Learning Outcomes in India: Insights from the National Achievement Survey 2022

[1]Durgaprasad Sahoo, [2]Dr. M. Sridevi

[1]Senior Research Fellow, Department of Education, Central University of Karnataka

[2]Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Central University of Karnataka

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ABSTRACT

Learning outcomes are key to ensuring that the goals set out within education systems are linked to useful evidence to help improve teaching. This paper critically analyses the learning outcomes framework of the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy National Achievement Survey 2022 (FLN-NAS 2022) for Class III. This framework provides a two-pronged approach to foundational learning through 'Children Become Effective Communicators' (EC) and 'Children Become Involved Learners and Connect with their Immediate Environment' (IL), with an outline of 16 specific learning outcomes for foundational language and numeracy. Strengths of this framework include its multi-dimensional, age-appropriate, valid, reliable, interpretable, and comparable approach. In addition, it has been designed with sensitivity to language and inclusivity. However, its success in improving teaching will depend on the assessment literacy of teachers, the capacity of teachers, useful feedback, teaching resources, and the capacity of states/schools to use system-level data to drive focused change. When compared with similar international initiatives such as EGRA/EGMA and the UNICEF Foundational Learning Skills module, this initiative stands out because it clearly maps to the national FLN policy framework and its use of learning outcomes for Class III. However, it does align with the international focus on diagnosing foundational learning outcomes. This paper uses qualitative analysis of documents and thematic coding to explore the learning outcomes framework. It argues that learning outcomes are most valuable when used in a diagnostic way to inform teachers of specific areas of learning gaps so that focused interventions can be put in place. This can then be used to make decisions at many levels, including classroom, school, district, state, and national. Finally, recommendations for implementation and an empirical research agenda are provided to determine if using FLN learning outcomes to inform teaching based on assessment data improves foundational literacy and numeracy.

Keywords: Educational Assessment, Foundational Literacy, Foundational Numeracy, Learning Outcomes, National Achievement Survey

INTRODUCTION

Measuring foundational learning globally has become an important area of education quality improvement. Evidence from around the world indicates that attendance does not always translate to children gaining fundamental literacy and numeracy skills. Therefore, it is essential that we measure how much children are learning to understand any learning gaps and improve their education. As UNICEF explains, it is important to have comparable data on foundational learning to help identify any learning gaps that may occur early on. There are many international and national assessments available to measure fundamental literacy and numeracy skills. Tools such as Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) have been widely used to understand the specific skills children have in literacy and numeracy. Additionally, UNICEF's Foundational Learning Skills (FLS) tool, included in the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), gives comparable global data on children's foundational literacy and numeracy skills. This tool measures children's literacy by looking at their fluency with reading aloud and comprehension, and their numeracy by looking at their ability to recognize numbers, compare quantities, add,

and identify patterns. This tool has been implemented in many countries, indicating the increasing global focus on measuring foundational skills.

These tools are extremely valuable in providing diagnostic data. They show you what foundational skills the children have and identify any learning gaps. This can help us to understand any learning gaps that children may have, plan our teaching strategies, provide interventions, and give policymakers information to plan resources. The current resources available for assessment highlight that the data can be reported on the individual child and classroom level, therefore giving teachers information to plan their teaching. Therefore, the effectiveness of the assessment will depend on how the data can be applied. India has developed a large-scale assessment tool, the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy National Achievement Survey (FLN-NAS) 2022. This is important, as the assessment relates to the national policies such as the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the NIPUN Bharat Mission. It outlines the learning outcomes for children in Class III for foundational learning. It provides specific skills to measure, therefore linking the national goal of foundational learning in India to learning outcomes, classroom assessment, and interventions. While there are many international assessments to measure foundational skills such as EGRA, EGMA, and the FLS module from UNICEF, they vary in their purpose, context of the assessment, target groups, areas of learning, and how the data is reported. The FLS module by UNICEF aims to produce comparable data through a household survey; however, the FLN-NAS 2022 is part of the national assessment system in India. It outlines what is expected of children in India in terms of foundational learning. The usefulness of the assessment framework will depend on how the data links to the curriculum expectations, teaching strategies, interventions, and decision-making.

