

SCHEME FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO DANCE, DRAMA AND THEATRE ENSEMBLES - A QUICK STUDY

1. The Study

With a view to preserve and promote and disseminate art and culture in the country, the Ministry of Education launched a scheme in 1971-72 for financial assistance to professional Dance, Drama and Theatre Ensembles. In addition to the previous schemes, another scheme was introduced in 1979-80 to provide financial assistance on non-recurring basis to art projects, professional groups and individuals.

At the instance of Planning Commission, the Programme Evaluation Organisation undertook a quick study of the scheme to assess the activities of the eminent Institutions and Art projects receiving financial assistance and also to examine the procedure of grant-in-aid of the Sangeet Natak Academy.

2. Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the evaluation study were as under:

- i) to assess the activities of the Institutions/art projects receiving financial assistance under the scheme,
- ii) to study the contributions/innovations of Gurus and Artists in the field of performing arts,
- iii) to ascertain as to how far the Institutions/Art projects receiving grant under the scheme have been able to encourage different art forms and styles of performing arts, and
- iv) to examine the adequacy of financial assistance including salary, production, maintenance and library and documentation.

3. Sample Size/Criteria for Sample Selection

The 74 art projects receiving grants were located in the 12 states and 2 UTs. Therefore, these were selected for the study. Out of these, 4 eminent Institutions and 20 Art projects located in 12 states and 2 Union Territories were selected. From these eminent Institutions and art projects 10 Gurus and 216 Artists were selected for an interview. In addition to this, the executive heads of all the 24 eminent institutions and Art projects selected were interviewed.

Further, 2 official and 2 non-official members of the expert Committee for assistance under the scheme were also interviewed.

4. Reference Period

The field study was conducted in October and November, 1993. The reference period was from 1985-86 to 1993-94.

5. Main Findings

1. About 70 percent of the personnel were above 25 years of age and 40 percent of them were Graduates/Post graduates. Most of the technical personnel received training under Guru Sishya Parampara.
2. 3 eminent Institutions had formal training in their Institutions and during 1985-94, 4,343 persons were trained by them.
3. The eminent Institutions had 134 productions with 1850 shows during 1985-94, out of which hardly about 9 per cent were in rural areas.
4. Out of 20 selected Art projects, the oldest was established in 1946. 12 had their own building and most of them specialised in one or the other form of Dance and Music.
5. Out of 20 Art projects, only 13 Art projects conducted training. During 1985-94, 5,998 persons were trained by them. It was reported that almost all the Art projects had conducted experiment and innovation in performing creative and fine arts.
6. It was observed that all the 10 Gurus were well established in their respective field of performing art and had contributed in the form of training, experimentation and performances.
7. The Art projects in the different states had also entered the areas of creative dance, video production, television and graphics.
8. The expenditure in the eminent Institutions was more than the grant provided. They had to depend more on their own sources like sale of tickets for their performances, hiring of halls and sponsorship, etc. which affected the quality and quantity of new productions.
9. It was reported by four eminent Institutions that the grant for the year 1993-94 was received late and less than the expenditure incurred.

10. Some of the organisations had inadequate infrastructural facilities to carry out the various activities related to their work.
11. It was reported that the procedure for release of grants was cumbersome.
12. Although the general view regarding the scheme for financial assistance to Dance, Drama and Theatre Ensembles was that it had proved useful, but the grant received under each item was inadequate.

6. Major Suggestions

1. In order to have a better appreciation of the performing arts, it is imperative that the younger generation should be involved in such performances.
2. The norms should be fixed under each item for which grants are given which could decide the scale of itemwise expenditure. Moreover, there should be a periodical review to be done by the Department of Culture in consultation with the eminent Institutions and Art Projects, etc.
3. Stringent criteria should be laid down in order to ensure continuity of management, economic stability, artistic viability and introduce a matching principle.
4. The existing zonal cultural centres should be activated to play a more effective role in identifying, screening, and monitoring of eminent Institutions and Art Projects.
5. It was suggested by most of the eminent Institutions and Art Projects that the infrastructural facilities should be strengthened.
6. It was reported that the grants for new production, may be provided adequately for meeting the expenditure in publication and training also.
7. It was suggested that the scheme for financial assistance to Dance, Drama and Theatre Ensembles should be more widely publicised and the role of State Government clearly specified.