



A Comprehensive Impact Assessment Study Of Foundational Literacy And Numeracy (FLN): With Special Reference To Umarpada Block In Surat District Of Gujarat State

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Abstract

This study presents a comprehensive impact assessment of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) initiatives in the Umarpada block of Surat district, Gujarat, aligning with the goals of the National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN Bharat). This study looks at how well children in the Umarpada block of Surat district, Gujarat, are learning basic reading, writing, and math skills – also known as Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN). These skills are very important for young children, especially in classes 1 to 3, because they form the base for all future learning. The study focuses on a tribal area where children often face more challenges in learning. Researcher used different methods like surveys, student assessments, classroom visits, and interviews with teachers and parents to understand what is working and what is not. Based on study findings, Researcher suggest ways to improve learning, especially by helping teachers more, using local languages, and involving the community. This can help all children build strong reading and math skills from the beginning.

Key Words: Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN), Learning Outcomes, Impact Assessment, NIPUN Bharat, Early Grade Learning.

Introduction:

Education is a cognitive process that continues throughout the life of a human being and literacy is the first step toward learning. Literacy stops after a certain age in life, when one becomes an affirmative in reading and writing this occurs in life from the age of 5 years to 15 years. Literacy is the ability, readiness, and confidence to provide language to obtain, build and communicate meaning in several aspects of daily life. Language plays a pivotal role in shaping the identity of individuals but at the same time, many issues related to acquiring literacy skills have become an important concern. Moreover, the approximation number of individuals having literacy problems, the figure goes up to more than one billion people worldwide, which is serious. Therefore, achieving universal foundational literacy and numeracy has to be high precedence to strengthen an individual's ability. The mission of the FLN program is to provide an inclusive and engaging learning environment that emphasizes each child's creative potential, leading to their desired learning and holistic development. The program aims to support children with different backgrounds, multilingual needs, and learning qualities, promoting their happiness and confidence. The Ministry of Education will enforce the FLN mission, and a five-tier implementation mechanism will be structured at the national, state, district, block, and school levels

across all states and union territories. The study aims to establish insights into the current status of foundational literacy and numeracy in Umarpada, given that early childhood (birth to eight years) is the most critical foundation stage of growth and cognitive, language, social, and physical development of a child. The lack of early experiences and limited/inappropriate exposure to learning opportunities impacts young children and their participation in schooling in later years. Multiple languages and dialects also pose a barrier, leading to high drop-out or absenteeism of children. The study approach and interacted with select teachers, head teachers, school management committees (SMCs), parents, and government functionaries at various levels. It aims to find scope for building the knowledge and skills of stakeholders so that they can take action for children and modify school and classroom practices to enhance the FLN (Foundational Literacy and Numeracy) skills of children from non-literate and multilingual backgrounds, using suitable tools and protocols.

Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of the Field Assessment Study is to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the resources, experiences, understanding, gaps, and community engagement related to FLN implementation in primary schools.

The specific objectives of the Field Assessment Study Report are as follows:

- Evaluate the resources that are available in schools
- Gain an understanding of the FLN structure and the experience of the ecosystem
- Analyze the gap between stakeholders in terms of their understanding and synergy
- Understand the status and scope of community engagement in the application of FLN
- Assess training needs for the stakeholders on the FLN structure
- Offer recommendations to improve the implementation of FLN at the primary school level
- Evaluate the effective implementation of FLN in classroom and school processes and environment

Research Design and Methodology

The field assessment study used a mixed-methods design to achieve its objectives. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the situation.

The sample for the study consisted of 25 primary schools in the Umarpada Block of the Surat district. The selection of the schools was based on their geographical distribution and level of infrastructure. The study included a total of 106 participants, including teachers, headteachers, school management committee members, parents, and community members. Apart from that 248 children were also covered under a FLN test.