This paper looks at the FLN-NAS 2022 and how it can be used as a tool to link learning to improvements. Having clear learning outcomes can help make the data more useful. For example, if a child can recognize letters but cannot decode words, a different teaching strategy would be required compared to if a child can decode but struggles with comprehension. Identifying any gaps in children's number recognition, operations, measurements, patterns, and data handling can help provide more targeted numeracy interventions. Therefore, this paper will look at how effective the learning outcomes in FLN-NAS 2022 can be to diagnose learning gaps and how the data can be used to improve teaching in classrooms, schools, districts, states, and nationally.

Why Was the National Achievement Survey Conducted?

The National Achievement Survey (NAS) was carried out to produce dependable, large-scale evidence about students' learning achievement and to show a kind of system picture of how good school education really is. Instead of examinations, which mostly look at what each individual student can do, NAS also helps bring out learning gaps across grades, subjects, areas, and different groups of learners. This kind of evidence then backs educational planning, policy choices, and specific interventions. In general, NAS gives system-level evidence of learning across school stages, while the focused FLN assessment kind of narrows down on foundational competencies only. The FLN-NAS 2022 framework for Class III puts the assessment around foundational language and foundational numeracy. It kind of also lays out sixteen learning outcomes across those areas. So the reason we need NAS and why a more focused FLN assessment matters comes from a shared intent: to understand what children are really learning, notice where the gaps show up, set practical benchmarks, and then lean on evidence to adjust teaching, strengthen targeted support, and steer educational policy.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it explores the potential of the FLN-NAS 2022 as an assessment framework to translate evidence obtained from foundational learning into teaching practices. It is significant for four reasons:

Conceptually, this study contributes to the increasing move towards outcome-based approaches in foundational literacy and numeracy. It explores the 16 learning outcomes for Class III learners in foundational literacy and numeracy. This demonstrates the necessity of understanding the specific skills children have and lack at a skill level, rather than looking at the general scores. This allows teaching approaches to be tailored to specific gaps.

Methodologically, this study provides a detailed qualitative analysis of the FLN-NAS 2022 assessment framework. It includes a document analysis and examination of the key principles behind the assessment. These include validity, reliability, interpretability, comparability, age appropriateness, language sensitivity, and inclusiveness. It also provides an overview of the framework in comparison to international initiatives to assess foundational learning.

Pedagogically, this study is significant, as the learning outcomes do not mean much if the evidence gained from the assessments cannot be used in teaching practice. A learning outcome-based assessment will help teachers identify specific areas that the learner is struggling with. For example, whether they are struggling with phonics, reading comprehension, writing, numbers, measurements, spatial reasoning, handling data, or patterns. This can help teachers provide differentiated teaching, interventions, formative assessment, and ongoing monitoring. However, the assessment evidence may not lead to improvements in teaching practice. Teachers need to be assessment literate and have the right resources to use the evidence effectively.

From a policy perspective, this study is significant, as the FLN-NAS 2022 is directly linked to the wider foundational learning agenda in India, as outlined in the National Education Policy 2020 and NIPUN Bharat Mission. The learning outcomes can provide evidence to make decisions in education beyond the individual classroom. They allow teachers to see patterns in learning gaps at the school, district, state, and national levels. This can help with teacher training, resource provision, curriculum and teaching planning, targeted interventions, and monitoring progress in foundational learning. However, the evidence collected nationally may not be impactful at a local level due to differences in capacity, resources, teacher readiness, and regional and language differences.

Based on the international policy approach, there are numerous international initiatives looking to measure foundational learning including EGRA, EGMA, and UNICEF's Foundational Learning Skills module. This means there is a global move towards measuring foundational learning. By looking at the FLN-NAS 2022 in comparison to these initiatives, similarities and differences can be identified. This assessment is included within the national FLN policy of India and clearly relates to Class III learning outcomes and foundational learning in India. This can help understand how to design an assessment to measure foundational learning on a large scale.

