



Impact of NEP 2020 on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) Outcomes: A Perception Study Among Primary School Teachers in Ahmedabad District

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Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 accords the highest priority to Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN), positioning it as an urgent national mission to be achieved through NIPUN Bharat by 2026–27. Teachers, as the frontline implementers of this mission, hold perceptions that critically shape classroom practice, resource utilisation and ultimately, learning outcomes. The present study examined the perception of primary school teachers regarding the impact of NEP 2020 on FLN outcomes, with specific reference to Ahmedabad district, Gujarat. A descriptive survey method was adopted on a sample of 240 primary school teachers selected through stratified random sampling across ten talukas of the district, covering variations in locality (urban/rural), gender and years of teaching experience. Data were collected using a self-constructed and validated FLN Perception Scale and analysed using mean, standard deviation, t-test and one-way ANOVA. Findings revealed that teachers in urban schools reported significantly higher FLN perception scores than their rural counterparts ($t = 8.98, p < .01$), while no significant difference emerged between male and female teachers ($t = -0.23, p > .05$). Teaching experience was found to significantly influence perception ($F = 2.86, p < .05$), with more experienced teachers reporting comparatively higher confidence in FLN implementation. The study underscores the continuing urban-rural divide in policy readiness and highlights the need for targeted, experience-differentiated professional development to strengthen FLN delivery across Ahmedabad district.

Keywords: NEP 2020, Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, NIPUN Bharat, Teacher Perception, Primary Education, Ahmedabad District

1. Introduction

The National Education Policy 2020 marks a watershed moment in the trajectory of Indian education by explicitly recognising Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) as an immediate and necessary prerequisite to all future learning. The policy states unambiguously that attaining foundational literacy and numeracy for all children by Grade 3 must become an urgent national mission, given that a large



proportion of children currently in elementary school are estimated to lack basic reading and numerical skills appropriate for their age.

In pursuance of this vision, the Ministry of Education launched the National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN Bharat) in 2021, laying down goals, targets and a five-tier monitoring framework to be achieved by the academic year 2026–27. The success of this mission, however, rests substantially on the beliefs, preparedness and day-to-day practices of primary school teachers, who mediate policy intent into classroom reality. Teacher perception — encompassing pedagogical confidence, resource adequacy, assessment literacy and institutional support — therefore constitutes a critical, though frequently under-examined, determinant of FLN outcomes at the ground level.

Ahmedabad district, with its mix of urban municipal schools and rural taluka-level government schools, presents a naturally stratified context in which to examine how policy readiness varies across locality, gender and experience. The present study was undertaken to empirically capture these variations and to generate evidence that can inform targeted, locality-sensitive teacher capacity-building under NEP 2020.

2. Review of Related Literature

Studies conducted since the release of NEP 2020 have consistently pointed to a gap between policy aspiration and classroom-level readiness. Research on NIPUN Bharat implementation has noted that while conceptual clarity regarding FLN goals has improved among teachers, translating these goals into differentiated, activity-based pedagogy remains uneven, particularly in resource-constrained rural schools.

Comparative studies of urban and rural elementary teachers have repeatedly reported that urban teachers benefit from greater access to teaching-learning materials, digital resources and in-service training opportunities, which in turn strengthens their confidence in delivering foundational-level instruction. Conversely, rural teachers, despite often demonstrating strong contextual and community knowledge, report constraints related to multigrade teaching loads, limited access to structured FLN training modules and inadequate print-rich classroom environments.

With respect to teaching experience, the literature presents a nuanced picture: while novice teachers bring recent exposure to updated pedagogical training, including NEP-aligned curricula, more experienced teachers often report higher self-efficacy owing to accumulated classroom management skill and familiarity with diverse learner needs. Gender-based differences in FLN perception have



generally been reported as statistically weak or non-significant in most Indian elementary education studies, suggesting that professional training and institutional context outweigh gender as predictors of perception. The present study builds upon this literature by empirically testing these patterns within the specific administrative and geographic context of Ahmedabad district.

3. Need and Significance of the Study

Although NEP 2020 and NIPUN Bharat have generated substantial policy-level momentum, district-specific empirical evidence on teacher perception remains limited, particularly for Gujarat. Ahmedabad district's administrative diversity — spanning dense urban municipal wards and dispersed rural talukas — makes it a strategically important unit for understanding how FLN readiness is distributed unevenly across contexts. Without such granular evidence, teacher training and resource allocation under the FLN mission risk remaining generic rather than need-based.

