

Reinventing Teachers' Unions in India: Insights From a Case Study in Maharashtra State

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Schooling in India – Some statistics



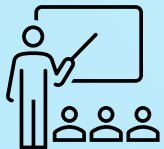
260 million

23 million



1.5 million

750,000



9.5 million

110,000

Schooling in India – Main characteristics

Higher student enrolments levels

- High dropout rates
- Low learning levels

Diverse and stratified schooling system

- Unequal education for the students
- Expansion and growth of Private sector

Diverse and stratified teacher population

- Government (63%) / Non-government (37%) division
- Unorganised group of teachers

Major equity and quality
challenges



Much potential for
Teachers' unions

Objectives of Teachers' Unions

1. Central focus

Increase teachers' salaries and improve working conditions



2. Accompanying focus

Raise the quality of education

Challenges in achieving educational quality objectives

- ❖ Quality of education not as tangible as salary
- ❖ Lack of consensus on what educational quality means

Active Teachers Forum (ATF)



Established in 2012:

Small group of
government school teachers & researchers
in Maharashtra State

Operates mainly through social media:

Facebook, Google and Whatsapp

Teacher members from remote regions
can experience a sense of belonging and
community connection.

Grown in numbers & diversity to include

- School heads
- Education department officials
- Pedagogy experts
- Journalists
- Researchers and practitioners from education and policymaking

9000

Active Teachers Forum (ATF): Main Objectives



1. Make children the central focus of the teaching-learning processes by enriching their learning experiences and educational outcomes



2. Build teachers' capacities and support one another in a way that would contribute to fulfilling the first objective



3. Utilise their grassroots experiences to influence policy decisions in a bottom-up manner

How are these objectives achieved?

- Share ideas, initiatives, projects, programmes implemented in classrooms and schools
- Discuss challenges and collectively plan out solutions
- Conduct regular seminars/ webinars and annual conferences
- Analyse government policies and their implications; put forth unforeseen issues to the governing bodies; and suggest appropriate actions to resolve them



