

## Awareness among Elementary School Teachers Towards the Nipun Bharat Scheme in Aizawl

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### Abstract

*This study examines the awareness of elementary school teachers in Aizawl, Mizoram, regarding the NIPUN Bharat Scheme, a national initiative aimed at achieving foundational literacy and numeracy by the end of Grade 3. Employing a descriptive survey design, the study sampled 100 teachers from 10 government and 10 private schools using a simple random sampling method. Data were collected through a questionnaire (QATNB). Findings revealed that 46% of teachers demonstrated low awareness, 22% had average awareness and 32% had high awareness of the scheme. Female teachers exhibited significantly higher awareness than male teachers, while teaching experience showed no significant impact. A significant difference was found between government and private school teachers, with private school teachers showing greater awareness. The results highlight the need for targeted professional development and awareness programs to ensure effective implementation of the NIPUN Bharat Scheme. The study underscores the importance of enhancing teacher knowledge to improve foundational learning outcomes in alignment with the objectives of the National Education Policy 2020.*

**Keywords:** NIPUN Bharat, teacher awareness and elementary education

### Introduction

Elementary education, generally covering children aged six to fourteen, represents the first stage of compulsory schooling in most parts of the world. It provides learners with foundational competencies in reading, writing, mathematics, and introductory knowledge of disciplines such as history, geography, science, art, and music (World Bank, 2012, p. 3). In the Indian context, the first eight years of the twelve-year schooling cycle correspond to elementary education, covering the compulsory education period from ages 6 to 14. Operationally, this stage is divided into two levels: five years of primary schooling (Grades 1–5) and three years of upper primary or middle school (Grades 6–8). While this general structure is applied nationwide, state governments retain autonomy over school organization, resulting in variations across states.

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In Mizoram, the structure of elementary education mirrors that of the national framework, yet teacher qualifications vary widely. For instance, in Aizawl district there were 2,774 teachers, with 43.51% holding graduate degrees, 22.17% completing secondary school, 18.20% higher secondary, 11.93% not completing secondary school, 3.89% postgraduates, and only 0.18% holding M.Phil. or Ph.D. degrees (Vanlalmangaihi et al., 2015, p. 112). These disparities in teacher qualifications have implications for the quality of foundational instruction and student learning outcomes.

Determined challenges including low learning levels, weak language and numeracy skills, and increasing dropout rates prompted the Government of India to launch the National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (Nipun Bharat) in 2021 under the Samagra Shiksha Scheme (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2020b, p. 45). The mission aims to ensure that all children attain foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) by the end of Grade 3 by 2026–2027. FLN encompasses reading, writing, speaking, listening, and basic mathematical operations, reasoning, and problem-solving. Foundational literacy focuses on language proficiency, whereas foundational numeracy emphasizes mathematical reasoning and number sense (Ball et al., 2014, p. 401; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2013, p. 29). These competencies are widely recognised as essential prerequisites for further academic learning.

The Nipun Bharat mission adopts an inclusive, child-centered, and competency-based approach, emphasizing play-based and experiential learning (MoE, 2020b, p. 47). Implementation follows a five-tier structure National, State, District, Block, and School levels supported by NCERT's curriculum development and the NISHTHA teacher training program. The initiative seeks to improve early learning outcomes, reduce dropout rates, facilitate smoother educational transitions, and enhance learning opportunities for socio-economically disadvantaged children (Ghosh, 2021, p. 7).

Teachers are essential to the success of Nipun Bharat. Their awareness, understanding, and classroom practices directly affect the scheme's implementation. In contexts such as Mizoram, where cultural and linguistic diversity intersects with varying levels of educational infrastructure, teacher preparedness becomes even more crucial. Without adequate awareness and training, even well-designed initiatives may fall short of their unintentional impact.

Against this backdrop, the present study examines the awareness of elementary school teachers in Aizawl regarding the Nipun Bharat scheme. It also investigates whether levels of awareness differ by gender, teaching experience, or type of school (government or private). The findings aim to contribute to a deeper understanding of teacher readiness for FLN implementation in Mizoram, informing strategies for strengthening teacher training, optimizing resource allocation, and enhancing program execution to ultimately improve learning outcomes for children in the region.