The findings of this study are expected to be of direct use to District Education Officers, Block Resource Coordinators, DIET faculty and teacher-training institutions in Ahmedabad district for designing differentiated, locality- and experience-sensitive FLN capacity-building programmes, in line with the monitoring and continuous professional development architecture envisaged under NIPUN Bharat.

4. Statement of the Problem

The problem of the present study is stated as follows: “Impact of NEP 2020 on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) Outcomes: A Perception Study Among Primary School Teachers in Ahmedabad District.”

5. Operational Definitions

- NEP 2020: The National Education Policy 2020 approved by the Government of India, with specific reference to its provisions on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy.
- Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN): The ability of a child to read and comprehend basic text and to perform basic arithmetic operations, as targeted under the NIPUN Bharat framework by the end of Grade 3.
- Perception: The composite score obtained by a primary school teacher on the FLN Perception Scale, reflecting pedagogical preparedness, resource adequacy, assessment practice and institutional support related to FLN implementation.
- Primary School Teachers: Teachers currently teaching at the primary level (Grades 1–5) in government and government-aided schools of Ahmedabad district.



6. Objectives of the Study

- To study the perception of primary school teachers of Ahmedabad district regarding the impact of NEP 2020 on FLN outcomes.
- To compare the FLN perception of urban and rural primary school teachers of Ahmedabad district.
- To compare the FLN perception of male and female primary school teachers of Ahmedabad district.
- To study the effect of teaching experience on the FLN perception of primary school teachers of Ahmedabad district.
- To suggest measures for strengthening FLN implementation on the basis of the findings obtained.

7. Hypotheses of the Study

The following null hypotheses (H0) were formulated for testing:

- H01: There is no significant difference between the mean FLN perception scores of urban and rural primary school teachers of Ahmedabad district.
- H02: There is no significant difference between the mean FLN perception scores of male and female primary school teachers of Ahmedabad district.
- H03: There is no significant difference among the mean FLN perception scores of primary school teachers belonging to different teaching-experience groups.

8. Delimitations of the Study

- The study was delimited to primary school teachers (Grades 1–5) of government and government-aided schools of Ahmedabad district, Gujarat.
- The study was delimited to a sample of 240 teachers drawn from ten talukas of the district.
- The study was delimited to the perception dimensions covered under the FLN Perception Scale; classroom observation and pupil achievement data were outside its scope.

9. Research Methodology

9.1 Research Method

The descriptive survey method was employed, as it is best suited to capturing the existing status of teachers' perception across a large and stratified sample.

9.2 Population and Sample



The population comprised all primary school teachers working in government and government-aided schools of Ahmedabad district. A sample of 240 teachers was selected through stratified random sampling, with strata formed on the basis of locality (urban/rural) and taluka, so as to ensure proportional representation across the district's administrative divisions. The distribution of the sample is presented in Table 1.

Taluka	Locality	Number of Teachers	Percentage
Ahmedabad City	Urban	42	17.5%
Daskroi	Urban	38	15.8%
Sanand	Rural	26	10.8%
Dholka	Rural	24	10.0%
Bavla	Rural	22	9.2%
Viramgam	Rural	22	9.2%
Dhandhuka	Rural	20	8.3%
Detroj-Rampura	Rural	16	6.7%
Barwala	Rural	16	6.7%
Mandal	Rural	14	5.8%
Total	—	240	100%

Table 1: Taluka-wise and Locality-wise Distribution of the Sample (N = 240)

9.3 Tool Used

A self-constructed and validated 'FLN Perception Scale' was used for data collection. The scale consisted of 40 statements distributed across four dimensions — pedagogical preparedness, classroom resource adequacy, assessment and monitoring practices, and institutional and community support — rated on a five-point Likert format. The scale was validated through expert opinion and a pilot try-out (Cronbach's alpha = 0.86), and raw scores were converted to a 100-point composite index for analysis.

9.4 Procedure of Data Collection

Data were collected with the cooperation of Cluster Resource Coordinators and school principals across the sampled talukas. Teachers were briefed regarding the purpose of the study, and informed consent was obtained prior to administration of the tool.

9.5 Statistical Techniques Used

Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) were computed for all variables. The independent-samples t-test was applied to test H01 and H02, and one-way ANOVA was applied to test H03. The 0.05 level of significance was used throughout as the criterion for rejection of null hypotheses.

10. Data Analysis and Interpretation

10.1 Overall Sample Profile

Figure 3 presents the taluka-wise distribution of the achieved sample, confirming proportional representation of both urban and rural strata of Ahmedabad district.