Research Question

RQ 1: How does the FLN-NAS 2022 learning-outcome framework for Class III contribute to identifying foundational learning gaps and informing classroom and educational policy interventions in India?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative document analysis approach to understand the policy and assessment documentation related to the FLN-NAS 2022 Assessment Framework in comparison to international foundational learning assessments like ERGA and EGMA. The main document used was the ‘Foundational Literacy and Numeracy National Achievement Survey-2022 Assessment Framework,' developed by NCERT, as well as international foundational learning assessments like ERGA and EGMA. The analysis was conducted based on the research question and involved four stages: 1) identification of documents, 2) identifying the statements that describe the purpose, constructs, learning outcomes, design, quality standards, language sensitivity, inclusiveness, and use of the framework in assessments, 3) coding these statements under themes, and 4) interpreting the results.

This involved coding based on a set of 10 categories: (a) Foundational Learning in the Indian context, (b) Learning Outcomes in foundational literacy & numeracy, (c) Critical Appraisal of the FLN-NAS 2022 Design, (d) Age-Appropriate Assessment, (e) Assessment quality: Validity, Reliability, Interpretable and Comparable, (f) Comparison with International Foundational Learning Assessment Initiatives, and (g) Language Responsiveness.

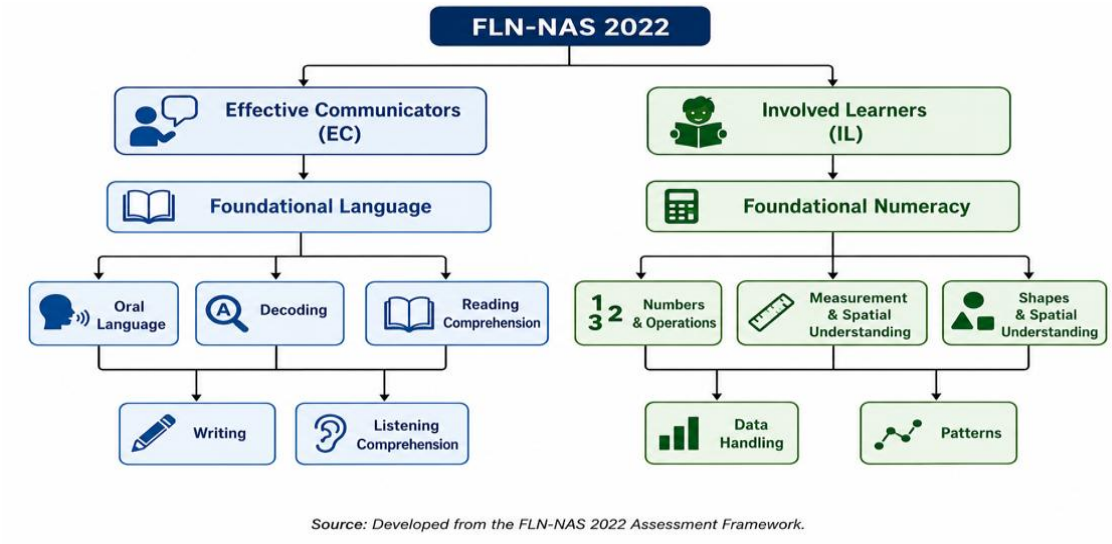
& Inclusive, (h) Learning Outcomes and Classroom Practice, (i) Implications for Teachers and Stakeholders, and (j) Implementation Challenges. Within each category, statements were coded if they directly stated an element of the framework, its purpose, assessment principles, or conditions for implementation. Statements were interpreted by identifying whether the statement was descriptive or analytic. An advantage was identified if it had characteristics that had the potential to improve coverage of the constructs, fairness, interpretability, and usefulness of information. The analysis also compared the purpose, target population/grade, coverage of constructs, administration structure, use of diagnostic information, language sensitivity, and purpose of the FLN-NAS 2022 assessment framework with select international foundations learning assessment initiatives.