Quantitative data were collected through a structured survey questionnaire, which was administered to all participants. The survey questionnaire included questions related to the resources available in the schools, the experience of the ecosystem in FLN structure, the gap among the stakeholders in terms of their understanding and synergy, the status and scope of community engagement in the FLN application, and the training provided to the stakeholders in the FLN structure. Qualitative data were collected through focus group discussions (FGDs) and semi-structured interviews with key informants, including school management committee members, parents, and community members. The FGDs and interviews were conducted in the local language and recorded for later transcription and analysis. Data from the survey questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including means, frequencies, and percentages. The data from the FGDs and interviews were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. The results of the study were presented using tables, charts, and graphs, along with narrative descriptions.

The stakeholders covered in the study are as stated in the table below

Method	Respondent	Sample	Indicators
Census-schools profiling	School Profile	25	School basic profile data & existing assessment data at schools.
Semi-structured interview	School Teacher	25	FLN classroom practices, learning environment, etc.
Interview	SMC members	25	SMCs involvement in development activities.
Interview	Children's	244	Classroom learning and material accessibility.
Interview	Parent	25	Learning material and children development
Interview	Panchayat Members	5	Educational facility and children development activities
Interview	CRC/ BRC	1	Departmental

Socio-demographics profile of study participants

Umarpada block is located in the Surat District of Gujarat State, India. The region is predominantly inhabited by tribal communities and is characterized by forested and hilly terrain. There are a total of 63 villages in Umarpada. According to the 2011 Census of India, Umarpada Taluka has a population of 83,723 individuals living in 17,338 households. Of this population, 42,093 are males and 41,630 are females, with a sex ratio of 989, higher than the average for the Gujarat state of 919. Children aged 0-6 years constitute 13.43% of the total population. The total area of Umarpada is 430.90 sq. km with a population density of 194 people per sq. km.

The literacy rate of Umarpada Taluka is 58.56%, with 66.53% of males and 50.5% of females being literate. The literacy rate is lower than the average literacy rate of Gujarat state. The low literacy rate can be attributed to several factors, such as the low socio-economic status of the population, limited access to quality education, and lack of awareness about the importance of education, especially for girls.

The taluka has a total of 104 primary schools and 21 upper primary and secondary schools. According to the District Information System for Education (DISE) data for the year 2019-20, there were 10,906 students enrolled in primary schools in Umarpada block. Out of these, 5,738 were boys and 5,168 were girls. The overall enrollment ratio for primary education in Umarpada block was 103.14%, indicating that there were slightly more enrolled students than the eligible population.

The dropout rate at the primary level in Umarpada was 1.94%, which is lower than the district average of 2.66%. The transition rate from primary to upper primary level was 87.09%, which is higher than the district average of 85.98%.

The pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) in primary schools in Umarpada was 22, which is higher than the prescribed PTR of 30 by the Right to Education Act. The teacher attendance rate was 93.72%, which is higher than the district average of 92.91%.

The DISE data also shows that the average number of working days in primary schools in Umarpada block was 214, which is lower than the prescribed 220 days. The average number of instructional hours per day was 4.85, which is slightly lower than the prescribed 5 hours.

The FLN initiative emphasizes the active involvement of key stakeholders, including teachers, parents, students, SMCs, local bodies, libraries, and BRC, for community engagement. For the field assessment, 25 villages have been selected from the Umarkada Taluka. The list of selected villages is as follows:

