Innovative Educational Practices, Policies and Strategies: An Evaluative Study of J&K State

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Abstract: Jammu and Kashmir is a northern most state of India, besides several odds and tough terrain, the state is gearing towards the educational development. The policy makers and the people at the helm of affairs are veering for several innovative ideas, practices, policies and strategies for revamping education in the state. Education has taken rapid strides in the state of Jammu and Kashmir at this juncture. There is a rising irreversible tide in educational picture of the state. It may be due to the introduction of the new innovative ideas, schemes, policies, strategies and collaborations. The state has a successful initiation of the National flagship programmes like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyas (SSA) in J&K, The Rashtarya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Rashtriya Uchattar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA). The programme of SSA focus on elementary level, RMSA at Secondary level and RUSA at university education level. There are other forces at work who play innovative role for educational progress. This paper intends to showcase the policies, strategies and innovations by several organisations and programmes of Centre and state and make an evaluative investigation of the same. The main thrust of this paper is Incorporation of Information and communication technology in education, use of Audio video aids in education, Educational CDs, Television Programmes, Smart schooling, e-learning initiatives, e-content, Schemes for education that has led to progress and contributions of several organisations and autonomous bodies on education, innovation and spreading of education to the areas hitherto unreached. The study explore the availability of ICT resources in the schools, IGNOU learning centres, EDUSAT activities, Schemes and innovative ideas developed by different organisations in the state.
Keywords: Strategy, Information, Schemes, System

I.   Introduction

Education in present day world faces a crisis of productivity and efficiency, innovation can help us in bringing about a quality improvement. Innovation in education is very contentious aspect. In today's world education is still treated as a conservative social system. Change has been implemented due to the lack of proper testing, experimentation and evaluation. Government have invested a lot in bringing technology, e-schooling, ICT concept to schools, but the data in UNICEF report says that we have not been able to associate increased availability and use of computers in schools.

Education is a pious activity to awaken the society. The education can be imparted through several modes. The objective is the same to reach the people hitherto unreached through several ideas. Learning can take place effectively by making use of innovative educational practices. In present day world, researchers are veering to popularise education among learners through e-learning, online learning, digital learning, Smart classes and many more. Efforts are being made to replace the traditional methods of teaching and learning by making use of Information and communication technologies. Policy makers are veering for well sophisticated innovative techniques to give Urdu a professional touch and make the learning easy and effective. Computers have by and large brought about this paradigm shift. Historically speaking, the state established Educational Board and a university in the year 1970.

The state of Jammu and Kashmir state has a population of 12,548,926 as per the census 2011. The literacy rate of the state is 68.74%. Male literacy rate is 78.26%, whereas the female literacy rate is 58.01%. The schools at primary level are 14171, Number of the upper primary schools has been increased to 6665. There are 1194 High Schools and 597 senior secondary schools. The other schools are twoSainik Schools, There are 22 DIETs providing Pre-Service and in-service training to the teachers. The state has two State Institutes of education (SIE) each one for Jammu and Srinagar. There are 79 KGVB schools under the central scheme of Girls education.

The educational industry of Jammu and Kashmir has made progress by leaps and bounds besides grim political situation in Jammu and Kashmir which is not very conducive to development of education. The efforts of the educational functionaries are appreciable in this direction. The current student strength in this North Indian state stands at 1.5 million according to the 2009 census reports.

The Jammu and Kashmir education board was established in the year 1970. There are more than 15000 schools within the state's boundaries today. With regard to the state higher education, it has 07 Universities and numerous number of Government. and Non Government Colleges.

In February 2018, J&K State Legislature passed "A Bill to Provide for the Establishment and Constitution of State Higher Education Council for enforcing, planning, monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance in Universities and other Higher Educational Institutions of the State.

As far as ODL system is concerned, the state Government invited Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and established fully approved Regional directorate at Jammu as well as at Srinagar, these are well knitted with Learner Support centres in rural areas, educationally and economically backward blocks, Jails and women Institutions. In addition to the J&K Board of School Education approved schools, there are KendriyaVidyalayas (run by the Government of India) and Indian Army schools that impart secondary school education under the (CBSC) pattern. The state of J&K is mostly rural, 27.21 percent of the population live in rural areas. State Governments have taken various innovative steps to promote e-learning and have drawn up a roadmap for IT implementation and delivery of online services. till now there has not been much progress in this direction except in making few websites, offering distance education through IGNOU, DD Nevertheless, there are National flagship programmes like Serva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) J&K, Rashtriya M adhyamik Shiksha Abdhiyan, (RMSA) and Rashterya Uchattar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) having innovative educational practices for teaching and learning, technologizing learning in schools. The growth of ICT and CAL centres in J&K under RMSA and SSA, the Edusat lecturing, Gyan Darshan and e-content development by SIE's, J&K Knowledge Network, IGNOU, J&K Board of School Education, Vocational educational practices of RMSA.