Foundational Learning in the Indian Context

The term 'foundational learning' is used to describe the acquisition of skills and knowledge in early education. The FLN-NAS 2022 framework highlights that foundational learning is correlated with children's cognitive, socio-emotional, physical, language, and mathematical learning. FLN was recognized as a high-priority area in NEP 2020, and a national mission was launched for the achievement of 'foundational competencies' in NIPUN Bharat. In this policy context, the need for assessment arises because in order to implement, there has to be evidence that children are learning the intended outcomes. The FLN-NAS 2022 framework thus offers a framework for assessing learning goals and the measurable competencies, assessment tasks, and educational intervention.

Conceptual Structure of FLN-NAS 2022

For Class III, the framework organizes foundational learning into two developmental goals:



Source: Developed from the FLN-NAS 2022 Assessment Framework.

Figure 1: Conceptual Structure for Foundational Learning

Foundational Language and Literacy

Area	Major Competencies
Oral Language	Conversation, vocabulary, self-expression, responding to questions
Decoding	Phonological awareness, letter identification, symbol-sound correspondence, word reading
Reading Comprehension	Understanding texts, retrieving information, inference
Writing	Writing words, sentences, and expressing ideas
Listening Comprehension	Listening to and understanding short texts or stories

Table 1. Major Areas of Foundational Language

The effective communicator's goal addresses children's ability to communicate, listen, decode, comprehend, and express themselves through writing. The framework recognizes that literacy

Development is not linear or restricted to reading and writing. Oral language, listening, decoding, comprehension, and writing develop in an interconnected manner.

Foundational Numeracy

Foundational numeracy is the ability to reason with numbers and apply simple mathematical concepts in daily life. The framework encompasses five significant areas. The framework therefore sees numeracy as more than mathematical calculations. It entails reasoning, application of mathematical thinking, spatial visualization, and pattern recognition.

Area	Major Competencies
Numbers and Operations	Number identification, comparison, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division
Measurement	Length, distance, weight, capacity and time
Shapes and Spatial Understanding	2D and 3D shapes, properties and spatial relationships
Data Handling	Tally marks, tables, charts, graphs and pictographs
Patterns	Identification, extension and communication of patterns

Table 2. Major Areas of Foundational Numeracy

Class III Learning Outcomes

Developmental Goal	Focus Areas	Learning Outcomes
Children Become Effective Communicators (EC)	Oral Language Decoding Reading Comprehension Writing Listening	8
Children Become Involved Learners and Connect with their Immediate Environment (IL)	Numbers & Operations Measurement Shapes & Spatial Understanding Data Handling Patterns	8
Total	Foundational Language + Numeracy	16

Table 3. Class III Learning-Outcome Structure

A major feature of FLN-NAS 2022 is the explicit identification of 16 learning outcomes for Class III—eight under foundational language and eight under foundational numeracy.

The language outcomes relate to communication, phonological awareness, symbol-sound relationships, reading fluency, comprehension, writing conventions, and written expression. The outcomes dealing with numeracy involve counting and reading and matching numbers, as well as process and measurement. The outcomes dealing with numeracy involve counting and reading and matching numbers, as well as process and measurement. The outcomes are specified through EC-01 to EC-08 & IL-01 to IL-08 in detail.

Critical Appraisal of the FLN-NAS 2022 Design

The design of FLN-NAS 2022 includes several notable features. Firstly, the framework has been designed to assess students based on their fundamental skills rather than an overall score. This can be seen by splitting the assessment into separate areas. For example, oral language, decoding, reading, writing, and listening have been separated from numeracy areas such as numbers and operations, measurement, shapes and space, and data and patterns. Secondly, this allows there to be an explicit learning outcome focus. Thirdly, the age-appropriate and performance-focused tasks used make the assessment suitable for Grade III learners. As basic skills cannot always be accurately assessed through traditional pen and paper tests, this is ideal. Fourthly, the assessment focuses on validity, reliability, interpretability, and comparability. This therefore can provide valuable evidence for monitoring the system. Lastly, the language-sensitive and inclusive nature of the assessment acknowledges 2 major sources of inequity within a multilingual and diverse education system. The FLN-NAS 2022 framework makes the following key points about assessment: It should yield valid, reliable, interpretable, and comparable evidence of foundational learning.