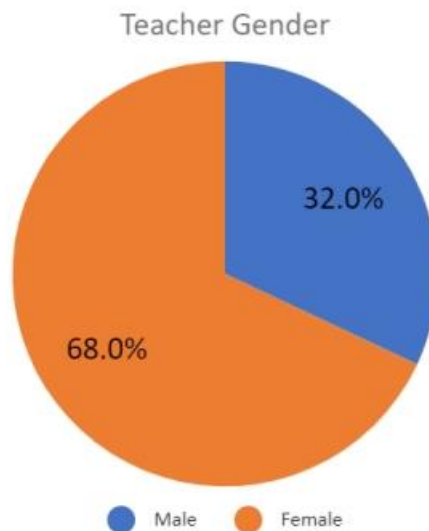
Sr. No	Village Name	Population		Village Name	Population
1	Pinpur	1164	13	Haldhari 1	1134
2	Venjali	1393	14	Haldhari 2	1134
3	Darda	483	15	Vadpada	1025
4	Kevdi	1583	16	Satvan	1951
5	Panchamba	1119	17	SatvanChulli	320
6	Chandrpada	439	18	SatvanGamanfaliya	560
7	Gopaliya	310	19	Kavangai	340
8	Uchwan 1	2642	20	Khodamba	827
9	Uchwan 2	2642	21	Salli	410
10	JunuUmarkada	2300	22	Sevlan	1028
11	Navagam	2000	23	Bardipada	677
12	Chakhvada	1380	24	Bilvan	2366
			25	Choudharyfadiya	1200

Role of Teachers in executing FLN

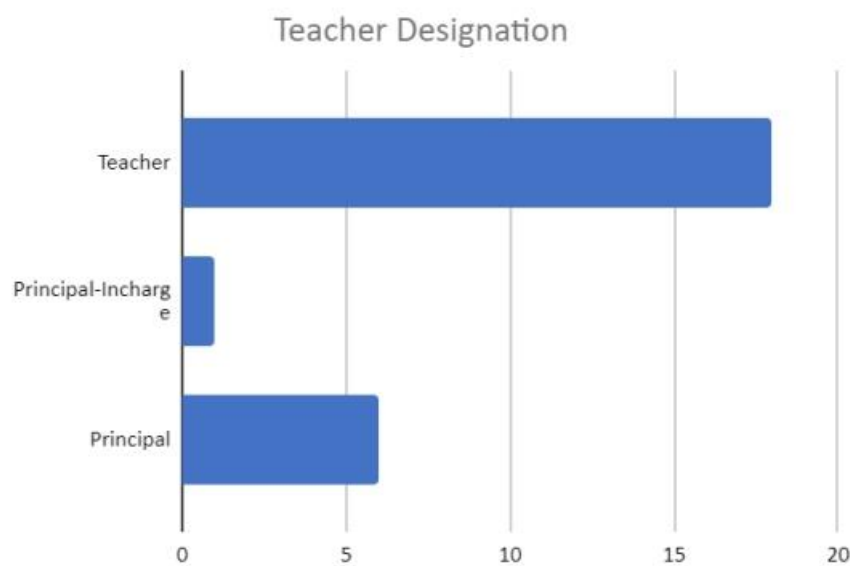
The success of the FLN mission relies heavily on the active participation of important stakeholders such as teachers, parents, students, SMCs, local bodies, the library, and BRC for community engagement. Teachers, in particular, play a crucial role in the education system as they are responsible for developing children's phonological, recognition, sound discernment, and visual knowledge, which are essential for reading and writing. To ensure the success of FLN, it is essential to provide teachers with capacity building and training in proper teaching methods to create a joyful learning environment for children.

Teachers who deal with FLN must understand that children come from diverse backgrounds and have different learning styles, so it is important to plan activities accordingly. For instance, teachers must motivate children to speak and engage them in learning tasks such as writing, repeating poems or numerical tasks, etc. Additionally, using real-world-based pedagogy can encourage children's interest in learning. Teachers must also support struggling learners, conduct constant assessments to find learning gaps, organize PTMs, do home visits, and participate in various training programs to develop themselves and the school. Lastly, teachers must also arrange extra remedial classes in the community to fulfill previous grade learning loss and fill gaps.

This section explores profile of the teachers covered under the assessment.



Data collect from 25 Primary schools. The table shows the gender distribution of teachers in the schools. There are 8 male teachers and 17 female teachers, indicating that a majority of the teachers are female.



The assessment included 25 teachers, out of which 6 are designated as Principal, 1 as Principal In-charge, and 18 as Teachers. Hence, the feedback obtained from the teachers is inclusive of all designations.

