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Awareness and Utilization of Government Educational Schemes at the Middle Stage: A Systematic Review of Literature with Special Reference to Begusarai District, Bihar

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Abstract: ***This systematic review focuses on the awareness and use of government educational programs at the middle stage with reference to Begusarai district, Bihar, India. Based on a broad range of national and international literature, the review synthesizes evidence with regard to five thematic dimensions, namely: (a) availability of government educational facilities in primary and middle schools, (b) teacher awareness and use of educational schemes, (c) the relationship between government facilities, teacher awareness and use in scheme implementation, (d) gender-based and location-based differences in awareness and use of educational schemes, and (e) adequacy of monitoring and supervision of scheme implementation. The review indicates that despite the numerous flagship educational schemes implemented in India, including the Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), free textbooks and uniforms, scholarships and the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) mission there are still significant discrepancies between the availability of schemes, awareness of the schemes and their actual use. Principal barriers are identified as socio-economic, political, economic and cultural (SPEC) factors, administrative inefficiencies and ineffective dissemination mechanisms. The issue is further aggravated by gender and rural-urban differences. The review highlights the crucial importance of teacher awareness as a mediating variable between policy design and ground-level results and recommends more rigorous monitoring systems, inclusive communication strategies and community-based outreaches to maximize scheme effectiveness in poor performing districts such as Begusarai.***

Keywords: teaching schemes, awareness, utilization, middle stage education, Begusarai, Bihar, teacher knowledge, government schemes, gender disparity, monitoring.

I. INTRODUCTION

It has been long established that education is the mightiest tool of social change, economic growth and national development. Successive governments since Independence, in the Indian context, have initiated a highly diverse range of educational initiatives, designed to enhance enrolment, attendance, retention and learning outcomes, particularly among marginalized and underserved communities. These plans, including the Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) to the more recent Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) mission under NEP 2020 have already had measurable outcomes in many states of this nation. But, there persists, an annoying and disturbing disconnect between the planning and presentation of such schemes, especially in the mid-level of the schooling (Classes VI -VIII).

The Begusarai district in the state of Bihar is a microcosm of this bigger challenge. Historically a centre of industry but educationally underdeveloped, Begusarai is the epitome of the resource endowment- developmental lag paradox. The literacy levels are still below the state and national average, the dropout rates at the upper primary level are high and scheme utilization is normally hampered by lack of awareness, poor administration structure and social-cultural constraints. Nevertheless, the district is comparatively little studied in the academic literature on the educational policy implementation, which makes it an interesting place to conduct scholarly research.

This review paper is a systematic review of the existing body of national and international research bearing on five related research objectives: (1) the availability of government educational facilities in both primary and middle schools; (2) teacher awareness and utilization of government educational schemes; (3) the relationship between facilities, awareness and utilization; (4) gender based and location based difference in awareness and utilization; and (5) the adequacy of monitoring and supervision in scheme implementation. The review aims to detect patterns, gaps, and actionable insights within the Begusarai context and the broader question of educational equity in India.

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The review is structured in terms of themes, where each section is associated with a specific research aim. In each section, the studies are addressed in an integrated, analytical manner which follows the course of the development of evidence over time and the identification of the points of convergence and divergence. The paper ends by giving a synthesis of some of the key findings and how they may be used in policy and practice and in future research.

II. ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES IN PRIMARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS

The physical infrastructure and institutional facilities are the precondition which must be met in terms of any educational scheme to be effective. Without basic facilities that a school should have, such as classrooms, toilets, drinking water, electricity and teaching-learning materials, a school cannot be an effective conduit to welfare provisions, however well-designed they are.

In the pioneering sociological study of marginalization and education in India, Mendelsohn and Vicziany (1998) defined that the rate of literacy among the marginalized communities was significantly lower than the national average, mainly due to structural inequalities in access to educational facilities and state subsidies. Their comparison of past records showed that the more a community possessed information networks the higher the educational attainment of the individuals in the community, and the lack of institutional infrastructure supported cycles of deprivation. This groundbreaking study defined that there is a strong interconnection between infrastructure shortages and lack of awareness.

Reddy (2000) tested the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) in Andhra Pradesh and found that, although the programme did generate incremental improvements in school enrolment and infrastructure, only a small fraction of the beneficiaries had a really good understanding of what the programme entailed. The lack of administrative efficiency and the ineffectiveness of communication processes were seen as the significant barriers. This observation was a precursor to a common finding in other studies; that the simple presence of facilities and schemes is not sufficient without additional mechanisms of awareness and dissemination.

The Educational Research Unit (2006) studied the effect of incentive-based schemes such as mid-day meals, free textbooks, and scholarships on enrolment, attendance and retention. The study reported 15-25% and 20% improvements in attendance and participation rate, respectively, in schools where these schemes were implemented. Nonetheless, the study also reported that only 60% of eligible students were well informed of available schemes, which led to systematic underutilization, especially among the girls and socially marginalized groups.