## Review of Literature

**Chandra (2024)**, in the article “Shaping Foundational Learning Skills: A Harbinger to the Future of Work”, highlights the importance of early childhood acquisition of fundamental skills for future learning and holistic development. The study evaluates Indian initiatives on foundational learning using a mixed-methods approach, combining policy and instructional material reviews with analysis of 2021–2022 educational data. It focuses on enrolment, learning outcomes, and the impact of interventions for children aged three to eight in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. Findings show India's progress in strengthening basic education but also point to challenges such as inequities in preschool access and reliance on rote learning, emphasizing the need for curriculum reform, teacher training, and family involvement.

**Khandpur, (2024)**, wrote an article titled, 'Towards Universal Foundational Literacy and Numeracy', In his work, according to the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, "achieving universal foundational literacy and numeracy in primary schools by 2025 will be the highest priority of the education system." As stated in Paragraph 2.2 of NEP 2020, "The remaining portions of this Policy will only be applicable to the students after they have met this fundamental learning requirement, which is reading, writing, and basic math." Nothing says the importance of foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) and its role in ensuring students can reap the rewards of their education more clearly than this. Their participation in society as productive, contributing members is thus made possible by this education.

**Singh and Agarwal (2023)** edited a book titled called 'Creating an Equitable Space for Teaching and Learning'. In their work, they make an effort to consider the fundamentals of holistic education, learning, and assessment—a topic that is covered in great detail in India's upcoming National Education Policy 2020. Referencing the NIPUN Bharat Guidelines issued by the Department of School Education and Literacy at the Ministry of Education, the chapter is built on the primary and secondary data collected through policy document analysis, desk review, stakeholder deliberations, and focus group discussions to design a Holistic Progress Card for grades 1, 2, and 3 under the National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN) Bharat Mission for holistic assessment.

**Menon (2023)**, in "Keeping it Complex: Resisting Simplistic Framings of Educational Discourse and Practice", discusses how the National Education Policy (2020) and NIPUN Bharat (2021) emphasize foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) for ages 3–8, aiming for all children to achieve FLN by Grade 3 by 2026–27. These policy mandates have spurred a rapid expansion of NGO-led FLN interventions across India, highlighting both opportunities and challenges in their implementation.

**Arora, (2023)** conducted a study titled "A study of teacher awareness of new education policy". The New Education Policy (NEP) of 2020 has had a significant impact on the Indian educational system. The study aims to determine teachers' understanding of the NEP and how it relates to their demographic factors. The teachers completed a sample questionnaire, and the results were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. According to the survey, instructors were generally aware of the NEP, although a sizable portion of them had little to no knowledge of it. According to this study, efforts should be made to enhance teachers' understanding of the NEP and its impact on the educational system, particularly for those who are less knowledgeable.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To find out the awareness among Elementary School Teachers towards the Nipun Bharat scheme in Aizawl.
2. To compare the awareness among Elementary School Teachers towards the Nipun Bharat scheme with respect to their gender.
3. To compare the awareness level among Elementary School Teachers towards the Nipun Bharat scheme with respect to their teaching experience.
4. To compare the awareness level among Elementary School Teachers towards the Nipun Bharat scheme with respect to the administration of the school i.e., Government and Private Schools

### **Hypothesis of the Study**

1. There is no significant difference between the awareness of elementary school teachers towards the Nipun Bharat scheme with respect to their gender.

2. There is no significant difference between the awareness of elementary school teachers towards the Nipun Bharat scheme with respect to their teaching experience.
3. There is no significant difference between the awareness of elementary school teachers towards the Nipun Bharat scheme with respect to Government Schools and Private Schools.

### **Delimitation of the Study**

The study has the following delimitation

1. The study focuses on the awareness of elementary school teachers only.
2. The study is conducted in the Aizawl District only.
3. Awareness towards the Nipun Bharat Scheme has been done only.

### **Design of the Study**

The present research is purely quantitative. A descriptive survey method was used to study awareness among Elementary School Teachers towards the Nipun Bharat Scheme in Aizawl.

### **Population**

The population of the study comprises of all the elementary school teachers in Aizawl.

### **Sample**

The sample of the present study consists of 10 Government schools and 10 Private schools, respectively. Out of which 5 teachers are randomly selected from each school. Therefore, the total sample for the study comprises 100 elementary school teachers. In the present study, Simple random sampling techniques is employed.