Subjects taught by teachers	No. of Teachers
Language	2
Math	2
All subjects	21

It was found that out of the 25 teachers surveyed, 2 teachers taught only language, 2 teachers taught only math, and 21 teachers taught all subjects. This means that a majority of the teachers were responsible for teaching all subjects, including language and math.

Role of parents in executing FLN

FLN recognizes the crucial role that parents play in their child's education and emphasizes their active participation in the intervention process. During the pandemic, when schools were closed, families played a vital role in providing learning support to children at home. Therefore, FLN seeks to encourage parents to take an active interest in their child's primary education. Regular attendance at Parent-Teacher Meetings (PTMs) is essential to promote healthy interactions between parents and teachers. Headteachers can create a group for parents and involve them in school activities. In addition, parents can engage with SMCs, community members, and the sarpanch to discuss FLN and provide suggestions for developing the school and improving their child's education.

The section below explores the profile of the parents covered in the assessment

Family Type

Family Type	No. of respondents	%
Nuclear	21	84.00%
Joint	4	16.00%
Total	25	100.00%

The distribution of family types among the surveyed households reveals that out of the total of 25 HH, 21 are nuclear families, which accounts for 84% of the sample HH. The remaining 4 HH belong to joint families, representing 16% of the sample. The data suggests that nuclear families are more common among the surveyed HH, while joint families are less prevalent.

Education

Education of the father of the students	No. of respondents	%
Primary	11	44.00%
Secondary	3	12.00%
Higher Secondary	6	24.00%
Graduate	5	20.00%
Total	25	100.00%

Out of the 25 fathers, 11 (44%) had completed primary education, while 3 (12%) had completed secondary education. Six fathers (24%) had completed higher secondary education, and 5 fathers (20%) were graduates.

Education of the mothers of the students	No. of respondents	%
Illiterate	2	8.00%
Primary	13	52.00%
Secondary	6	24.00%
Higher Secondary	3	12.00%
Graduate	1	4.00%
Total	25	100.00%

The table shows the education level of the mothers of the students. Out of the 25 mothers, only 2 (8.00%) were illiterate, 13 (52.00%) had completed primary education, 6 (24.00%) had completed secondary education, 3 (12.00%) had completed higher secondary education, and only 1 (4.00%) had a graduate

degree. Disparity of educational level among fathers and mothers of the students was observed. While a higher percentage of fathers had completed higher secondary education or were graduates, the majority of mothers had only completed primary education.

Occupation

Occupation of the fathers	No. of respondents	%
Farming	6	24.00%
Farm Labour	14	56.00%
Pvt. Job	4	16.00%
Business	1	4.00%
Total	25	100.00%

Out of the 25 fathers, 6 (24%) were involved in farming, 14 (56%) were farm laborers, 4 (16%) were engaged in private jobs, and only 1 (4%) was in business. This indicates that the students are mainly from families with background in farming and farm labour.

Role of School Management Committee in executing FLN

The active participation of SMC members is crucial in school activities. SMC members should ensure that all children receive basic facilities and resources in the school, such as regular health check-ups, mid-day meals, drinking water, sports equipment, toilet facilities, various physical and mental activities, teacher training, implementing FLN activities, organizing quiz competitions, setting up a child's library in the community, developing reading habits for students, and organizing training programs for SMC members.

Monitoring the quality of education is also an important role of the School Management Committee (SMC). The SMC must ensure that the teaching and learning process in the school is effective and of good quality. This can be achieved through regular visits to the school, conducting meetings with teachers and parents, and observing classroom activities.

They can identify the areas where students are struggling and take steps to address them, such as arranging extra classes or providing additional support.

Profile of the SMC members

The table below provides a profile of the SMC members who were assessed. The assessment covered a total of 25 SMCs, with each SMC consisting of 12 members. Therefore, the study included a total of 300 SMC members.

Role of Gram Panchayat

Gram Panchayat play a crucial role in the development of primary and secondary education. They are responsible for ensuring the quality of education and managing educational resources in their respective areas. The sarpanch, as the head of the Gram Panchayat, plays a vital role in the overall development of schools in the villages. They are responsible for providing necessary assistance and services to the schools, such as physical facilities, separate toilet facilities, drinking water facilities, and computer labs.