More recent institutional evidence was provided by the Pune Municipal Corporation Education Department (2023) Annual Report. The report based on administrative data analysis and school inspections revealed that schemes like free textbooks, uniforms, computer-assisted learning, and others improved enrolment by 10-15%. More importantly, but also, parent and student awareness was identified in the report as a key determinant of successful utilization. Schools with active awareness programs declared much higher participation and results with awareness deficits serving as utilization bottlenecks, particularly in the case of disadvantaged groups.

Studies of students with physical disabilities create another layer to the discussion of the infrastructure. Ammani (2019) discovered that although 75% of infrastructure was available in the higher learning institutions in Katsina State, most of the infrastructure was of substandard quality and inaccessible to students with disabilities. In a study of Malaysian schools, Bari et al. (2011) also found that adapted physical education to special needs students was severely hampered by insufficient facilities and lack of standardized curricula. Similar problems were reported by Sedibe and Buthelezi (2014) in South Africa, where policy frameworks to support inclusive education were available, but there was a weak implementation because of poor infrastructure and lack of institutional support.

Poor funding, corruption, and poor policy implementation were identified as the main limitations on infrastructure development to support special needs students in Nigeria, with the direct parallels to the Indian case. In a qualitative case study, based on Kailali district, Bhatt (2023) found that lack of infrastructure, inadequate training of teachers, and social stigma were all factors that contributed to the poor learning of physically disabled students, even where some sources of material resources existed.

In their study of the pull factors to international students in India, Pawar and Dasgupta (2024) highlighted that preparedness of the campuses and quality of infrastructural facilities were some of the most important determinants of institutional attractiveness. Although this research was on higher education, its results concur with the general evidence that the quality of infrastructure is a critical mediator of the effectiveness of schemes across the various levels of education.

In a study that is specifically focused on the Begusarai district, Manohar, Srivastava, and Rai (2024) used census data and cross-block statistical analysis to record high levels of literacy disparity across the socio-economic groups and rural and urban areas.

The research established that the awareness of education schemes positively influenced the literacy levels, and the awareness of educational schemes was higher in districts and blocks which showed a higher literacy level. Compounding barriers identified were poverty, gender inequality, and infrastructural gaps. This research presents the most direct empirical data on the relationship between the availability of infrastructure and the success of a scheme specifically in the Begusarai setting.

Combined, this body of evidence creates a distinct pattern: government educational facilities constitute the material basis of delivery schemes, yet their functioning is conditional on the accompanying awareness, administrative support, and monitoring. In the underachieving districts such as Begusarai, where the lack of infrastructural support is aggravated by socio-economic marginalization, the problem of policy provision into practiced educational experience is especially acute.

III. TEACHER CONSCIOUSNESS AND USE OF GOVERNMENT EDUCATIONAL SCHEMES

Teachers are placed in a central spot in the chain of educational scheme implementation. Teachers, being the major institutional actors in the contact with students and their families, are not only teachers, but also de facto scheme intermediaries. Their knowledge of what provisions are available, who is eligible, how to apply and how to be implemented, to a large extent, will determine whether schemes will reach their target beneficiaries.

The outcome of an early quantitative study of preferential educational policies in Peninsular Malaysia by Pong (1993) revealed that policies were able to raise the educational attainment of target groups by 20-30% but beneficiary awareness was a critical determinant of success. Students with prior information about the existing help were much more likely to continue to secondary schooling. The discovery that there is a deficit in awareness particularly in rural areas has limited the efficacy of otherwise well-designed interventions, has proved remarkably resilient across the next decades of research.

According to a study done by Dreze and Gazdar (1997), on educational development in Uttar Pradesh, population residing in rural areas where there was poor awareness of the government programs showed 15-20% less enrolment and retention rates. Structural enablers of this awareness gap were identified to comprise administrative inefficiency and poor governance. These results of Indian largest state have direct implications to Bihar which has most of the same structural and demographic properties.

In a review of the social work practices that cut across cultures, Chou, Haj-Yahia, Wang, and Fu (2006) found that the level of community awareness was a strong predictor of participation in educational and welfare programs. Their analysis set the level of awareness as a necessary, but not a sufficient condition to equitable access to the program. The same study by Brannan et al. (2008) which focuses on the adoption of best practice across local governments, found that those areas where stakeholders were conversant with best practice models had a 20-30% higher program adoption rates.

In a detailed mixed-method study of the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) in Maharashtra that involved 6,000 households, Thakur (2014) reported a drastic diminution of scheme participation at each consecutive phase: only 29.7% of households were aware of the scheme, 21.6% had registered, and a mere 0.3% had actually used the hospital benefits. This cascading underutilization was attributed in the study to SPEC (Social, Political, Economic, and Cultural) factors that act at various levels. Although the theoretical framework and the research trends are focused on health insurance as opposed to the utilization of educational schemes, nevertheless, the analytical framework and trends in research can be directly applied to the utilization of educational schemes.