Sociological



Pedagogical



Technological



Administrative

Sociological Factors



Increased awareness about discriminatory social practices

➤ Reflected in the classrooms of the ATF teachers

A strong belief in an equal society

➤ All children are treated equally

Democratic classrooms

➤ Similar expectations from all the students

Pedagogical Factors



Expertise & support of organisations involved in pedagogical research

➤ Professional development courses for the teachers

Centrality on tests and examinations

➤ Raising awareness on developing critical thinking skills

Pointing out misleading activity-based learning activities

➤ Prevent trivialisation of constructivist pedagogical approaches

Technological Factors



Insufficient & asymmetric knowledge about Edtech

- Provide meaningful digital education for students

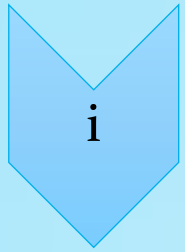
Taking stock of ground realities

- Provide innovative solutions according to the contextual situation

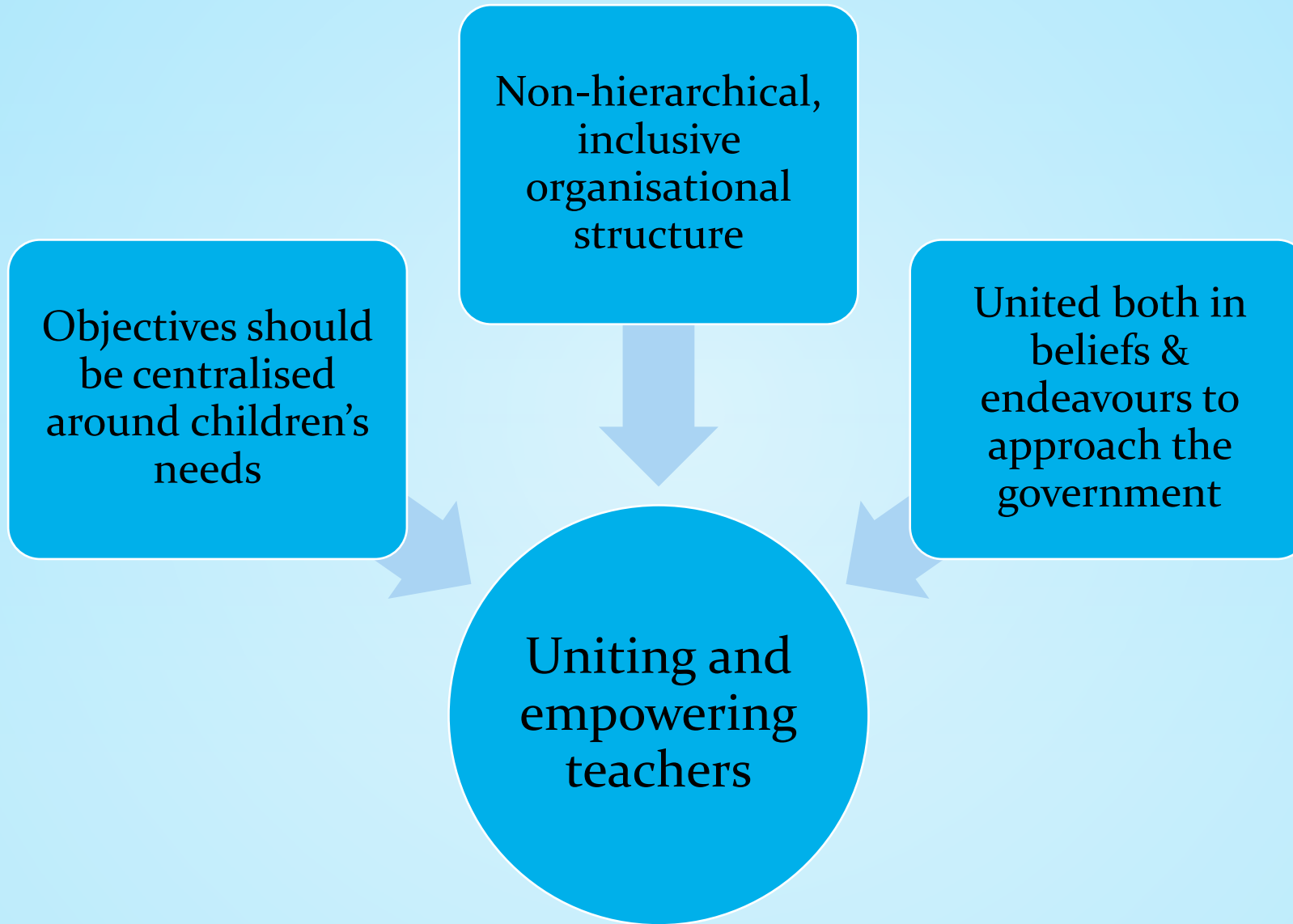
Creating awareness about data privacy

- Prevent misuse and abuse of data

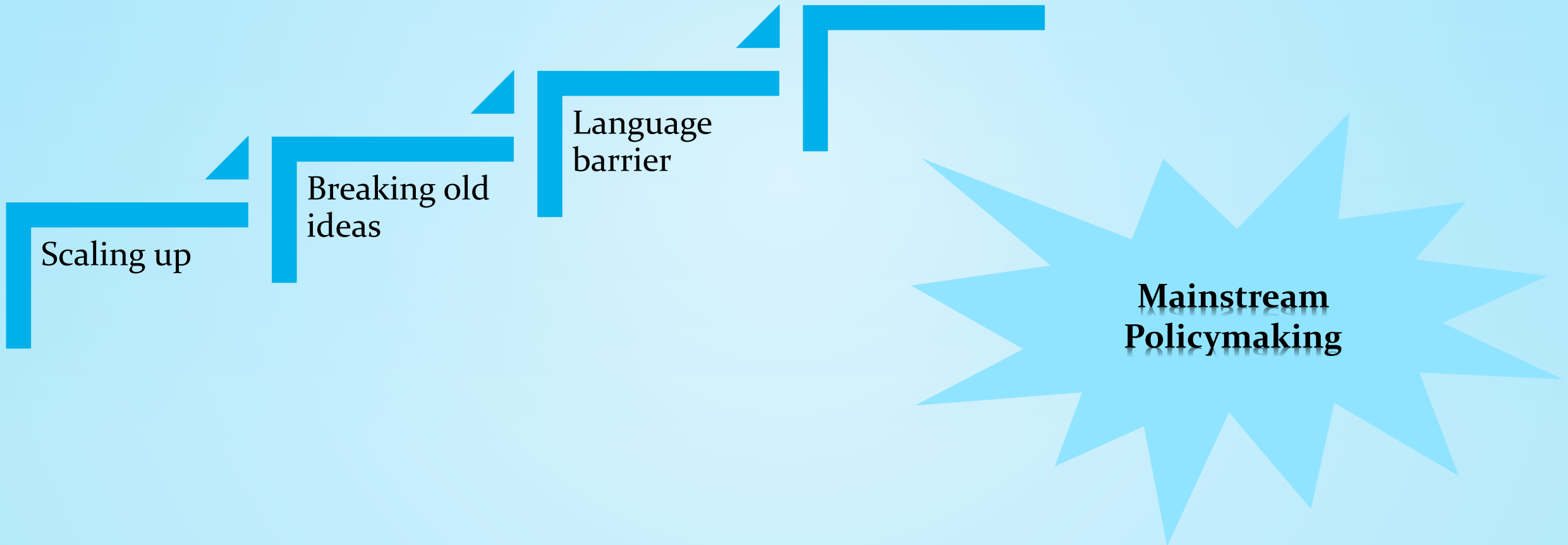
Administrative Factors



New Model for Teachers' Unions



Challenges and Potential Solution





THANK YOU

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