The Gram Panchayat also works closely with the SMC and makes policy-level planning to achieve the FLN mission. They are responsible for ensuring that 100% of children are enrolled in school and that there is zero dropout. Local bodies also assist schools and parents in achieving FLN goals and take regular meetings with stakeholders to monitor the FLN mission's progress. Additionally, the Gram Panchayat organizes activities at the grassroots level to support the FLN mission and follows the state mission's instructions to ensure the mission's success. Therefore, the active involvement of local bodies is essential for achieving the FLN mission's goals in primary education.

The following table presents profile of the sarpanches covered in the assessment.

Sr. No	Gram Panchayat	Details of the Sarpacnches		
		Age	Gender	Education
1	Venjali	42	Female	Twelfth
2	Vadpada	52	Female	Tenth
3	Haldhari	38	Male	Graduate
4	Satvan	36	Female	Graduate
5	Bardipada	34	Female	Twelfth

The villages covered in the assessment comes under ten group panchayats of which data collected from five sarpanches. This was found that the Sarpanches are younger in ages, mostly below fifty years of age. By education, most of the educated up to secondary level and beyond. This indicates that the Sarpanches in the villages are capable to comprehend the importance of FLN and their role in implementing the approach.

Key Findings: School infrastructure and resources available in the schools

The availability of school infrastructure and resources is a critical component in ensuring the provision of quality foundational learning and numeracy (FLN) education. The study reviewed the following areas when assessing school infrastructure and resources available for FLN:

Physical infrastructure

The assessment covered the availability and quality of physical infrastructure such as classrooms, libraries, laboratories, and sanitation facilities of the schools to provide quality FLN education.

<i>Infrastructure</i>	<i>No. of school</i>
<i>Building</i>	25
<i>School gate</i>	25
<i>Boundary wall</i>	25
<i>Toilet for boys</i>	25
<i>Toilet for girls</i>	25
<i>Toilet for teachers</i>	24
<i>Playground</i>	25
<i>Drinking water</i>	25
<i>Mid-day meal shed</i>	25
<i>RO For drinking water</i>	11
<i>Library</i>	9

Based on the survey of 25 schools, it appears that all of the schools have basic infrastructure in place, including buildings, school gates, and boundary walls. Additionally, all schools have basic amenities such as toilets for boys and girls, playgrounds, and drinking water facilities.

However, there is room for improvement in some areas, as only 24 schools have a toilet for teachers, indicating that one school may lack this essential facility. Additionally, only 11 schools have RO (reverse osmosis) facilities for drinking water, which suggests that the remaining schools may not have access to clean drinking water. Moreover, the survey indicates that not all schools have facilities for mid-day meals, as all 25 schools have a mid-day meal shed. In terms of academic resources, only 9 schools have a library, which could potentially limit the access of students to reading material and resources.

The table provides information on the condition of infrastructure in 25 surveyed schools.

Infrastructure	Conditions	No.
Building Status	Concrete	25
School gate Status	Grilled	25
Boundary wall Status	Complete	25
Toilet for boys Status	Separate	23
	Makeshift	2
Toilet for girls Status	Separate	22
	Common	1
	Makeshift	2
Playground Status	Natural	25
Drinking water Status	Piped	1
	Common Tank	22
	Drum	1
	Matka	1
Mid-day meal shed	Cooked	25
RO For drinking water	Working	4
	Not Working	7

The building status of all 25 schools is concrete. All 25 schools have grilled school gates, and complete boundary walls. For boys' toilets, 23 schools have separate toilets, while 2 schools have makeshift toilets. For girls' toilets, 22 schools have separate toilets, 1 school has common toilets, and 2 schools have makeshift toilets. All 25 schools have a natural playground. This means the playground is not artificially carpeted or infrastructural improvement is done on the playground. In terms of drinking water, only one school has piped water, while 22 schools use a common tank, one school uses a drum, and one school uses a matka. All 25 schools have cooked mid-day meal sheds. In all the schools food is prepared in the school itself, and not supplied ready-to-eat food from outside. Regarding RO (reverse osmosis) for drinking water, only 4 schools have a working RO system, while 7 schools have a non-functional RO system. All other schools do not have a RO system.