Age-Appropriate Assessment

Assessment tasks are planned in line with children's developmental level. The framework acknowledges that young children might need more than just written tests, in that they might need oral, visual, concrete, and performance-based approaches.

Balanced Incomplete Block Design

The structure is an equal selection of assessment tasks among booklets in an “equal selection” incomplete block design. This allows for a wider coverage of learning outcomes with fewer tasks given to every child.

Assessment Subtasks

The assessment is comprised of activities like

- Oral language and vocabulary;
- listening comprehension;
- phonemic awareness;
- letter identification;
- Reading familiar and nonword words;
- oral reading fluency;
- writing;
- Identifying and comparing numbers;
- addition and subtraction;
- multiplication and division;
- measurement;
- shape identification;
- data interpretation; and
- Identification and extension of patterns.

Assessment Quality

Assessment quality is central to the FLN-NAS 2022 framework. The framework's emphasis on these principles strengthens the usefulness of FLN assessment for both educational research and policy.

Quality Criterion	Description
Validity	Assessment tasks should measure the intended foundational competency rather than unrelated skills.
Reliability	Standardized administration and scoring procedures are necessary to ensure consistency across learners and contexts.
Interpretability	Assessment results should provide meaningful information about children's performance and competencies.
Comparability	Assessment procedures should enable meaningful comparison of learning evidence across relevant groups and contexts.

Table 4 Assessment Quality

Comparison with International Foundational Learning Assessment Initiatives

The FLN-NAS 2022 assessment tool can be compared to existing global assessment tools. For example, tools like Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) are subtask-based. UNESCO describes the EGRA assessment as assessing 'preschool-level or early grade subtasks,' including knowledge about letter names and letter sounds. EGMA was developed to assess foundational mathematics skills (UNESCO, assessment resources). The Foundational Learning Skills (FLS) module developed by UNICEF assesses basic reading and numeracy skills through various tasks. This includes tasks such as reading accuracy, literal and inferential comprehension, number recognition, numeric comparison, and adding and patterning. This is similar to the FLN-NAS 2022, as it focuses on observing foundational skills. However, there are some key differences. The FLN-NAS 2022 is aligned to India's national FLN policy and is specifically designed to reflect the objectives of Class III and 16 learning outcomes. This means that the purpose of the assessment aligns directly to the national monitoring of foundational learning objectives. In contrast, EGRA/EGMA are more modular and have often been adjusted to support diagnostics and program planning. The UNICEF FLS module aims to be incorporated into household surveys providing internationally comparable data. Therefore, the FLN-NAS 2022 has a unique advantage of being aligned to the curriculum. However, the international tools provide a useful example for diagnosing subskills flexibly. Overall, these examples highlight that creating an assessment tool is just one part of a successful learning improvement system. UNESCO emphasizes that foundational assessments can add value to their understanding of educational systems. The World Bank highlights that it is important to link assessments to teaching. Therefore, the FLN-NAS 2022 tool provides a unique opportunity to assess foundational learning objectives through an Indian learning outcome structure. With the correct tools, training, and feedback systems, it can potentially link national monitoring to classroom diagnostics (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2026; World Bank, 2022; UNICEF, 2026).