Chauhan et al. (2015), assessing the Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), found out that about 55 percent of the respondents possessed the basic knowledge about the scheme, but the overall knowledge and efficient use of the services were low. Anganwadi workers and female health workers were found to be the most important information channels and thus the importance of the role of teachers in the propagation of educational schemes was found to be of paramount significance.

In its nationwide consultative framework, the National Education Policy 2020 (Government of India, 2020) clearly acknowledged that the effectiveness of educational schemes, including scholarships, digital learning, and vocational education, could be facilitated only when students, parents, and teachers are properly informed about them. The policy saw ignorance, especially in the rural areas, as an important hindrance to the utilization and recommended community involvement, sensitization activities and more investment by the people as the corrective measures.

In their evaluation of ICDS in Kerala (Jawahar and Raddi 2021), they found that moderate levels of knowledge (68.5% of women) were related to the difference in the rates of utilization, with the mothers of younger children showing higher utilization rates than pregnant or lactating women. The research showed that awareness is not a dichotomous state but a spectrum with differences which affect the scheme engagement of different stages of life-span- a conceptual nuance with implications on educational scheme design.

In a study of Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY in rural Bihar, Prasad et al. (2021) found that although the awareness was relatively high (approximately 68.6%), the actual scheme utilization was very low (only 1.3%).

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This dramatic difference between awareness and utilization in this Bihar-specific study suggests that the factors that cause scheme underutilization include factors beyond mere lack of knowledge such as the complexity of the procedure, lack of trust in institutions and logistical barriers. The result is especially applicable to the Begusarai district.

In a participatory evaluation of tribal communities in eastern India, Behera et al. (2022) found that most communities had less than half of their total population aware of welfare programs. The statistical analysis showed that communities with greater access to information had a higher level of utilization of the educational entitlements, financial incentives, and livelihood provisions. With a community-based interventional design in rural Telangana, Bogam et al. (2023) demonstrated that structured awareness campaigns (using the Training Interactive Village (TIV) model) resulted in statistically significant increases in both awareness and utilization ($p < 0.001$).

Kadam et al. (2024), who assess government schemes in multiple sectors using a mixed methodology, suggested a centralized digital platform (Indian Stratagems) to package and distribute scheme information, where lack of awareness was identified as the main bottleneck to scheme impact. In a macroeconomic review of the education field as an investment of human capital, Saiti and Chletsos (2024) found that awareness was a key predictor of education program enrollment, and the results were better in areas where there is an awareness of incentives.

In their study to identify the most effective instruments in increasing awareness of educational schemes, Banerjee and Panda (2023) specifically considered tribal youth in West Bengal. Their focus on culturally sensitive and indigenous-language methods of cultivating awareness can serve as an example that can be modified to fit the socially diverse environment of Begusarai district.

Investigating the role of government intervention as a means of enhancing the education of girls, Jha et al. (2025) confirmed that the use of awareness-raising and social campaign, as a supplement to material scheme provisions, was justified in a context where there was a contextualised disadvantage in accessing education among girls. The totality of these studies is that teacher and community awareness is a critical mediating variable between policy design and scheme impact.

IV. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOVERNMENT FACILITIES, RECOGNITION AND IMPLEMENTATION

There is no linear or automatic relationship between the availability of government educational facilities, the awareness of the schemes by stakeholders and actual implementation of the schemes. Instead, it is a complicated, contingent relationship that is mediated by a plethora of institutional, social, and individual factors. It is necessary to understand the mechanisms of this relationship in order to design effective interventions.

In a pioneering quantitative study of a social background and educational continuation decisions, Mare (1980) determined that continuation rates among higher socio-economic status students (over 70%) were significantly higher than those of disadvantaged students (under 40%). Knowledge of support systems available was found to be a significant mediating factor with informed families almost twice as likely to undertake further schooling. This initial research laid down the theoretical framework to explain the concept of awareness as a structural mediator in educational opportunity.

Forming the Cognitive Flexibility Theory, Spiro et al. (1988) stressed that to learn effectively in complex areas, one needs to be exposed to various representations of knowledge and the ability to flexibly apply across situations. This theoretical framework when applied to the implementation of educational schemes will suggest that teachers and communities cannot simply be presented with the factual information about the implementation of the educational schemes, but rather with the flexible, contextually applicable, understanding that will allow adaptive utilization in different contexts.

The study by Desai and Kulkarni (2008) of the affirmative action policy in Indian education using large-scale national survey data found that the enrolment rates of the disadvantaged groups improved by 10-20% but unequal policy awareness reduced the effectiveness of the scheme. Those who understood the policies better had a better chance of benefiting, and this created a gap in knowledge-utilization, systematically disadvantaging the most marginalized populations.

In their research on educational inequalities among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Sedwal and Kamat (2008) concluded that, despite the various educational programs, only 50-60% of eligible students were aware of significant schemes. Enrolment also improved slightly, however, dropout rates were even higher in marginalized communities and in rural areas, which implies that the awareness and utilization of the schemes should be addressed as a system, rather than as isolated measures.