Teaching resources

The assessment looked into the availability of teaching resources such as textbooks, teaching aids, and computers to quality the FLN education. Assessing the adequacy and quality of these resources can help identify gaps and opportunities for improvement.

Teaching Resources	No. of schools
Internet Connectivity	4
Electricity	25
Smart Class	3
Science lab	2
Computer Lab	1
Desk And Benches	25

The table suggests that all 25 surveyed schools have access to electricity and desks/benches. However, only 4 schools have internet connectivity, indicating that the majority of the schools lack access to the internet. In terms of digital learning resources, only 3 schools have smart classes, while only 1 school has a computer lab. This suggests that the majority of schools may lack access to these resources, potentially limiting the ability of students to engage with digital learning materials. Moreover, only 2 schools have a science lab, indicating that the majority of the surveyed schools may lack the resources necessary for hands-on scientific experimentation and learning.

Physical Environment The assessment looked into status of physical environment in the schools with access to ventilation, sanitation facilities and overall cleanliness of the school premises.

Physical Environment	Conditions	Count
Fan	Yes	25
	Working	25
	Very Good	9
Cleanliness at Toilet	Good	11
	Average	4
	Poor	1
Cleanliness in General	Very Good	8
	Good	13
	Average	4
	Poor	0

The data suggests that all 25 surveyed schools have fans in the learning environment, indicating that students have access to a comfortable learning environment with adequate ventilation.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Extra-curricular activities play a vital role in a student's overall development. These activities are those that students participate in outside of their regular academic curriculum and include sports, music, drama, art, debate, and community service, among others.

Extra-curricular Activities	No. of schools
Independence Day	25
Republic Day	25
Annual Day	25
Sports Day	25
Celebration Of festivals	25

The data indicates that all 25 surveyed schools celebrate Independence Day, Republic Day, Annual Day, Sports Day, and other festivals. This suggests that these events are an integral part of the academic calendar for the surveyed schools, and that they actively participate in national, cultural, and sporting events.

Participation Level	Boys		Girls	
	High	Low	High	Low
Independence Day	22	3	24	1
Republic Day	23	2	25	0
Annual Day	25	0	24	1
Sports Day	25	0	24	1
Celebration Of Festivals	25	0	25	0

Out of the 25 surveyed schools, three reported low participation of boys in Independence Day celebrations, and two reported low participation in Republic Day celebrations. Additionally, one school reported low participation of girl students in Independence Day, Annual Day, and Sports Day. Overall, the data suggests that most schools celebrate major public days, and participation of both boys and girls is high. Apart from these public days, schools also organize Praveshtoshav (enrollment campaign) with support from the government, and they participate in events organized at the taluka and district levels when invited.

However, none of the schools reported conducting any extra-curricular activities on a regular basis as part of their own initiatives. They do not regularly organize activities such as art, quiz, debate, drama, or any other activities, and such subjects are not part of the course curriculum.

Curriculum and instructional materials

The curriculum and instructional materials used in FLN education are crucial in providing relevant and effective instruction. The study explored the quality and relevance of the curriculum and instructional materials that can help identify gaps and opportunities for improvement. From the perspective of parents also it was attempted to understand the how their children are performing in the school and if they are aware of FLN activities.

