

OVERVIEW

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This Report contains a Specific area Compliance Audit of Outcomes in Higher Education and 10 compliance audit paragraphs.

Specific area Compliance Audit of ‘Outcomes in Higher Education’

Higher education is passing through a phase of unprecedented expansion in terms of number of students and number of higher education institutions (HEI). Higher education includes both general streams and professional or technical streams. Government of Tamil Nadu (GoTN) seeks to provide equitable access to good quality higher education.

The present Specific area Compliance Audit attempts to ascertain the outcomes of higher education in general stream in the State, in terms of its contribution to employability and research, the level of equitable access to quality higher education, and the adequacy and effectiveness of governance and management structures. The Audit focused on the role played by GoTN and four sampled universities towards the fulfilment of these objectives.

The State performed well in student enrolment, pass percentage, access and affordability. Audit, however, found issues mainly with student-faculty ratio in colleges, valuation of answer papers, poor research output, regional disparity in access and ineffective functioning of governance structures.

- Student-Faculty Ratio (SFR) is a determinant of quality in higher education. Significant delays in recruitment of regular teaching staff for Government colleges resulted in colleges being run with low number of regular faculty members, and thereby having an adverse impact on the quality of education imparted.

(Paragraph 2.1.6)

- Large number of revaluation requests and change of marks after revaluation cast doubt on the efficiency of answer sheet evaluation system. The moderation exercise and award of grace marks lacked transparency in the absence of any guidelines.

(Paragraph 2.1.7)

- Only a handful of university departments were active in research. Majority had poor or nil research output. Further, the sampled universities largely depended on research grants from Government of India for carrying out research.

(Paragraph 2.1.8)

- The State has a higher college density than the all India average. However, regional disparity within the State is a matter of concern as 14 districts have lower college density than the all India average.

(Paragraph 2.1.9.1)

- The Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) of SC and ST students was much below the State's overall GER.

(Paragraph 2.1.9.2)

- The autonomous bodies charged with the responsibility of Governance of higher education at State level were not active in discharging their roles.

(Paragraph 2.1.10.1)

- The University of Madras, the oldest in the State, continues to face financial crisis due to mismanagement and inadequate financial support from GoTN. As a result, funds meant for research and development activities were diverted for salaries and regular non-plan expenditure.

(Paragraph 2.1.10.7)

Compliance Audit Paragraphs

Launching a project at King Institute of Preventive Medicine, Chennai, to revive Anti Snake Venom Serum manufacturing, without comprehensive technical and financial feasibility study and ensuring source of funding, resulted in unfruitful expenditure of ` 16.77 crore.

(Paragraph 3.1.1)

Poor planning and implementation of installation of bio-digester/bio-tank toilets under Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin), resulted in non-achievement of objective of improved sanitation in rural areas and also led to unfruitful expenditure of ` 4.44 crore.

(Paragraph 3.1.2)

Failure of the Agriculture Department to frame a comprehensive guideline and to enforce the existing guidelines resulted in misuse of subsidy of ` 3.01 crore, besides non-achievement of the intended objectives of agricultural mechanisation.

(Paragraph 3.1.3)

Failure of the Government and Revenue authorities to take timely action had resulted in unauthorised occupation of Government land worth ` 14.16 crore at Madurai, and short collection of revenue of ` 7.38 crore.

(Paragraph 3.2.1)

Failure to consult the local body and to acquire land for approach road before commencement of a bus stand project at Gandarvakottai in Pudukottai district, resulted in idling of the new bus stand constructed at a cost of ` 3.91 crore.

(Paragraph 3.3.1)

Failure to select beneficiaries for *Samathuvapuram* housing scheme before commencement of construction, resulted in the idling of infrastructure created at a cost of ₹ 2.42 crore for over six years and consequent damage to the properties thus rendering them unfit for occupation.

(Paragraph 3.3.2)

Lack of comprehensive planning by Natham Panchayat Union in Dindigul district, leading to piecemeal construction, delay in obtaining electrical connection, non-provision of water supply and toilet facilities, etc., had resulted in idle investment of ₹ 84.46 lakh.

(Paragraph 3.3.3)

Failure to restrict the requirement for Aadhaar enrolment kits based on actual need of Child Development Project Offices had resulted in accessories of Aadhaar enrolment kits valuing ₹ 7.85 crore lying unutilised for more than two years.

(Paragraph 3.3.4)

Non-adherence to Government's orders by the Director of Adi Dravidar Welfare and District Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Officers had resulted in an inadmissible expenditure of ₹ 1.81 crore towards sanction of Higher Education Special Scholarship to ineligible students.

(Paragraph 3.4.1)

Non-adherence of Government's orders by the Director of Adi Dravidar Welfare and failure of Government to check repeated violations had resulted in inadmissible excess reimbursement of fees to the tune of ₹ 1.62 crore to private schools.

(Paragraph 3.4.2)