II. Methodology

The data collected for this study comprise of the Secondary data, from different sources, like websites, visit to the perspective offices, official documents, brochures, annual reports, Ministry of human resource development reports, books, periodicals and journals.

2.1 Innovation, Policies and Strategies at Elementary level of Education

The innovative practices at school level are being managed by the national flagship programme called Serva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). This programme was initially started in the year 2002 focussing on the eight intervention of SSA and belief of these indicators with regard to the state of Jammu and Kashmir has been assessed by this researcher. The programme is implemented through UJALA Society. The SSA focuses on Quality concerns, and development of infrastructure and human resource. SSA has a concern for Improved Curriculum, Provision of Teaching Learning Material. The SSA in J&K has a focussed attention on Child Centred and active pedagogy. The major concern of ICT in schools has been taken by the SSA by way of Information and Communication Technologies. The innovative practices under SSA as discussed as under:

2.2 Information and Communication Technologies in Schools under SSA

Computer Aided Learning (CAL)-The Serva Shiksha Abhiyan in Jammu and Kashmir has taken several innovative practices to technologies learning and provide access to ICT. As many as 1104 Middle Schools has been covered under the ambit of the CAL (Computer Aided Learning). These centres has been approved by the Ministry of Human resource development Government of India. The CAL Schools are identified and recommended by State Project Director of SSA Jammu and Kashmir. The budget for each district for CAL includes 50 Lakh per district and 5 lakh per centre. The CAL centres are equipped with the Computers, Instructional boards, Projector, Wi-Fi and in case not wifi (efforts has been made to cover those schools under Solar Panel. The Serva Shiksha Abhiyan in Jammu and Kashmir has taken several innovative practices to technologies learning and provide access to ICT. As many as 1104 Middle Schools has been covered under the ambit of the CAL (Computer Aided Learning). These centres have been approved by the Ministry of Human resource development Government of India. The CAL Schools are identified and recommended by State Project Director of SSA Jammu and Kashmir. The budget for each district for CAL includes 50 Lakh per district and 5 lakh per centre. The CAL centres are equipped with the Computers, Instructional boards, Projector, Wi-Fi and in case not Wi-Fi (efforts has been made to cover those schools under Solar Panel.

2.3 Training for Computer Aided learning for Teachers and Masters

The teachers are trained in e-learning 33775 teachers/Masters has been provided training during the session 2016-2017. The training component include introduction to the operations of CAL learning in the identified centres. During the session 2017-2018 220 centres are under process.

Year wise Progress of CAL:

Table 1- No. Of schools covered under CAL

Year	No of Schools Covered under CAL	Status
2015-2016	220 Schools	Commissioned
2016-2017	40 Schools	Not Commissioned
2017-2018	383 Schools	Under Process

2.4 ICT @ School Scheme in J&K under RMSA

The Information and Communication technology is one of the interventions which intends to impart the knowledge of digital technology to the learners across the state. With the acquisition of the knowledge of digital technology to the learners so that the learners will be in a position to face the future challenges in his/ her life.

During 2007-08, MHRD approved 200 high and Higher secondary schools but the state could not implement the scheme. With the introduction of RMSA in 2009, the ICT @ School scheme was subsumed in it. In 2014-15 the state of J&K surrendered 200 schools and fresh approval of 220 schools was sought from the MHRD, Government of India with an approval of Rs 1408 Laces (90:10) and finally the scheme was kick started in the year 2015-16 in collaboration with NIELIT.
The Lab Setup for a Smart Innovative Classroom for each School

2.5 Growth of RMSA Centres of ICT in J&K State
Table-2: showing the District wise yearly growth of ICT Centres in J&K State under RMS