#### **Sample Distribution**

| Types of school   | No. of schools | No. of teachers    | Total no. of teachers |
|-------------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Government school | 10             | 5 from each school | $5 \times 10 = 50$    |
| Private school    | 10             | 5 from each school | $5 \times 10 = 50$    |

### **Tools used in the Study**

For the present study, the researcher has developed a questionnaire for studying the awareness towards the Nipun Bharat Scheme.

A questionnaire developed by the researcher on awareness towards the Nipun Bharat Scheme (QATNB) was used for collecting data from elementary school teachers.

### **Development of a Questionnaire for the Awareness Towards Nipun Bharat Scheme**

The researcher designed an awareness questionnaire towards the Nipun Bharat Scheme. The questionnaire item was created on the basis to know whether elementary school teachers are aware of the Nipun Bharat scheme or not. It contains 15 questions, which are objective in nature. For one single question, four options were given, for which four options were given with one correct response. The tool was finalized with the help of experts. After the experts' comments, some items were modified. Three categories were used to classify the level of awareness among elementary school teachers towards Nipun Bharat Scheme in Aizawl: "High awareness," "Low awareness," and "Average awareness". Scores between 0-5 percentage were classified as less awareness, scores 6-10 percent were classified as average awareness, and scores between 11-15 percent were classified as

high awareness. The tool was validated with the 5 experts in the field of education. Along with the content validation, language ambiguity was also removed after consultation with experts.

**Score Distribution Table**

| SCORE | LEVELS OF AWARENESS |
|-------|---------------------|
| 0-5   | Low Awareness       |
| 6-10  | Average Awareness   |
| 11-15 | High Awareness      |

### Data Collection

In the present study, the data was collected with the help of questionnaire for awareness among elementary school teachers towards Nipun Bharat Scheme. The questionnaire was used in order to explore the teachers' awareness about the Nipun Bharat Scheme.

### Findings on Objectives I

#### To find out the awareness level among Elementary School Teacher towards Nipun Bharat Scheme in Aizawl.

The level of awareness of the Nipun Bharat Scheme among elementary school teachers in Aizawl was measured, and the results were tabulated. The three levels of awareness of the Nipun Bharat Scheme among primary school teachers were determined by analyzing their responses: "high awareness," "average awareness," and "low awareness." The scores falling between 0 and 6 percentages were classified as "low awareness," the scores between 11 and 15 percentages were classified as "high awareness," and the scores between 6 and 10 percentage were classified as "average awareness." The category for level of awareness is represented by the table below.

#### Classification of awareness level of the teachers towards the Nipun Bharat Scheme

**Table 1**

| Classification    | Range of Score | No. of Teachers | Percentage |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|------------|
| High Awareness    | 11-15          | 32              | 32%        |
| Average Awareness | 6-10           | 22              | 22%        |
| Low Awareness     | 0-5            | 46              | 46%        |
| Total             |                | 100             | 100%       |

The present study was conducted among 100 elementary school teachers' awareness level towards the Nipun Bharat Scheme in Aizawl, among which 32 respondents were considered to have high awareness of the Nipun Bharat Scheme, 22 respondents were considered to have average awareness, and 46 respondents were considered to have a low level of awareness. The overall responses of the respondents were also calculated and converted into percentages. Therefore, the majority of the elementary school teachers in the Aizawl district have a low level of awareness of the

Nipun Bharat Scheme. Thus, it can be concluded that the awareness level of elementary school teachers in Aizawl was unsatisfactory and can be classified under “low awareness level” towards the Nipun Bharat Scheme

## Findings on Objective II

### To compare the awareness among Elementary School Teachers towards the Nipun Bharat Scheme with respect to their gender

Hypothesis no 1 states, “There is no significant difference between the awareness of elementary school teachers towards the Nipun Bharat scheme with respect to their gender.

### Comparison of the awareness among elementary school teachers towards the Nipun Bharat Scheme with respect to their gender.

Table 2

| Gender | Number | Mean | SD   | t- Value | Sig Level                   |
|--------|--------|------|------|----------|-----------------------------|
| Male   | 30     | 4.86 | 3.27 | 4.60     | * Significant at 0.01 level |
| Female | 70     | 8.94 | 4.29 |          |                             |

\*significant at 0.01 level

As shown in Table 2, the mean scores of male and female teachers of elementary school are 4.86 and 8.94. The obtained value of ‘t’ is 4.60. The calculated value of ‘t’ is more than the critical value of ‘t’ at the 0.01 level. Hence, the Null hypothesis is rejected, and the difference was found in favour of the female teachers. Therefore, it can be concluded that the female teachers of elementary school in Aizawl were more aware than the male teachers with regard to the Nipun Bharat scheme.

