unstructured discussions with a large number of central and state government

officers connected with planning, and financial and educational administration. They are also supplemented by an on-the-spot observation of one 'administrative phenomenon' investigated by the study, namely, state plan discussions.

5. Chapterisation :

The study comprises the following seven chapters :

CHAPTER I : Introduction.

CHAPTER II : Historical Perspective: Evolution of Centre-State Relations in Education (1813-1950)

CHAPTER III : The Indian Constitution and the Constitutional Basis of Centre-State Relations in Education.

CHAPTER IV : Centre-State Financial Relations in Education.

CHAPTER V : Centre-State Relations in Educational Planning.

CHAPTER VI : Centre-State Consultative Machinery in Education.

CHAPTER VII : Conclusions and Suggestions.

The first chapter attempts a profile of the study in terms of its nature, objectives, method, sources and other relevant facts. The second constitutes a survey of the historical antecedents of centre-state relations as they have developed during the period of the study. The sub-stantive portion of the study starts with the third chapter. In this chapter, the constitutional provisions regarding education and the centre-state

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relations visualised in them are looked at in the background of the emergence of the federal idea in India. It also makes a comparative study of the educational provisions in some other federal constitutions. The fourth chapter starts with an examination of the financial arrangements in the constitution and goes on to study the operation of these arrangements in the financing of education. The fifth chapter discusses the process and procedures of educational planning in the background of the constitutional provision in this regard and then critically examines the various 'linkages' between the Centre and the States in the planning of education. The sixth chapter makes a study of some selected centre-state consultative devices from the point of view of their efficacy in collaborative decision-making. The seventh chapter, which is the last, sets forth the findings and conclusions and then seeks to make some broad suggestions on the basis of these.

6. Findings, Conclusions and Suggestions :

(i) Findings : The findings of the study relate to both the broad questions raised and the subsidiary points of enquiry arising out of these broad questions. The broad findings are :-

(a) The 'buts' in the main constitutional provision regarding education, namely Entry 11 of List II of the Seventh Schedule of the constitution imports to it a certain degree of 'amorphousness' so that it lends itself

to interpretations investing the centre and the states with overlapping jurisdictions.

- (b) The financial superiority of the central government has tended to become its political opportunity in education. Large central subventions to education under Article 282, made possible by this superiority and made necessary by the endemic indigence of the states, have shown a tendency to erode the judgement of the states in educational matters.
- (c) The 'linkages' between the Centre and the States in the planning of education have been rendered largely ineffective, through the inexorable operation of a number of factors inherent in the institutional and procedural framework so that the centre has tended to become, through the years under study, the fountain-head of all planning in education.
- (d) The selected Centre-State consultative devices studied here do not, because of their composition, conferencing procedures and a number of other factors, constitute anything more than 'administrative pyrotechnics'. Also, the emergence of the Planning Commission in which all decision-making, has come to be centred, has considerably reduced the capacity of these devices to intervene effectively in policy formulation which is their avowed objective.

(ii) Conclusions : The major conclusion indicated by the study is that educational authority in this country has, during the period under study, tended to shift to the centre so that operationally education has almost become a concurrent subject.

(iii) Suggestions : The concluding part of the study seeks to make a socio-political analysis of the movement of 'educational sovereignty' to the Centre. On the basis of the analysis, this movement is perceived as a response to the needs and compulsions of a society that has accepted socio-economic planning as its preferred instrument of change and development. As a corollary, the problem of Centre-State relations in education is diagnosed as a malalignment between constitutional provisions regarding education and the needs of a planned society. Suggestions are then advanced to rectify the situation.