SNO	District	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Total
1	Anantnag	16	29	32	77
2	Bandipore	9	36	3	48
3	Baramulla	18	52	25	95
4	Budgam	11	18	19	48
5	Doda	8	11	33	52
6	Ganderbal	6	13	4	23
7	Jammu	23	36	31	90
8	Kargil	9		8	17
9	Kathua	12	12	38	62
10	Kishtwar		7	11	18
11	Kulgam	9	6	22	37
12	Kupwara	11	15	33	59
13	Leh	7	8	2	17
14	Poonch	8	59	4	71
15	Pulwama	9	19	10	38
16	Rajouri	11	20	22	53
17	Ramban	7	1	26	34
18	Reasi	6	6	14	26
19	Samba	7	13	3	23
20	Shopian	7	9	5	21
21	Srinagar	15	22	6	43
22	Udhampur	7	20	31	58
	Total	216	412	382	1010

2.6 Vocational educational Practices in J&K under RMSA

There are 352 schools covered under Vocational educational initiative of RMSA in the state, Details of the vocational trades focussed / incorporated during the session 2016-17, and 2017-18 are as under:

2.6.1 Innovation, Policies and Strategies at Higher level of Education

RUSA in Jammu and Kashmir: RUSA stands for RashteryaUchattarShikshaAbhiyan that was started in 2014-15 under the supervision of State Higher Education Council (SHEC). The objective of the RUSA in J&K was to improve access, quality and equity in higher education, bring reforms in state higher education system by creating a facilitative infrastructure, bring qualitative improvement in state higher education system, Research and Innovation, achieve higher enrolment and use of information and communications technologies (ICT).

2.6.2 EDUSAT in J&K

J&K launched EDUSAT initiative in 2006, Jammu operating on 18 Degree Colleges and Srinagar operating on 20 Degree colleges. J&K uses SIT facility to interact. EDUSAT in the state is being introduced. The material for more 24 SITs received and delivered to 18 SITs. For all SITs earth to neutral voltage output issue was resolved at main hub. A team from ISRO visited Srinagar colleges from 11th to 13th Dec., 2017 to take stock of work progress at SITs.

Table 3- Unique business models

SNO	Model	College
1	Food Science and Technology,	GDC Gandhi Nagar/ Baramullah
2	Chocolate Making	GDC Gandhi Nagar/ Baramullah
3	Florist Studio	GDC Gandhi Nagar/ Baramullah
4	Fashion Designing /Boutique	GDC Gandhi Nagar/ Baramullah

Table 4- Skill Development Courses in Higher Education Colleges

SNO	Skill Programme
1	Dyeing Technology
2	Block Printing,
3	Hospitality and Catering Technology,
4	Fruit Preservation
5	& Mushroom Cultivation,
6	Sericulture, Tourism & Travel Management,
7	Hospitality and Catering,
8	Spoken Persian,
9	Interior Designing,
10	Fundamentals of Computers and its Operating System,
11	Information Technology

2.7 Innovation, Policies and Strategies at Open and Distance learning in J&K

The Open and Distance learning has taken rapid strides in the state of Jammu and Kashmir especially in Jammu region. There is a rising tide in educational face. The educational services has reached each and every nook and corner of the state. The IGNOU's contribution in this direction is commendable. The local NGOs and IGNOU has entered into the memorandum of understanding for popularisation of IGNOU programmes by making use of e-content, educational telecasts like GyanDarshan, GyanVani, e-gyanKosh, Edusat etc. The following Special Study centres has been established with an objective to reach the unreached population. These centres are fully equipped with the Television sets and computers, and Internet facilities in rural and remote areas of the state especially in Jammu region. The detail of these special study centres is given as under:

Table 5- Category

SNo	Category	Nos	Use of Edusat ICT Lessons	Availability of ICT equipment's / e-content/CDs
1.	Special Study Centres in Educationally and Economically backward blocks	10	Yes	Yes
2.	Special Study centres in Rural areas	10	Yes	Yes
3.	Special Study centres under the scheme of Confederation of NGOs of rural India	4	Yes	Yes
4.	Special Study Centres for Jail Inmates	4	Yes	Yes
5.	Special Study centres for Mobile Population	1	Yes	Yes
	Total	29	Yes	Yes

2.8 Innovation, Policies and Strategies by autonomous bodies

The State Institute of Education (SIEs), Two SIEs are functional each one at Jammu and Srinagar, These State institutes of Education (SIEs) are enganged in teacher training, planning, curriculum development, formation of policies on education. These SIEs are having a close collaboration with NCERT, NUEPA, IGNOU New Delhi, RIE Ajmer, RIE Chandigarh, CCRT The Key Resource Persons are deputed to these Institutes and they in turn prepare Resource Persons for conducting various training programs that are organized by SIE and DIETs of state for teachers and masters during summer and winter vacations, The SIEs has a close cooperation with organization like J & K State Board of Education, SarvaSikshaAbhiyan, Rashtriya Madhyamic Shiksha Ab hiyan, Institute of Management, Planning and Administration etc. Innovative educational ideas are born from the brainstorming sessions, workshops, seminars organised by these SIEs. Pre-Service & In-service Training programmes of Teacher education are organised by SIEs with special emphasis on subject content.The technology is being used in training the teachers and in use for electroning gadgets in enhancing the quality. Organisation of Science Seminar, Science Drama, Science Exhibition, Art Exhibition, Book Fairs and Inspire Awards, Training on ICT, Library and Lab. Assistant.