## Findings of objective III

### To compare the awareness level among Elementary School Teachers towards the Nipun Bharat Scheme with respect to their teaching experience

Hypothesis no 2 states, “There is no significant difference between the awareness of elementary school teachers towards the Nipun Bharat scheme with respect to their teaching experience.

Table 3

### Comparison the awareness level among Elementary School Teachers towards the Nipun Bharat Scheme with respect to their teaching experience.

| Teaching Experience | Number | Mean | SD   | t- Value | Sig Level |
|---------------------|--------|------|------|----------|-----------|
| 5yrs and Above      | 47     | 7.23 | 4.59 | 1.02     | *NS       |
| Up to 5yrs          | 53     | 8.15 | 4.23 |          |           |

\*Not significant at at 0.01 level.

Table 3 shows that the mean scores of elementary school teachers having an experience of 5 years and Above and up to 5 years in school are 7.23 and 8.15. The obtained value of 't' is 1.02. The calculated value of 't' is less than the critical value of 't' at the 0.01 level. Hence, it can be concluded that there was no significant difference in the awareness level of elementary school teachers towards the Nipun Bharat Scheme with regard to their experience.

#### Findings of objective IV

**To compare the awareness level among elementary school teachers towards Nipun Bharat Scheme with respect to the administration of the school i.e, Government and Private Schools.**

Hypothesis no 3 states, 'There is no significant difference between the awareness of elementary school teachers towards the Nipun Bharat scheme with respect to the administration of the school, Government Schools and Private Schools.

**Table 4**

**Comparison of the awareness level among elementary school teachers towards Nipun Bharat Scheme with respect to the administration of the school i.e., Government and Private Schools.**

| Type of school    | Number | Mean  | SD   | t- Value | Sig Level                           |
|-------------------|--------|-------|------|----------|-------------------------------------|
| Government School | 50     | 4.46  | 2.30 | 10.47    | <i>* Significante at 0.01 level</i> |
| Private School    | 50     | 10.98 | 3.56 |          |                                     |

Table 4. shows that the mean scores of Government and Private School teachers at are 4.46 and 10.98, respectively. The obtained value of 't' is 10.74. The calculated value of 't' is more than the critical value of 't' at 0.01 level. Therefore, it was founded a significant difference exists in the awareness level between Government School and Private school teachers towards the Nipun Bharat Scheme.

#### Summary

This study investigates the awareness of elementary school teachers in Aizawl regarding the Nipun Bharat Scheme, a national initiative under the Samagra Shiksha programme aimed at achieving universal foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) by Grade 3 by 2026–2027. Using a descriptive survey method, the research sampled 100 teachers from 10 government and 10 private schools through simple random sampling. Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire (QATNB) and analysed using mean, median, and t-tests.

Findings revealed that 46% of teachers had low awareness, 22% had average awareness, and only 32% had high awareness of the scheme. Female teachers demonstrated significantly higher awareness than male teachers, while teaching experience showed no significant difference in awareness levels. However, private school teachers had significantly higher awareness than government school teachers.

## Discussion on the Findings

The findings of this study reveal that awareness of the NIPUN Bharat Scheme among elementary school teachers in Aizawl is relatively low, with nearly half (46%) of the respondents demonstrating limited awareness. This suggests that despite the national importance of foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN), dissemination of information and professional engagement with the scheme remains inadequate at the grassroots level.

The gender-based analysis highlights that female teachers possess significantly higher awareness compared to their male counterparts. This could be attributed to factors such as greater participation of women in primary education roles, stronger engagement with professional development activities, or heightened sensitivity toward early childhood learning needs.

Interestingly, teaching experience was not found to have any significant influence on awareness levels. This implies that both novice and experienced teachers face similar challenges in accessing or engaging with the scheme. The result underscores that awareness gaps are systemic rather than individual, and cannot be bridged solely through experience.