Language Responsiveness

India's multilingual context kind of makes language an important factor when it comes to foundational assessment, because you know schools and homes can differ a lot. In the FLN-NAS 2022 framework it is recognized that there are differences between the language used for instruction and the linguistic life children

actually have before school. The point is that children should be assessed in a language where they are already sufficiently proficient, not just in the "official" language, or whatever is standard. Language-responsive assessment also matters since an unfamiliar language can mess with a child's performance even if the child has the competency that's being tested. This shows up especially in reading, listening, oral language, and even when mathematical tasks come with language inputs, instructions, or wording. So, in the end, language really needs to be treated as a key component for assessment validity and for fairness too.

Inclusion of Children with Special Needs

The framework recognizes how important it is to include children with special educational needs in the early learning assessment. The right accommodations and suitable adaptations are needed so that children can actually take part in the assessment process in a meaningful way, not just be present. Inclusive assessment helps make national learning evidence more representative, and it also backs up the bigger purpose of fair education, more or less.

Learning Outcomes and Classroom Practice

The value of learning outcomes reaches past national assessment, and it kind of matters in a way that feels more practical. They can also give teachers a more structured roadmap for the day-to-day formative assessment happening in a classroom. For instance, a teacher notices that a child

- recognizes letters but struggles with decoding,
- reads words but has weak comprehension,
- communicates orally but experiences difficulty in writing,
- recognizes numbers but struggles with operations,
- understands numbers but has difficulty with measurement or
- identifies patterns but struggles to extend them

With this kind of info, teachers can shape a more precise intervention, rather than relying on one single overall achievement score.

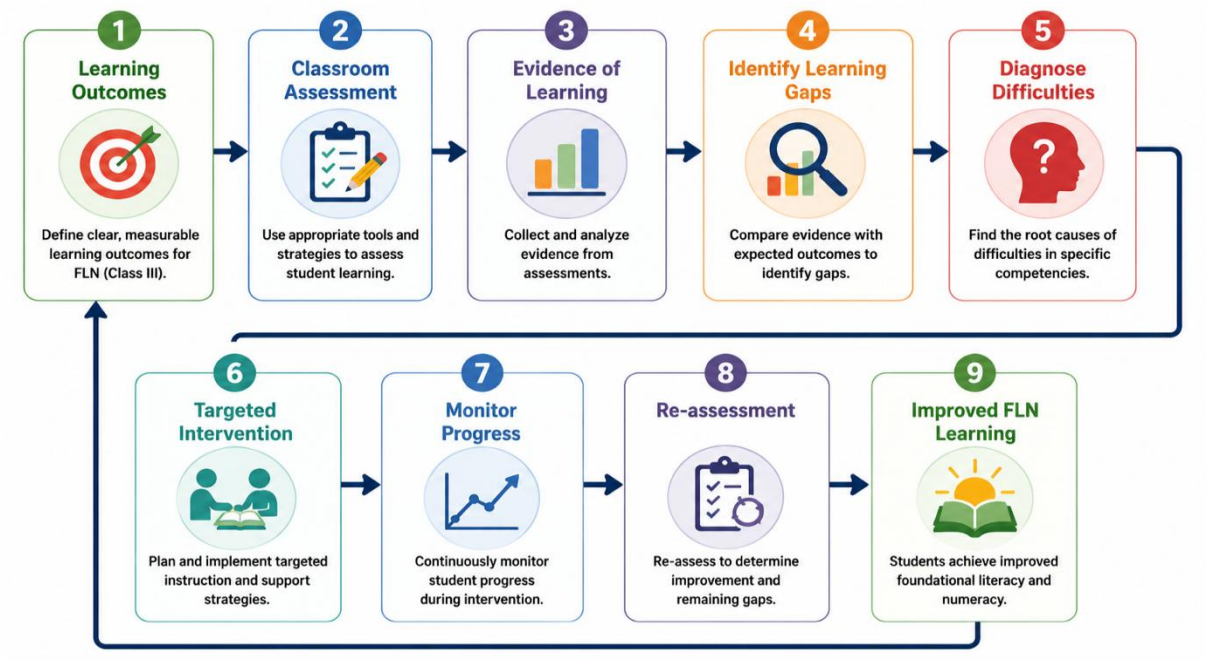


Figure 2: Assessment to Intervention Cycle

This cycle illustrates that assessment should be connected to instructional action rather than functioning only as a measurement exercise.