Are you aware of the FLN activities?	Count	Column N %
Yes	17	68.00%
No	8	32.00%
Total	25	100.00%

Out of these 25 parents, 17 (68%) reported awareness about FLN activities, while 8 (32%) responded that they were not aware of FLN activities. However, the response to the specific activities at the school the following table presents their response -

Do the school engage in the following activities	Yes	No	Don't Know
	Count	Count	Count
Akshar Knowledge	24	0	1
Sound identification	25	0	0
Oral Vocabulary	25	0	0
Reading a text with accuracy	25	0	0
Writing Aksharas	24	1	0
Writing for expression	21	3	1
Count and Understand the number system	23	2	0
Shapes and Spatial Understanding	25	0	0
Understand three-digit numbers	22	3	0
Addition, subtraction, multiplication and division	22	3	0
Identify pattern in numbers	18	7	0

Use of bases ten systems to represent numbers	0	18	7
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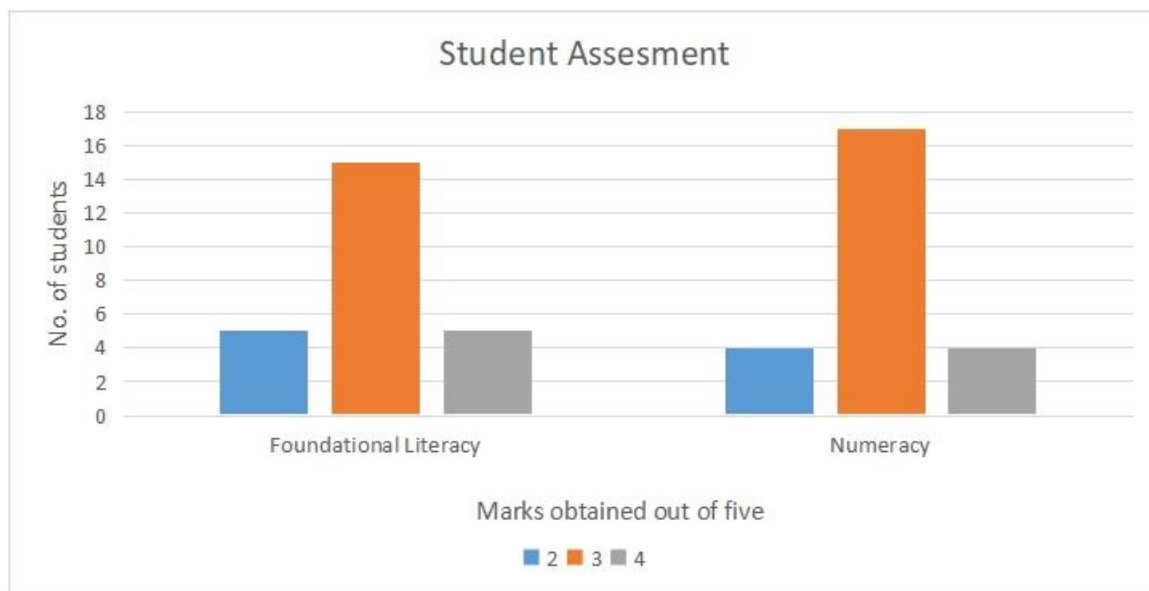
The majority of the parents reported about engagement in Akshar knowledge, sound identification, oral vocabulary, reading a text with accuracy, writing Aksharas, shapes and spatial understanding, and understanding three-digit numbers as all of these activities had a "Yes" count of 24 or 25. However, when it comes to writing for expression, the engagement count decreased to 21, with 3 parents answering "No" and 1 answering "Don't Know." Similarly, when it comes to counting and understanding the number system, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, and identifying patterns in numbers, 2-3 parents responded with "No." Finally, none of the students were engaged in the use of the base ten systems to represent numbers, with 18 parents answering "No" and 7 answering "Don't Know." Overall, most of the parents acknowledged that FLN activities in schools are being undertaken.

Overall, how satisfied are you with the education your child is receiving at this school?	Count	%
Very Satisfied	19	76.00%
Satisfied	6	24.00%
Total	25	100.00%

Out of the 25 respondents, 19 (76%) reported being very satisfied with the education, while 6 (24%) reported being satisfied. No respondent reported being unsatisfied. This shows that the majority of the parents are happy with the education their child is receiving at the school. The teachers have given their schools higher ratings for most parameters, and this is reflected in the level of satisfaction reported by parents. However, it is important to note that these perspectives only represent those of the teachers and parents, and do not necessarily reflect the actual performance of the students.