A significant difference was observed between government and private school teachers, with private school teachers showing considerably greater awareness of the scheme. This disparity may reflect variations in institutional support, exposure to training opportunities, or communication of policy directives. Government school teachers, despite being at the forefront of implementing central and state initiatives, appear to be less informed, which could hinder the effectiveness of the mission in public education settings.

Taken together, these findings indicate a need for structured awareness and capacity-building initiatives targeted especially at government school teachers. Without adequate teacher preparedness, the ambitious goals of NIPUN Bharat to achieve universal foundational literacy and numeracy by 2026–2027 may remain unattainable. Therefore, interventions should focus on strengthening professional development, ensuring systematic information dissemination, and fostering collaborative engagement between schools, administrators, and policymakers.

The study revealed that overall awareness of the NIPUN Bharat Scheme among elementary school teachers in Aizawl is relatively low, with 46% of teachers showing limited awareness, 22% having average awareness, and only 32% demonstrating high awareness. This lack of widespread understanding reflects a gap between national policy initiatives and their grassroots-level dissemination. As Chandra (2024) emphasized, foundational skills in early childhood form the basis for holistic learning and future development, yet inequities in implementation often hinder progress. The findings of the present study align with this concern, suggesting that inadequate teacher awareness could obstruct the effective realization of FLN goals.

A significant gender-based difference was identified, with female teachers demonstrating higher awareness compared to their male counterparts. This result resonates with Arora (2023), who also noted uneven levels of policy awareness among teachers depending on demographic factors. The heightened awareness among female teachers may indicate their stronger involvement in early-grade teaching and greater engagement with child-centred pedagogies.

Interestingly, teaching experience did not influence awareness levels. Both novice and experienced teachers exhibited similar gaps, suggesting that awareness of NIPUN Bharat is not a matter of classroom experience but rather of systemic communication and professional development. Singh and Agarwal (2023) also highlighted that effective implementation of FLN frameworks requires structured teacher training and assessment mechanisms rather than reliance on experience alone. The most significant disparity was found between government and private school teachers, with private school teachers showing higher levels of awareness. This is particularly concerning given that government schools are the primary sites for implementing NIPUN Bharat. Menon (2023) cautioned that the rapid expansion of FLN interventions, particularly through NGOs and private actors, risks

creating uneven implementation if not systematically supported at the state level. The present study confirms this imbalance, as government teachers—who play a central role in national initiatives—are less prepared than their private school counterparts.

Khandpur (2024) stressed that achieving universal foundational literacy and numeracy is the highest priority of the Indian education system under NEP 2020. However, the present findings suggest that without targeted interventions to raise awareness and preparedness among teachers, especially in government schools, these ambitious goals may not be met within the proposed timeline of 2026–2027. Overall, the study demonstrates that while NIPUN Bharat provides a comprehensive framework for improving foundational skills, its success depends heavily on teacher readiness. Bridging awareness gaps through capacity-building, systematic dissemination of information, and sustained training programs is crucial. Only then can teachers effectively translate policy into practice, ensuring that the vision of universal FLN is achieved in line with national and global educational goals.

### **Conclusion of the Study**

The study concludes that awareness of the Nipun Bharat Scheme among elementary school teachers in Aizawl is generally low. While female teachers showed significantly higher awareness than their male counterparts, teaching experience did not influence awareness levels. However, a significant difference was observed between government and private school teachers, with private school teachers displaying greater awareness. These findings suggest that insufficient awareness could hinder the effective implementation of the scheme's objectives for foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN). Therefore, there is a pressing need for targeted awareness programmes, teacher training, and systematic dissemination of information to enhance teacher readiness and support the successful realization of Nipun Bharat goals.

### **Educational Implications of the Study**

The present study facilitates some of the following educational implications:

- 1) The findings of the study can be utilised by the Government of Mizoram to focus on early education, implementing and strengthening foundational skills, i.e., numeracy and literacy skills, under the Nipun Bharat Scheme and also give age-appropriate pedagogy.
- 2) The findings of the study can be utilised by elementary school teachers in Aizawl for their professional development towards the Nipun Bharat Scheme.
- 4) The findings of the study can be utilised by both government and private elementary school teachers for their awareness about the importance of foundational literacy and numeracy.
- 5) The elementary school teachers can utilise the findings of the study for the improvement of learning outcomes and enhance prospects through the Nipun Bharat Scheme.

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