Implications for Teachers and Stakeholders

The FLN-NAS 2022 framework has significance for classroom instruction and education policy. Formative assessment should be applied frequently at the classroom level to track student progress while linked to the FLN learning outcomes. The results of the assessment should be utilized to determine which learning gaps to address and what instructional interventions are needed and planned. Literacy teaching should draw on oral language, decoding and comprehension, listening and writing, and numeracy; teaching should draw on concrete, contextual, and experiential activities. It is also important to take into account children's linguistic backgrounds and respond to a variety of learning needs by using inclusive assessment and instruction. Therefore, the framework fosters a move towards competency-based and learner-responsive teaching. At the policy level, FLN-NAS 2022 can be used to gather evidence for monitoring foundational learning as per the NIPUN Bharat Mission. It has a learning-outcome structure that facilitates the identification of learning gaps, targeted action, teachers' professional development, enhancement of language-responsive planning, inclusive assessment, and systematic monitoring of progress in learning foundations. It also enhances the utilization of assessment evidence for evidence-informed decisions. Overall, the framework provides a clear link among priorities for national FLN, measurable learning competencies, classroom practice, and improvement in learning.

Implementation Challenges

The usefulness of FLN-NAS 2022 will depend on how well it can be used to translate evidence into action. There are several considerations when implementing:

- **Teacher assessment skills:** Teachers must understand what each learning outcome entails, identify evidence of competency and difficulty, and use or interpret the correct assessments. Evidence shows that teacher competency in assessments is a key enabler for using assessment data to improve teaching (World Bank, 2025).
- **Assessment tasks must align with the learning outcomes**. If teachers do not adapt their assessment strategies to include regular simple assessments, then the differentiated assessment structure may not offer much insight. Assessments must also be simple to complete and low stakes to allow for regular formative assessment.
- **Resources**: Teaching may need additional resources such as differentiated texts, concrete resources, print-rich environments, multilingual resources, visuals, and assessment resources. These resources may not be evenly distributed across schools, meaning that the same assessment result may not always provide an opportunity for intervention.
- **Multilingual classes**: The language used in the instructions and assessment can impact the performance of learners. Particularly within oral, listening, reading comprehension, and language-based mathematics. An assessment that is responsive to language must be supported by a pedagogy that is responsive to language. This is not just an assessment design issue.
- **Disparities between regions and institutions:** They can impact how effectively the assessment can be used. The availability of teachers, CPD, digital resources, strong leadership, time spent teaching, and support within the locality may mean that the learning gaps aren’t identified. The reporting system should not only show how well the children are doing but also allow prioritization, planning for intervention, tracking, and feedback at different levels of administration.

DISCUSSION

Overall, this analysis shows that the FLN-NAS 2022 does make significant progress from a general question of whether children are performing to a more specific question of which foundational skills they have developed. The 16 outcomes make the learning outcomes very clear and provide a shared vocabulary for assessing, teaching, CPD, and monitoring. It is particularly good that there are multiple aspects to literacy and numeracy, as foundational skills cannot simply be reduced to knowing how to read and do arithmetic. However, the framework’s academic and practical value is determined by how well the assessment to action cycle works. If there is evidence about a learning outcome that can be used to provide an accurate diagnosis

and appropriate action, then it will have an impact on education. Whilst the framework can help identify whether a learner or group lacks in decoding, comprehension, writing, measuring, data handling, and pattern spotting, we cannot know why exactly this is happening in instruction from the assessment itself. From comparing this to international frameworks such as the EGRA, EGMA, and UNICEF FLS module, we see that they are similar in that they all assess observable foundational skills. However, they differ in their purpose, delivery, and integration with the curriculum. Whilst FLN-NAS 2022 is unique in that it links to the national FLN agenda in India and learning outcomes for Class III, the international experience shows that having adaptable diagnostic tools, teacher support, and useful feedback is required for effective assessment.

