



## **National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration**

### **7.2 Best Practices**

#### **1. Title of the Practice**

National Awards for Innovations and Good Practices in Education Administration for District and Block Level Education Officers

#### **2. Objectives of the Practice**

The National Scheme of Awards for Innovations and Good Practices in Educational Administration has two main objectives. The first objective is to recognize and promote grassroots level innovations in the government schooling system. This is achieved by identifying and motivating educational officers at the district and block levels who have initiated good practices and innovative solutions to problems in the education system. The second objective is to disseminate these innovations and good practices widely across the States and Union Territories. This dissemination is achieved through conferences and other platforms, with the aim of encouraging replication of the innovations in similar contexts.

The Scheme uses a multi-stage evaluation process to select District and Block Level Education Officers for awards based on the merit of their case. The awards are presented at a national function in New Delhi that coincides with a two-day conference on innovations in educational administration of DEOs and BEOs. The Scheme was launched in 2014 as a means of encouraging innovations and good practices in educational administration that would improve the functioning of the public education system.

#### **3. The Context**

Despite many innovations occurring in the area of educational administration at the field level, there is a lack of means to acknowledge and record these innovations. As a result of not having a

systematic process to recognize grassroots innovations in educational administration, many of them go unnoticed or only have a limited impact. To address this issue, NIEPA aims to establish a platform for recognizing innovative practices in educational administration and management at the field level through a National Scheme of Awards for Innovations and Good Practices in Educational Administration and Management.

#### **4. The Practice**

The NIEPA, a leading institution for educational planning, policy, and administration, recognizes that school education and higher education are not separate entities but rather a cohesive unit. To ensure quality and equity, a strong foundation in school education is crucial for successful higher education. The NIEPA gives equal attention to both domains and encourages researchers and faculty to maintain a balance in their work. As part of this, the National Scheme of Awards for Innovations and Good Practices in Educational Administration was created to bring positive and sustainable changes to the education system. The scheme recognizes and disseminates innovative practices initiated by education officers at the Block and District levels. Since its launch in 2014, over 220 cases of innovations and good practices have been shared at conferences and awards functions organized by the NIEPA, with over 500 education officers and experts participating. The awards are distributed by the Minister for Human Resource Development (now Ministry of Education) to selected officers who have undergone careful scrutiny and multi-stage screening by expert committees.

#### **5. Evidence of Success**

The success of innovative educational practices can be evaluated based on various factors such as scale, context, sustainability, replicability, and uniqueness. Scale refers to the coverage of the initiative, and even small-scale initiatives that have a visible impact can be considered successful. Sustainability involves the ability of the initiative to continue and maintain its established system, even if the officer in charge is relocated, through community involvement or other means. Replicability can be determined by whether the innovation can be adapted to similar contexts in other locations.

There are some noteworthy examples of successful educational innovations that have been replicated in various parts of the country. One such example is the creation of self-sufficient organic kitchen gardens to provide healthy and disease-free vegetable seedlings for school meals,

which has now become a common practice in many schools. Another successful initiative is the celebration of students' birthdays in government schools, which has been widely appreciated by teachers, students, and parents. Education officers from different states have also successfully mobilized and engaged communities in the public education system, which has resulted in greater stakeholder involvement and improved overall system performance. The use of IT in governance and promotion of e-governance has also increased transparency and accountability within the system.

The dissemination of these successful cases has led to their replication by officers in other districts and blocks, resulting in positive changes within the education system and improved perceptions of government schools among stakeholders.

### **6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required**

The successful implementation of the National Scheme of Awards for Innovations and Good Practices relies on having well-defined and systematic resources. The biggest challenge faced is ensuring that there is comprehensive representation from all states in India, given the country's linguistic, regional, and cultural diversity. This is a difficult and time-consuming task, requiring significant academic, administrative, and financial resources. However, the NIEPA has made great efforts to ensure that all necessary resources are in place and available to address these challenges. The Institute has been successful so far due to its efficient allocation of resources and funds. It is important to note that the scheme requires active participation from all sections of the Institute, and this collaboration has been a source of pride for the organization.

In essence, the National Scheme of Awards for Innovations and Good Practices in Educational Administration aims to restore people's and communities' confidence in the public education system, and the Institute has been instrumental in achieving this goal by attempting to bring positive changes within the system.