**Figure 3: Taluka-wise Distribution of the Sample
(N = 240 Primary School Teachers, Ahmedabad District)**

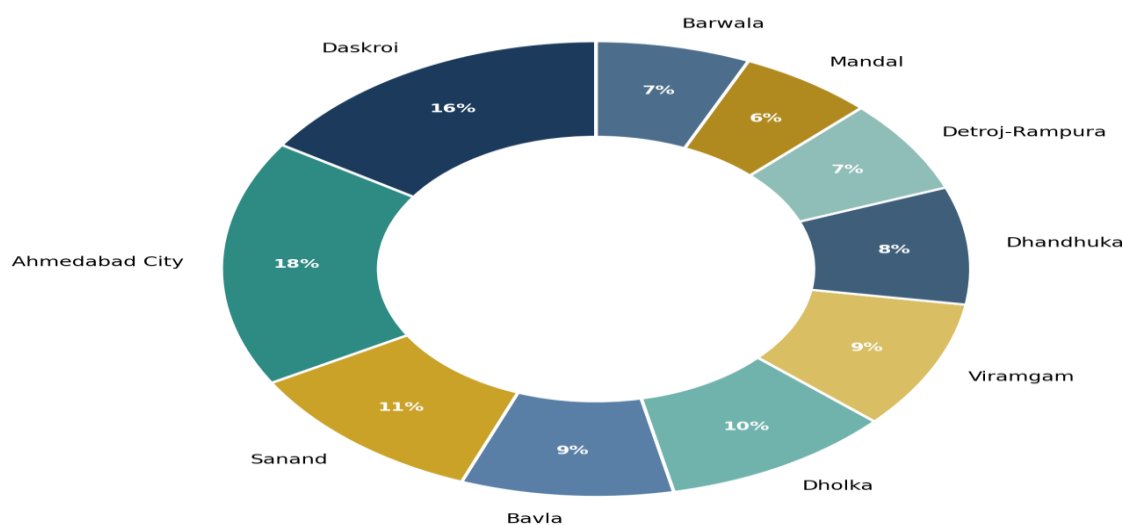


Figure 3: Taluka-wise Distribution of the Sample (N = 240)

10.2 Testing of Hypothesis H01 (Locality)

H01 stated that there is no significant difference between the mean FLN perception scores of urban and rural primary school teachers. The relevant descriptive and inferential statistics are presented in Table 2.

Locality	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Sig.
Urban	80	76.49	6.57	8.98	$p < .01$
Rural	160	67.96	7.53	—	Significant

Table 2: Locality-wise Mean, S.D. and t-value of FLN Perception Scores ($df = 238$)

As shown in Table 2, the obtained t-value of 8.98 is significant at the 0.01 level. Hence, H01 is rejected. Urban primary school teachers ($M = 76.49$) reported significantly higher FLN perception than rural teachers ($M = 67.96$), indicating a persistent urban-rural divide in policy readiness, resource access and training exposure under NEP 2020.