These SIEs also works in collaboration with concerned staff of the DIET and other resource persons, to develop simple, effective and low-cost teaching aids for various subjects/areas relevant to elementary education and elementary teacher education –charts, diagrams, models, photographs, slides, audio tapes, play scripts etc.SIE identifies the locally relevant work experience areas and work for their inclusion in the curriculum of elementary schools. Making of candles, Chalk workshops on work experience subjects like toy making, candle making calligraphy competition, painting competition, soap making, book binding, Tie and Dye, food preservation, juice, pickles and other local crafts.Cleanliness of DIET complex, maintenance of furniture every month.

2.9 Innovative practices of J&K State Board of School Education

The J&K State Board of school education has taken several innovative and e-learning strategies for making teaching and learning process effective. The BOSE J&K has taken the following strategies and innovative practices :

2.9.1 Development of e-content

National Vocational Education Qualification Framework (NVEQF) is being implemented in the State as per the MHRD guidelines from the current academic session. Four Vocational Courses viz: IT &ITes,, Automobile Technology, Retail and Security are the vocational courses identified for 132 schools across the state. Each school shall have a choice of 2 vocational Courses to be implemented from Class 9th, The Programme is funded by MHRD shall be through RMSA.

2.9.2 J & K State Open School

J&K Govt has notified open schooling way back in 2001, after a gap of 13 years J&K BOSE has taken initiative to implement the scheme in 38 Govt. Schools as study centres in as many district across the state. The Instructional material has also distributed among the learners to democratise school education in the state.

2.9.3 NTSE (National Talent Search Examination)

NTSE is an activity of NCERT, New Delhi aimed at search talent at an initial state of a student. An examination is conducted for this purpose to explore the hidden talent.

2.10 Other Educational Strategies

i) Medicinal Plant Gardens in Schools With a view to promote entrepreneurship, generate awareness about medicinal/aromatic plants in the state, rare medicinal plants, establishment of herbal gardens has been initiated in various schools of the state.

ii) Development of small nurseries. Plant material/Herbal produce to be sold to the end users.

iii) Operation Digital board for all schools: Very recently anMoU was signed between the HRD ministry and Jammu & Kashmir education department to converge the syllabus followed in state education board schools with CBSE and use NCERT books.

iv) Smile Foundation & Wilde Ganzen launch e-learning platform :Smile Foundation in collaboration with the Dutch development organization, has launched the international capacity building initiative Change the Game Academy (CTG Academy) in India. It is a kind e-learning portal specially created for building the capacities of, grassroots NGOs and

v) Department of Education has signed an MoU with ISRO :Content will be developed for Information and Communication Technology-enabled classrooms, for which the Department of Education has signed an MoU with ISRO.

vi) NCPUL and NIELIT Collaborative exercises for Computer training in Schools: The National Council for promotion of Urdu language has established----centres in Jammu and Kashmir with an objective to give Urdu language a professional touch by the use of computers, ICTs forMatric pass students of the state. The NCPUL has covered almost all the districts of the state of Jammu and Kashmir for providing computer education to the students. This exercise has been collaborated by the council in collaboration with NIELIT Government of India. Urdu has been given a professional touch by the NCPUL. The NCPUL computer centres are catering to the needs of the Urdu students who teach it class X and above.

vii) The Community Information Centre Project:It is a Government of India Scheme at each Block in the State which isbased on Citizen Kiosk with content enabling citizen centricservices, e-governance, e-learning and e-commerce. The CommunityInformation Centre (CIC) Project was started by the state of Jammu andKashmir in the year 2004. In these CIC centres, students are provided e-learning facilities.