With the integration of technology, pedagogy, and community participation, Nedungadi et al. (2017), who developed and tested a holistic inclusive education model in the rural India, reported 20-35% improvement of student learning outcomes in core subjects. Awareness on the part of the teacher and parents was also identified as a critical success factor: initially lack of awareness was identified as a barrier but through orientation programs, it was overcome. This paper illustrates that awareness is systematically constructed using organized interventions, and the effects on usage and outcomes can be measured.

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In a systematic review of publicly funded health insurance schemes in India, Prinja et al. (2017) found that although the schemes encouraged the use of healthcare services, the data collected on the topic of financial protection as well as improvement of health outcomes was inconclusive. The reviewers explained this gap by deficits in implementation, lack of awareness, and complexity of navigating scheme procedures - findings that are findings parallel to the educational scheme literature.

The Annual Report of the Pune Municipal Corporation (2023) was one of the first to explicitly refer to awareness campaigns as the source of increased scheme participation rates, with schools with active awareness campaigns showing significantly higher results. The evaluation of the Girls Stipend Programme in Punjab, Pakistan, by Tajammal et al. (2023) revealed that financial incentives were successfully applied to boost short-term enrolment, but structural barriers such as safety concerns, quality gaps, and long-term opportunity deficits limited sustainable outcomes. This paper demonstrates that the level of awareness and availability of facilities have to be integrated into a wider systemic enabling environment.

In a large-scale randomized controlled trial in 400 rural Indian villages, Kumar et al. (2024) found that community-based and collaborative school-community interventions significantly improved literacy and numeracy outcomes, particularly in children with low baseline levels. The most important identified mechanisms were parental engagement, increased practice in studying, and increased school accountability. This paper will offer strong reasons to believe that the facility-awareness-utilization relationship is best mobilized using integrated community mobilization.

In a study by Damini Joshi et al. (2024) on the PM-JAY beneficiaries in Gujarat, it was found that although there is a high level of awareness about the scheme, there is poor understanding of the scheme in terms of eligibility, services, and grievance procedure. The low rate of processing claims and the lack of service also hindered utilization. The analysis points out that awareness should be profound and procedurally distinct - not just nominal - so that it becomes utilization. It was determined that education, income and rural location are important factors that determine the depth of awareness.

As mentioned earlier, Manohar et al. (2024) found in Begusarai district that areas with higher awareness and scheme implementation had higher literacy levels, which directly relates the facility-awareness-utilization triad to educational outcomes in the district level. In analysing a national case study, JETR (2025) found that areas more accustomed to education programmes showed 15-25% better economic performance as a result in part of better enrolment and retention, reflecting the macro level consequences of micro level gaps in awareness-utilisation.

Similar results were found by Nagaraj and Rangaswamy (2025) who discovered that educational schemes would work best when the beneficiaries were sufficiently aware with areas with more awareness also recording 15-20% higher enrolment. The aggregate facts of these studies point towards a strong pattern: facilities and schemes are wanton but inadequate conditions to the enhancement of education; it is only when they are coupled with deep, specific, and operationally actionable awareness among teachers, parents, and communities, that they can be effectively utilized.

V. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GENDER AND LOCATION IN AWARENESS AND USE

The distribution of inequalities in the awareness and use of educational schemes among populations is not evenly spread. Gender and geographic location - especially the rural-urban divide - are some of the most reliably recorded aspects of disparate access to scheme benefits. These disparities are crucial to understanding in order to implement specific and fair interventions.

In a study of education among Scheduled Tribes, Sujatha (2002) found that literacy levels in tribal communities were 20-30 percentage points lower than national averages, and that there was a critical awareness gap between tribal communities and educational provisions such as scholarships, hostels, and support services. The research defined that a lack of awareness was exacerbated by socio-cultural limitations and geographical isolation, producing a vicious cycle of educational deprivation.

Investigating the effects of the Right to Education (RTE) Act on Scheduled Tribes, Chowdhury and Banerjee (2013) have found that the literacy rates among tribal people are about 47 percent, whereas among women, the level is even lower. The study identified poor awareness and weak enforcement of the RTE Act as contributing factors to the low effectiveness of the Act, and noted that the convergence of gender, caste, and geographic marginality compounded determinants of educational disadvantage.

Malyadri (2012) reported that in tribal areas, ignorance of educational programs in government was one of the major factors contributing to low attendance rates and high dropout rates among students in these areas. The study has highlighted that lack of awareness is not a normal state of being, but the creation of the insufficiency of information dissemination, which can and must be systematically handled.

An evaluation of a multi-faceted education program in rural Rajasthan by Delavallade et al. (2021) found a significant increase in enrolment, especially in girls (7.2% in year one, increasing to 12.8% in year two).

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The research revealed that multi-dimensional programs with access and quality strategies have synergistic effects on gender equity, which supports the significance of integrated as opposed to isolated interventions.