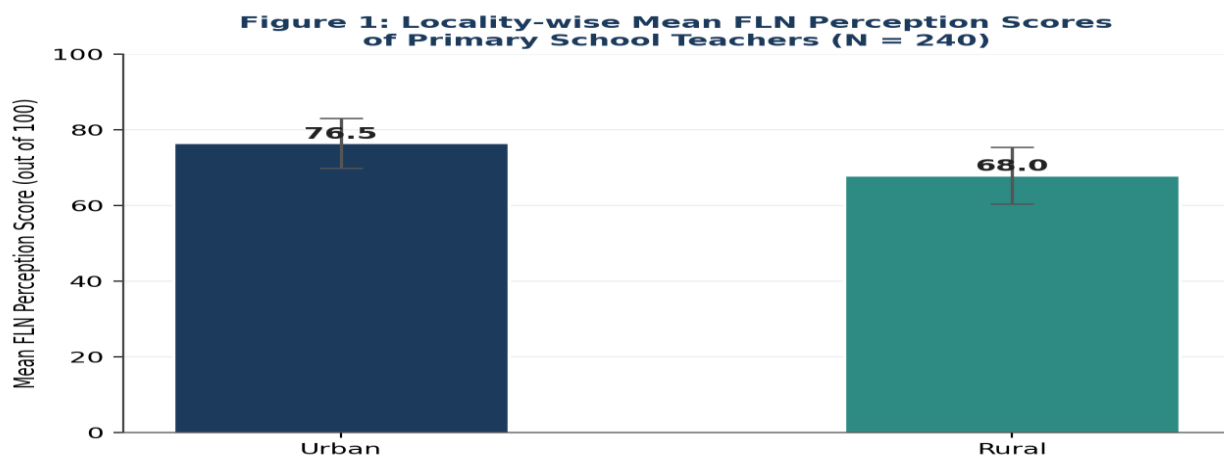


Figure 1: Locality-wise Mean FLN Perception Scores of Primary School Teachers

10.3 Testing of Hypothesis H02 (Gender)

H02 stated that there is no significant difference between the mean FLN perception scores of male and female primary school teachers. Male teachers ($N = 93$, $M = 70.65$, $S.D. = 8.18$) and female teachers ($N = 147$, $M = 70.90$, $S.D. = 8.33$) obtained a t-value of -0.23, which is not significant even at the 0.05 level ($df = 238$, $p = .818$). Hence, H02 is accepted. This finding suggests that gender does not differentiate teachers' perception of FLN implementation in Ahmedabad district, and that professional training and locality-related factors play a more decisive role than gender.

10.4 Testing of Hypothesis H03 (Teaching Experience)

H03 stated that there is no significant difference among the mean FLN perception scores of teachers belonging to different teaching-experience groups. Table 3 presents the group-wise descriptive statistics and the one-way ANOVA summary.

Experience Group	N	Mean	S.D.	Rank
0–5 years	67	69.50	7.46	4
6–10 years	79	69.76	8.32	3
11–20 years	52	71.84	8.33	2
Above 20 years	42	73.57	8.49	1

Table 3: Experience-wise Descriptive Statistics of FLN Perception Scores (N = 240)

Source of Variance	df	F-value	p-value	Result
Between Groups	3, 236	2.86	.037	Significant

Table 4: One-Way ANOVA Summary for Teaching-Experience Groups ($p < .05$)

The obtained F-value of 2.86 is significant at the 0.05 level ($p = .037$). Hence, H_{03} is rejected. Teachers with more than 20 years of experience recorded the highest mean perception score ($M = 73.57$), followed by those with 11–20 years ($M = 71.84$), while early-career teachers (0–5 years) recorded the lowest mean score ($M = 69.50$). This pattern suggests that accumulated classroom experience contributes positively to teachers' confidence in FLN implementation, even as recently trained teachers bring fresh exposure to NEP-aligned pedagogy.

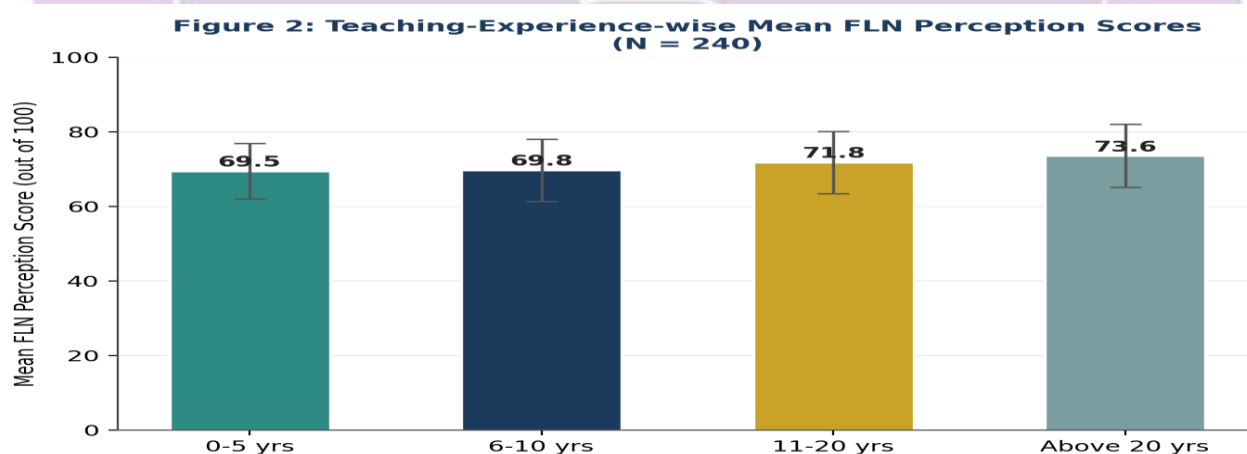


Figure 2: Teaching-Experience-wise Mean FLN Perception Scores

10.5 Conceptual Framework of the Study

Figure 4 presents the conceptual framework underlying the study, depicting how NEP 2020 and the NIPUN Bharat Mission translate into classroom-level FLN outcomes through the mediating construct of teacher perception, which is itself shaped by four inter-related dimensions.