Overall, the key issue here is the assessment implementation. Current international evidence shows that although countries tend to be better at using assessment data to inform policy and planning, they are not always consistent with using it to inform teaching practice. For example, around seven out of ten countries surveyed in Africa use assessment data nationally to inform policy and planning, whilst only around four out of ten use it nationally to inform teaching practice (UNICEF's 2026 Foundational Learning Action Tracker). Whilst this is not directly an indicator of how it will work in India, it does show a gap between policy and practice that should be specifically considered. (UNICEF & Hempel Foundation, 2026). In relation to our research question, FLN-NAS 2022 can help identify gaps in foundational skills through the learning outcomes being seen as diagnostic categories. These could be used to inform teaching practice at a classroom level, planning instruction and providing CPD at a school level, providing targeted academic and resource interventions at a district/state level, and monitoring, reviewing and prioritising at a national level. Therefore, overall the framework has significant potential; however, it is conditional. This paper highlights that whilst there is a clear conceptual framework, further empirical evidence is required surrounding the next steps. We need to investigate whether teachers understand the reporting at the outcome level, what types of CPD will help them use the data, how multilingual and resource-poor schools will adapt interventions, and whether there will be measurable improvements in foundational literacy and numeracy after multiple cycles of assessment informed practice. This would take the field forward beyond describing the framework and instead investigate the impact it will have on education.

Future Research Directions

Future research directions focus on application and outcomes. Firstly, mixed methods studies can be used to investigate how teachers make sense of FLN-NAS (or similar outcomes reports) and what format is most useful for informing teaching. Secondly, intervention studies can explore how assessment-literate professional development improves teachers' diagnostic skills and targeting of responses to specific outcomes. Thirdly, longitudinal studies can investigate how multiple cycles of assessment to intervention improve long-term improvements in basic literacy and numeracy skills. Finally, cross-state studies can investigate how variation in language, teacher capability, school resources, and administrative support impact on the use of assessment information. In addition, classroom-based studies could investigate how outcomes data inform differentiation, targeted practice, teaching approaches, and improvements in student engagement. Implementation studies can explore how assessment-informed FLN interventions are feasible and implemented with fidelity and cost-effectiveness and scalability within rural, urban, multilingual, and low-resource environments. This would provide the evidence needed to determine whether the framework provides both a measurement tool and an improvement tool for teaching.

CONCLUSION

This study critically evaluated the FLN-NAS 2022 learning outcome framework for Class III. It was found to have 16 learning outcomes, which can help identify learning gaps in foundational literacy and numeracy. The framework is focused on providing a structured, competency-based approach. It is also focused on providing valid, reliable, and age-appropriate assessments that are sensitive to language, inclusive, and aligned to the NIPUN Bharat Mission. Comparing the FLN-NAS 2022 framework to other international frameworks like EGRA, EGMA, and the UNICEF Foundational Learning Skills Module demonstrates that it has a similar focus on diagnosing foundational literacy and numeracy skills. However, this framework is unique in how it is directly aligned to the national FLN policy framework and learning outcomes for Class III. However, having

an assessment does not guarantee that learning outcomes will improve. Teachers' assessment capabilities will need to improve through training, there must be sufficient resources, and the information gained from the assessment must be used to inform their teaching so that it is targeted. Therefore, the FLN-NAS 2022 should be seen as part of an assessment for an action system. Due to the qualitative nature of this research, it cannot be determined how the framework will affect student achievement. However, the main contribution of this study is explaining how the FLN-NAS 2022 fits into the wider international picture of foundational learning assessments. It highlights how this framework is unique in being aligned with policy and curriculum in India. It also suggests viewing this framework as an assessment for an action framework to help diagnose learning outcomes, make targeted interventions, and plan policies. Future research should be undertaken to investigate if these assessment-informed cycles lead to long-term improvements in foundational literacy and numeracy across India.

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Conflict of interest

The authors have no conflict of interest.

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