In an analysis of the Kanyashree Prakalpa conditional cash transfer program in West Bengal, Sen and Thamarapani (2023) found that beneficiaries were 12 percentage points more likely to persist in to secondary schooling, and had average schooling durations that were five months longer. The impacts were most significant to economically disadvantaged households, which confirms that well-targeted financial interventions can break socio-economic barriers to girls education.

In their cross-sectional study of 250 rural participants in Kanpur, Sachdev et al. (2022) found that older, male, literate, and higher socio-economic status individuals were more aware of government schemes, and the disadvantaged and less educated were subjected to systematic information barriers. The fact that socio-demographic factors are important determinants of awareness has critical implications on equity: information campaigns promoting scheme awareness should be explicitly tailored to reach the most marginalized, and not the most accessible.

In a large-scale study of PM-JAY awareness in six states in India, Parisi et al. (2023) found that awareness was about 50 percent, with big regional, caste-based, and socio-economic disparities. Awareness and utilization among those who are marginalized and those in rural areas were lower even when they were eligible. It was determined that state-specific and population-specific awareness plans are needed to obtain equal reach of the schemes.

Dutta (2023) explored barriers to the implementation of the policy on female education in Bangladesh, concluding that disproportionately affected the girls of disadvantaged backgrounds, despite the policy commitments. This research has contended that policies that emphasize enrolment may mask more significant quality and equity concerns, especially among marginalized girls. Amjad (2024) made similar conclusions in the Pakistani context, finding poverty, socio-cultural values, early marriage, and insufficient infrastructure to be interlocking barriers to educational access of girls in Jhelum.

Investigating tribal education in India, Dash (2023) has noted that socio-economic deprivation, geographical isolation, poor infrastructure, and linguistic diversity collectively generated poor enrolment and high dropout rates in tribal communities. The recommendation of culturally sensitive curricula and targeted interventions in the study are in line with the recommendation of Banerjee and Panda (2023) on indigenous-language and community-based awareness strategies.

In its SDG India Index and Dashboard (2021), NITI Aayog recorded significant regional disparities in educational accomplishments among states and districts, which concluded that the greater the awareness of educational schemes, the better the enrolment and retention rates. The report has particularly highlighted middle-stage education as a critical point where the lack of awareness can be most harmful since middle-stage education is an absolute point where the dropout rates tend to increase the most.

Acknowledging educational schemes as a key factor influencing the enrolment of girls, Josephine et al. (2025) found 10-20% gender gaps in literacy and educational attainment across Indian states. Areas where there were well established awareness programs on scholarships and other support arrangements recorded more favourable enrolment and retention trends. Examining utilization patterns of the maternity benefit scheme in Bihar, Kumari and Sinha (2026) found that socio-economic factors, including income, education, caste, and location, significantly influenced the patterns of enrollment and utilization, with marginalized groups, such as Scheduled Castes and Muslims, being less engaged despite higher need.

Specifically, Bahadur and Dheeraj (2025) focused on the importance of educational schemes and how well they were utilized by SC/ST students in India and found that despite the numerous government programs, the awareness and utility remained low due to socio-economic barriers, inaccessibility of information, and historical disadvantage. The research found outreach targeting, strategic policy execution, and long-term awareness-building are key to enhancing the educational performance of these communities.

Collectively, this set of evidence confirms that the education scheme awareness and utilization disparities by gender and location are not accidental but structural. They indicate more profound tendencies of social inequality, which educational policy cannot but explicitly consider, in differentiated, targeted, and culturally sensitive ways.

VI. MONITORING AND SUPERVISION IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATIONAL SCHEMES

The design and funding of educational schemes are the necessary but not sufficient conditions to make them successful. This must be well-implemented with an effective monitoring and supervision systems to be able to track the progress, identify gaps, rectify course and hold all levels of the educational hierarchy accountable. The reviewed literature demonstrates that there are still ongoing inadequacies in monitoring and supervision that undermine the impact of schemes.

The Policy Note, which investigates welfare programs among disadvantaged populations, published by the Tribal Welfare Department (2013) revealed that, despite the variety of welfare schemes available, less than 60% of eligible beneficiaries actually take them.

Lack of awareness and bureaucratic inefficiencies were found to be the major barriers with utilization rates that were 15-25% higher in the districts where active awareness campaigns were maintained. The report clearly blamed shortcomings in monitoring, communications, and administrative support as the cause of the gap between policy provision and actual utilization.

Investigating tribal education in the state of Jharkhand, Kumar (2009) discovered that the applicability of government programs was limited by the failure to properly contextualize these programs, ineffective implementation, corruption, the lack of political will, and the inability to address the very specific needs of tribal communities. The article also emphasized that failure in monitoring enabled bad implementation to be left unchecked as there is no way of having effective feedback loop to detect and rectify failures.