Any suggestions for developing FLN skills in children?	Count
Writing practice should be improved	11
Need to include reading, writing and counting related activities	12
Need Facility of technology	12
Total	

However, not many suggestions regarding FLN was received from the parents. Their consolidated suggestions indicate only two aspects – more practice in the school and use of technology. While talking about technology, they primarily indicated about smart classes, which have in limited numbers of schools in the area. An assessment of 25 students was done taking one random student from each school. There were 5 questions each for foundational literacy and foundational numeracy. Each question was weighted equally with one mark. The assessment result is presented in the following diagram.



Overall, the results indicate that the majority of the students scored average or above average in both Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, as very few students scored below average or failing grades. This indicates that both teachers and parents have given higher ratings to their students' performance in foundational literacy and numeracy. However, these ratings may be influenced by their expectations rather than objective assessments. The objective assessment reveals that there is significant room for improvement in the overall quality of education in the schools

Key Findings: Scope of community engagement in the FLN application

Community engagement is crucial for the successful implementation of the FLN approach. The community can play an important role in providing support to the teachers, parents, and SMC members, which will help to improve the teaching-learning process. This section explores community engagement in the FLN application in the study area.



The table shows the ratings given by SMC (School Management Committee) members for various parameters of the school. The parameters include the attendance of children, attendance of teachers, quality of education, physical infrastructure, basic amenities, and overall performance of the school. The ratings are divided into four categories: very good, good, average, and poor. The quality of education received a mixed rating with 8 members rating it as very good, 13 as good, 3 as average, and 1 as poor.

Physical infrastructure received a similar rating with 10 members rating it as very good, 8 as good, 4 as average, and 3 as poor. Basic amenities received a relatively higher rating with 12 members rating it as very good, 7 as good, 4 as average, and 2 as poor. The overall performance of the school received a mixed rating with 9 members rating it as very good, 8 as good, 6 as average, and 2 as poor. Overall, the ratings suggest that SMC members have mixed opinions about the quality of education and physical infrastructure of the school, with some members rating it very good or good, and others rating it as average or poor. However, the attendance of teachers and basic amenities received a relatively higher rating with most members rating it very good or good.

Conclusion

The comprehensive impact assessment of the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) program in the Umarpada block of Surat district reveals notable progress in early-grade learning outcomes, especially in the areas of basic reading and numeracy skills. The study indicates that concerted efforts under the FLN framework—such as teacher training, availability of learning materials, community engagement, and regular monitoring—have led to a positive shift in classroom practices and student performance.

The evaluation reveals that although all parties involved expect parents to play a crucial role in the implementation of FLN, the efforts made by stakeholders to engage with and reach out to the community are inadequate. Currently, the focus is mainly on schools and teachers, which needs to be broadened. The stakeholders must make substantial efforts to create a conducive ecosystem where parents feel more empowered and confident about their children's education. For instance, CRCs and community libraries can cultivate reading habits among children and the community by organizing various events that promote a reading environment. Moreover, community members can be encouraged to participate in school events, including sports competitions or cultural programs. In general, community engagement can help establish a more supportive and effective learning environment for students.

However, the findings also underscore persistent challenges, including infrastructural gaps, varied teacher competencies, and socio-economic disparities that influence student learning trajectories. While the program has succeeded in laying a strong foundation for literacy and numeracy, sustained efforts are required to bridge the remaining gaps, particularly in remote and tribal hamlets of Umarpada. To ensure long-term impact, the study recommends strengthening teacher support systems, integrating local language-based instruction, enhancing parental awareness, and reinforcing data-driven decision-making. Overall, the FLN mission in Umarpada has made commendable strides, yet continued commitment, contextual interventions, and inclusive policies will be crucial to achieve the vision of universal foundational learning by Grade 3.

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