Need for an Education Data

What is the issue?

India lacks and needs a data which can hold the local vision of education and local actors accountable.

What is the case of Rajasthan?

- Media writings have highlighted the marked fall or improvement in learning outcomes, depending on the dataset
  - Annual Status of Education Report (ASER)led by the NGO, Pratham
  - The National Achievement Survey (NAS) led by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)
- According to ASER 2019 data, Rajasthan was among the bottom five States in learning levels, while in NAS 2017, Rajasthan was among the top performers.
- Despite near consensus among policymakers and the intense efforts to disseminate data among the end-users, it is rarely used by poor parents.
- For them, schooling is about examination outcome, which is a proxy for learning, English language skills and a chance for secondary and graduate level degrees.
- Data on school infrastructure at the district level, or learning levels at the State level cannot galvanise the masses.

What about the present status?

- Data has to be linked with a vision of school education which addresses the anxieties and aspirations of parents.
- A national-level policy should encompass the essence of the vision of the people at the national, State, district and local levels.
- The district and school development plans such as the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) were not representatives of parent-school consensus.
- Community-based consultative bodies such as the school management committees and parent-teacher committees could not become platforms to facilitate this.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is Government of India's flagship programme for achievement of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner, as mandated by 86th amendment to the Constitution of India.

Why is the education data so significant?

- It is only when data is connected with a locally developed and politically owned vision of school education that it will move beyond the administrator and the activist.
- The education data is essential to hold the local actors accountable.

References

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