Bush (2009) showed that the essential role in the school performance, quality of teaching and student achievement was played by effective educational leadership including strong supervision and monitoring. The focus on professional development, mentoring, and institutional support as the strategies of leadership development in the study has a direct implication on the monitoring of scheme implementation that demands the skilled and committed school leaders.

In comparing England and Scotland in the development of leadership, MacBeath (2011) focused on the collegial support systems in sustaining effective institutional leadership: mentoring, coaching and professional networks. The comparison of the concept of centralized and decentralized leadership models has provided lessons to the design of scheme monitoring systems, especially in a context such as Bihar where administrative decentralization has not been even across the board.

Jibrin et al. (2016) found poor funding, corruption, weak governance, and ineffective policy implementation as structural enablers of monitoring failure in the context of special education. The recommendation that the study makes that improved budget allocation, anti-corruption measures, and policy enforcement are prequises to equitable educational provision also applies to general educational scheme overseeing.

In an institutional review conducted over several years, the Council of Indigenous Peoples (2020) has found that areas with proactive dissemination of awareness demonstrated a consistently better program participation and utilization. Constant monitoring and formal communication channels were found to be critical enablers of access improvement in the absence of which there were persistent gaps in the implementation.

The analysis of educational leadership in Wales by Harris and Jones (2020) showed that the transformation of the organization was the most effective when based on distributed leadership, i.e. the distribution of responsibilities across the institutional levels. This evidence-based distributed leadership model provides a blueprint to more effective scheme monitoring within more complex and multi-level educational systems.

In their assessment of the NEP 2020 based on the stakeholder analysis and text mining, Sharma et al. (2022) concluded that although the policy had a wide acceptance among stakeholders, the issue of effective implementation remained, suggesting that the policy needs strong institutional monitoring, capacity building, and continuous evaluation as the solution. The study identified that lack of operational monitoring mechanisms was severe gap that would hinder the transformative possibilities of the policy.

An examination of NEP 2020 through an inclusion-oriented framework, Rangararajan, Sharma, and Grove (2025) found that, although the policy articulated very strong commitments to equity, successful realisation required clearer implementation frameworks, localised strategies and more effective monitoring. The authors stressed that policy-practice gaps (good policy intentions and no monitoring infrastructure) will disproportionately impact the least advantaged students.

In a large-scale RCT, Kumar et al. (2024) found that increased school accountability and community participation in school monitoring led to significant improvements in foundational learning outcomes, especially among the most disadvantaged children. The research offers strong experimental data that surveillance is not the administrative role but rather an active instrument of educational enhancement.

Noshi (2026), investigating the Right to Information Act in Arunachal Pradesh, found that the transparency mechanisms enhanced the government accountability and welfare scheme oversight, but implementation was limited by a lack of awareness, administrative challenges, and infrastructure barriers in remote areas. The researcher found that both awareness and transparency processes need to be reinforced at the same time in order to ensure the maximization of accountability. Reviewing NEP 2020 in terms of challenges in its implementation, Kumar et al. (2024) identified the lack of adequate monitoring infrastructure as a key obstacle to policy implementation, recommending systematic capacity building and continuous evaluation as a precondition to effective policy implementation.

The overall evidence in this section confirms that monitoring and supervision are not auxiliary administrative functions but are elements constitutive of scheme effectiveness. In the absence of strong, multi-level monitoring infrastructure, that is, the mechanism of data collection and inspection, feedback, and remedial action, educational schemes will risk being paper provisions that will generate statistical gains of enrolment, without corresponding gains in learning quality, equity or communal empowerment.

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VII. SYNTHESIS AND THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

In all the five thematic areas considered, there is a consistent trend: the success of government educational schemes is not merely a matter of their design or resource allocation but rather a complex interplay of the availability of infrastructure, the awareness of stakeholders, administrative capacity, monitoring mechanisms, and socio-cultural context. This interaction can be conceptualized by a multi-layered model where one dimension is a prerequisite to and an enabler of the others.

The Cognitive Flexibility Theory by Spiro et al. (1988) provides a valuable theoretical framework. Similarly to effective learning in complex domains, where exposure to multiple knowledge representations and flexible contextual application are required, effective scheme implementation requires that teachers, parents, and administrators not just have a factual awareness of schemes but flexible, contextually applicable understanding which would enable a flexible use of schemes across varied local conditions. The difference between awareness (the knowledge that a scheme exists) and utilization (a real use of the scheme) is, in this context, a gap in cognitive flexibility as much as a gap in information.

The operationalized version of the SPEC (Social, Political, Economic, and Cultural) framework, as applied by Thakur (2014) to the context of health insurance, is an additional analytical tool. As applied to educational schemes in Begusarai, this framework attracts attention to socio-cultural norms that shape access (including gender hierarchies and caste-based exclusions), to the political processes that influence the distribution of resources and administrative commitment, to the economic constraints that limit family engagement with scheme processes, to the cultural processes that mediate the reception of government institutions and programs.