Figure 4: Conceptual Framework — NEP 2020, FLN Mission and Teachers' Perception (Ahmedabad District Study)

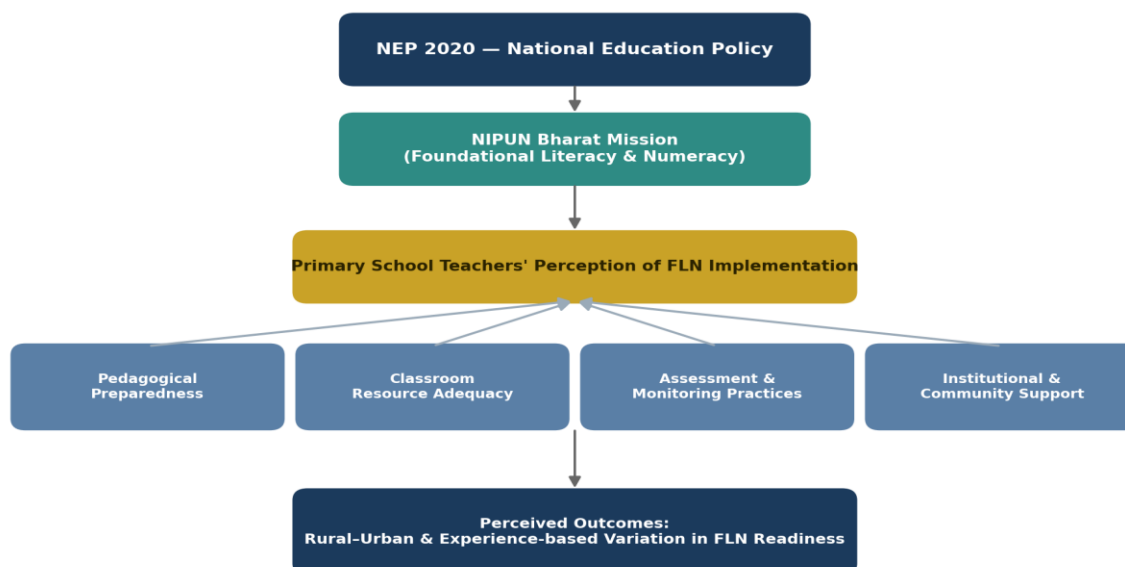


Figure 4: Conceptual Framework — NEP 2020, FLN Mission and Teachers' Perception

11. Major Findings

- Urban primary school teachers reported significantly higher FLN perception scores ($M = 76.49$) than rural teachers ($M = 67.96$), $t(238) = 8.98$, $p < .01$.
- No significant difference was found between the FLN perception of male ($M = 70.65$) and female ($M = 70.90$) primary school teachers, $t(238) = -0.23$, $p > .05$.
- Teaching experience significantly influenced FLN perception, $F(3, 236) = 2.86$, $p < .05$, with teachers having more than 20 years of experience reporting the highest mean perception scores.
- Across all sub-groups, teachers' perception scores were consistently higher on the pedagogical-preparedness dimension than on the classroom-resource-adequacy dimension, indicating a gap between conceptual readiness and material provisioning.
- Rural talukas such as Dhandhuka and Detroj-Rampura recorded comparatively lower mean scores, suggesting the need for concentrated FLN capacity-building in these areas.

12. Educational Implications

The findings carry several implications for policy and practice. First, the persistent urban-rural gap indicates that NIPUN Bharat implementation strategies in Ahmedabad district should move beyond uniform, one-size-fits-all training modules towards differentiated, resource-linked interventions for rural talukas. Second, since teaching experience significantly shapes perception, structured mentoring



pairing experienced teachers with early-career colleagues could accelerate FLN readiness among newly appointed teachers. Third, the absence of gender-based differences suggests that FLN capacity-building programmes need not be gender-differentiated, and resources currently allocated for such differentiation may be redirected towards locality-based targeting. Finally, Cluster and Block Resource Centres should prioritise strengthening classroom resource adequacy — print-rich materials, FLN kits and assessment tools — which emerged as a comparatively weaker dimension across the sample.

13. Conclusion

The present study set out to examine the perception of primary school teachers of Ahmedabad district regarding the impact of NEP 2020 on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy outcomes. The findings affirm that while NEP 2020 and NIPUN Bharat have created strong conceptual momentum, ground-level readiness remains unevenly distributed — favouring urban and more experienced teachers over rural and early-career teachers. Gender, by contrast, does not appear to be a differentiating factor. As Ahmedabad district moves towards the NIPUN Bharat target year, these findings point to the value of locality-sensitive, experience-differentiated teacher support strategies in ensuring that every child achieves foundational literacy and numeracy by Grade 3, in true spirit of NEP 2020.

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