III.   Result And Discussion

The innovative educational practices need to be fostered in the state, SSA, has done a bit for technologizing learning in schools, As many as 1104 Middle Schools has been covered under the ambit of the CAL- Computer Aided Learning, this research reveal that the schools at primary level in the state are 14171; Number of the upper primary schools has been increased to 6665. The Computer Aided learning is provided only though 1104 schools, rest of the schools are not familiar of computers or ICT initiatives. The SSA need to go beyond these 1104 Schools in order to provide each school ICT or computer aided instruction. With regard to the ICT initiatives in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, this study reveal that 1010 ICT enabled smart schools rest of the schools are without ICT as per the data produced by State Project Directorate of RMSA. Under RMSA, 216 schools has been established in the year 2015-2016, 412 Schools in 2016-2017, and 382 schools in the year 2017-18. The total number of the High Schools in the state is 1194. The efforts of RMSA as compared to the SSA are herculean as RMSA has covered majority of the schools in the state under Innovative practices like ICT enabled Smart Schooling. Nevertheless, the schools at primary and upper primary that comes under the ambit of the SSA are more than the Secondary schools. The RMSA has another feather to its cap, i.e. vocational education in 132 schools during 2016-2017 for four tradesi.e. Retail, IT, Health Care, and Tourism for secondary school students in the Ist phase. In the second Phase 220 schools has been covered during the current session 2017-18 with 6 vocational trades i.e. Agriculture, Sports, Beauty and wellness for 9th, 10th, 11th students respectively. The Vocational education in all the rest of uncovered schools is yet to be done. The innovative ideas under SSA and RMSA need more resources to cover the entire areas.

The use of Information and Communication technologies and EDUSAT at higher education level has been introduced in the state and there has a lot to be covered. In Jammu region only 18 colleges are covered and in Kashmir region 20 colleges were covered. J&K uses SIT facility to interact. EDUSAT in the state is being introduced. The material for more 24 SITs received and delivered to 18 SITs. For all SITs earth to neutral voltage output issue was resolved at main hub. A team from ISRO visited Srinagar colleges from 11th to 13th Dec., 2017 to take stock of work progress at SITs. There are majority of the new colleges in rural areas of Bhalessa, Doda, Thahtri, Rajouri, Poonch and many areas of Kashmir yet to get EDUSAT facility. In order to make learning more effective and innovative, EDUSAT need to be introduced in all the colleges of the state.

The establishment of the State Higher Education Council (SHEC) in Jammu and Kashmir is first time in the history, this bill to this effect has been passed by the state legislature in February 2018. The SHEC is playing a pivotal role in implementing the schemes like RashtriyaUchchatarShiksha Abhiyan (RUSA). RUSA is playing an effective role in establishing Cluster universities, Establishment of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) at Jagti, Nagrota.Establishment of Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), RUSA Engineering Colleges at Kathua and Safapora(Ganderbal and J&K Institute of Mathematical Sciences (JKIMS) during 2016-17. The Higher education in the state ranked 2nd in the Higher education sector of India. The research and innovation are the key factors that need to be looked into. Under Higher education system, the staff development initiatives are undertaken by the state, visit of the faculty to the foreign universities etc.

The innovative practices of State higher education are introduction of Skill development course in various colleges. The programmes of skill education like Dyeing technology, Block Printing, Spoken Persian, Tourism and Travel management, Hospitality and catering, Interior designing, Fundamentals of computers and its operating system, Information technology in various degree colleges of the state. These courses have enhanced the employability of the college students. In order to revamp the education sector both at school,

college and university level, there is a need to reach the each and every nook and corner of the state to enhance quality, equity and access. This study reveal that there are other programmes like Computer Centres in Urdu schools funded by the National Council for Promotion of Urdu language (NCPUL) Government of India and collaborated by NIELIT, In every district, NCPUL sponsored Computer Application and Multilingual DTP Centres are existing that has enhanced the employability of the students in the state. The schemes like Digital Literacy, Prime Ministers KoushalVikasYojna is being implemented in the state. The study also reveal that unique business models in the fields of Food Science and Technology, Chocolate Making, Florist Studio and Fashion Designing /Boutique toimprove skill and encourage entrepreneurship amongst students has been developed by different colleges like Govt College for Women Gandhi Nagar and Baramulla. This investigation reveal that the e- content initiatives of the J&K Board of school education upto class 10th. The e-content is also developed by the J&K Knowledge Network.The state of Jammu and Kashmir is confronting a peculiar situation in terms of topography; the study also explores the non-availability of electricity in the majority of the schools of the state. There is also a need to develop basic infrastructure in schools in order to think of the major initiatives and innovative practices from such schools and colleges.

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