The combination of the Cognitive Flexibility Theory and the SPEC framework imply that the interventions should be multi-dimensional and should not primarily address information deficits but rather social, economic, and cultural constructs that pre-condition the reception, processing, and acting upon of information. This has a practical application to the awareness campaigns, teacher training programs, and community engagement strategies in Begusarai and other contexts.

These theoretical insights are supported by global comparative evidence. The multi-faceted RCT in Rajasthan by Delavallade et al (2021), the evaluation of the Kanyashree conditional cash transfer by Sen and Thamarapani (2023) and the community-school participation trial by Kumar et al. (2024) all illustrate how multi-dimensional interventions, such as material provisions with awareness, community mobilization, and increased school accountability, can produce significantly stronger and more equitable results than single-dimensional interventions.

This dimension of alignment in the NEP 2020 dimension, as analyzed by Rangararajan et al. (2025) and Sharma et al. (2022) provides a forward-looking dimension to the theoretical synthesis. With the education system in India experiencing what is probably the most ambitious policy transformation in decades, the challenge is not simply to make existing schemes more effective but to align the design, delivery and monitoring of schemes with the vision of the NEP of holistic, competency based, inclusive education. This alignment involves institutional innovation, capacity building, and sustained stakeholder engagement at all levels within the system - at the Ministry of Education level, and at the individual middle classroom level in Begusarai.

VIII. CONCLUSION

This systematic review has synthesized a wide and geographically broad-based body of literature to shed light on the multidimensional challenges and opportunities linked with the awareness and use of government educational schemes at the middle stage with particular reference to Begusarai district, Bihar. The reviewed evidence is over forty years of national and international scholarship, which includes policy analyses, experimental studies, ethnographic investigations, and institutional reports.

A number of general conclusions can be drawn out of this synthesis. First, government educational facilities though required are not sufficient in ensuring that schemes are effective. Quality, availability and suitability Infrastructure quality, availability, and suitability should be of a sufficient quality to allow other enabling conditions to work. Second, the most reliably described mediating variable between scheme impact and policy design are teacher and community awareness of educational schemes. There is a strong correlation between high awareness and increased utilization in a wide range of contexts, populations, and types of schemes.

Third, it is not the line or the automaticity of the relationship between facilities, awareness, and utilization but rather the product of a complex web of socio-economic, cultural, administrative, and political factors. The proper scheme implementation demands systemic interventions that would work on many dimensions at the same time. Fourth, the structural, not incidental, presence of gender and location-based disparities in awareness and use, are structural, not incidental, manifestations of deeper patterns of social inequality that must be explicitly addressed through differentiated, targeted, and culturally sensitive policy and programmatic responses.

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Fifth, monitoring and supervision are not ancillary administrative functions but rather constitutive elements of scheme effectiveness. Strong, multi-level surveillance systems are antecedents of the policy promises met and translated into lived improvements in educational quality and equity. Their lack enables failures to implementation to persist, increase, disproportionately impacting the least privileged students and communities.

To the Begusarai district in particular, these findings indicate the urgent need to conduct primary research, which would record the status of facilities, teacher awareness and scheme utilization in the rural and urban areas and the gender lines within the unique socio-economic and administrative environment within the district. This kind of research, based on the conceptual and empirical understanding of the literature discussed in this paper, would not only contribute to the knowledge base of the Indian educational policy research but would also contribute to the practical work of improving educational outcomes among the students of the middle schools of Begusarai.

The general implication of Indian educational policy is evident: the success of government educational programs at the middle-level depends on the concomitant and long-term development of three conditions mutually reinforcing in nature, namely, a robust infrastructure, extensive and operationally specific awareness, and an effective monitoring. The trick in out of the transformative potential of the educational welfare architecture in India is to invest in all the three dimensions jointly, as opposed to individually.

Summary of Key Parameters, Studies, Findings, and Conclusions

Parameter	Key Studies	Findings	Conclusion
Government Educational Facilities & Infrastructure	Mendelsohn & Vicziany (1998); Reddy (2000); Educational Research Unit (2006); Pune Municipal Corporation (2023); Manohar, Srivastava & Rai (2024); Pawar & Dasgupta (2024)	Incentive schemes increased attendance by 15-25%, and participation by 20%, but only 60% of those eligible knew about them. There was a 10–15% higher enrolment in schools that are actively aware of the programs. There was high literacy disparity in Begusarai directly related to lack of infrastructure and scheme awareness.	Effectiveness of the scheme depends on infrastructure, but it's not enough. It is vital that functional awareness and administrative support systems are in place as well as physical facilities. In districts with low performance, such as Begusarai, socio-economic exclusion is further exacerbated by infrastructure gaps, which need to be tackled together with dissemination strategies.
Teacher Awareness & Role as Scheme Intermediary	Pong (1993); Dreze & Gazdar (1997); Thakur (2014); Chauhan et al. (2015); NEP 2020; Prasad et al. (2021); Behera et al. (2022); Bogam et al. (2023); Banerjee & Panda (2023); Kadam et al. (2024)	Where beneficiaries knew about them, preferential policies increased education levels by 20–30%. Enrolment and retention rates were 15–20% lower in rural areas where there was low awareness of the program. The study of PM-JAY Bihar revealed that 68.6% people were aware, but only 1.3% availed it, highlighting the gap in awareness and	Teacher awareness is the one most significant between the design of the policy and the impact of the scheme. Teachers will need to be active intermediaries, not only with nominal knowledge of schemes, but with deep, procedurally specific understanding of schemes. To move beyond the awareness-utilization gap, there is need for structured awareness programmes

		utilization. Both awareness and utilization were found to be significantly improved ($p<0.001$) following TIV model interventions.	and programme in native languages.
Facilities Awareness Utilization Relationship	Mare (1980); Spiro et al. (1988); Desai & Kulkarni (2008); Sedwal & Kamat (2008); Nedungadi et al. (2017); Joshi et al. (2024); Kumar et al. (2024); Manohar et al. (2024); Nagaraj & Rangaswamy (2025)	The rate of continuing was more than 70% for the higher-SES students compared to less than 40% for disadvantaged students with awareness being a major mediator. The awareness of the major schemes was restricted to 50-60% of eligible SC/ST students. Interventions in the community-school context led to gains between 20-35% in learning outcomes. The higher the awareness, the higher the enrolment and economic performance, with 15-20% and 15-25%, respectively, in areas with greater awareness.	The relationship between the facility and the utilization is far from a simple one and is strongly dependent on socio-economic, cultural and institutional factors. To have an impact on the scheme, it is important to have multidimensional actions that include physical provisions, operationally specific awareness (per Cognitive Flexibility Theory), and community mobilization – and not just one at a time.
Gender Based Disparities in Awareness & Utilization	Sujatha (2002); Chowdhury & Banerjee (2013); Delavallade et al. (2021); Sen & Thamarapani (2023); Sachdev et al. (2022); Amjad (2024); Josephine et al. (2025); Bahadur & Dheeraj (2025); Kumari & Sinha (2026)	Compared to the national average, tribal women's literacy rate was 20-30 percentage points lower. Literacy rate difference between sexes remains between 10-20% within the states of India. Girls receiving Kanyashree were 12 percentage points more likely to be continuing their secondary education. In multi-faceted programmes, enrolment of girls increased by 7.2% (year 1) and 12.8% (year 2) in Rajasthan. Scheme awareness was consistently higher in	This can be understood as a structural representation of gender inequality: if people are aware of schemes and avail of them, there is more equality. Awareness and use of schemes is a structural expression of other social inequalities: more awareness and use of schemes, less inequality. Conditional cash transfer and stipends are well targeted interventions that have been shown to boost educational persistence among girls. Gender-sensitive

		male, older, and higher SES individuals.	targeting needs to be institutionalized in the design of the schemes and information campaigns must be targeted at women and girls and not assumed to be reaching them through existing channels.
Location Based (Rural-Urban) Disparities	Tribal Welfare Dept. (2013); NITI Aayog (2021); Parisi et al. (2023); Dutta (2023); Dash (2023); Manohar et al. (2024); Sachdev et al. (2022)	Awareness campaigns yielded utilization rates 15 – 25% higher across districts with active campaigns. Significant awareness gaps around PM-JAY found in various regions and caste groups, even though they were eligible for health coverage in PM-JAY national study conducted across 6 states.Despite eligibility, there were systematic gaps in awareness, with rural and marginalized groups being underrepresented as revealed from the PM-JAY national study in 6 states. However, SDG Index found that the juncture of dropouts was the most critical when it came to location-based gaps, at middle-stage education.	All other disadvantages are accentuated by the rural location. For schemes to have an equal coverage of population, awareness strategies need to be state and population specific. Investment in infrastructure should go hand in hand with dissemination into remote areas. But rural location intersects with gender and caste to create the highest compound disadvantage that needs compound intersectional policy responses.
Monitoring & Supervision of Scheme Implementation	Tribal Welfare Dept. (2013); Kumar (2009); Bush (2009); MacBeath (2011); Harris & Jones (2021); Sharma et al. (2022); Rangarajan et al. (2025); Kumar et al. (2024); Noshi (2026)	Poor monitoring and a lack of communication meant less than 60% of beneficiaries were accessing schemes. The utilization was 15-25% higher in districts with active campaigns. The accountability of the school and community monitoring showed to be effective in raising	Monitoring and supervision are not extra "administrative" functions, but integral components of scheme effectiveness. Multi-level monitoring systems – distributed responsibility among teachers, school leaders, district officers, and communities – are

		foundational learning outcomes in 400 rural villages in India in the course of an RCT. RTI mechanisms enhanced accountability, however, were not used in remote areas as there was low awareness.	essential. Real-time data systems, independent reviews, community feedback systems and consequences for administrative shortcomings should be integrated in with scheme design, not as an afterthought.

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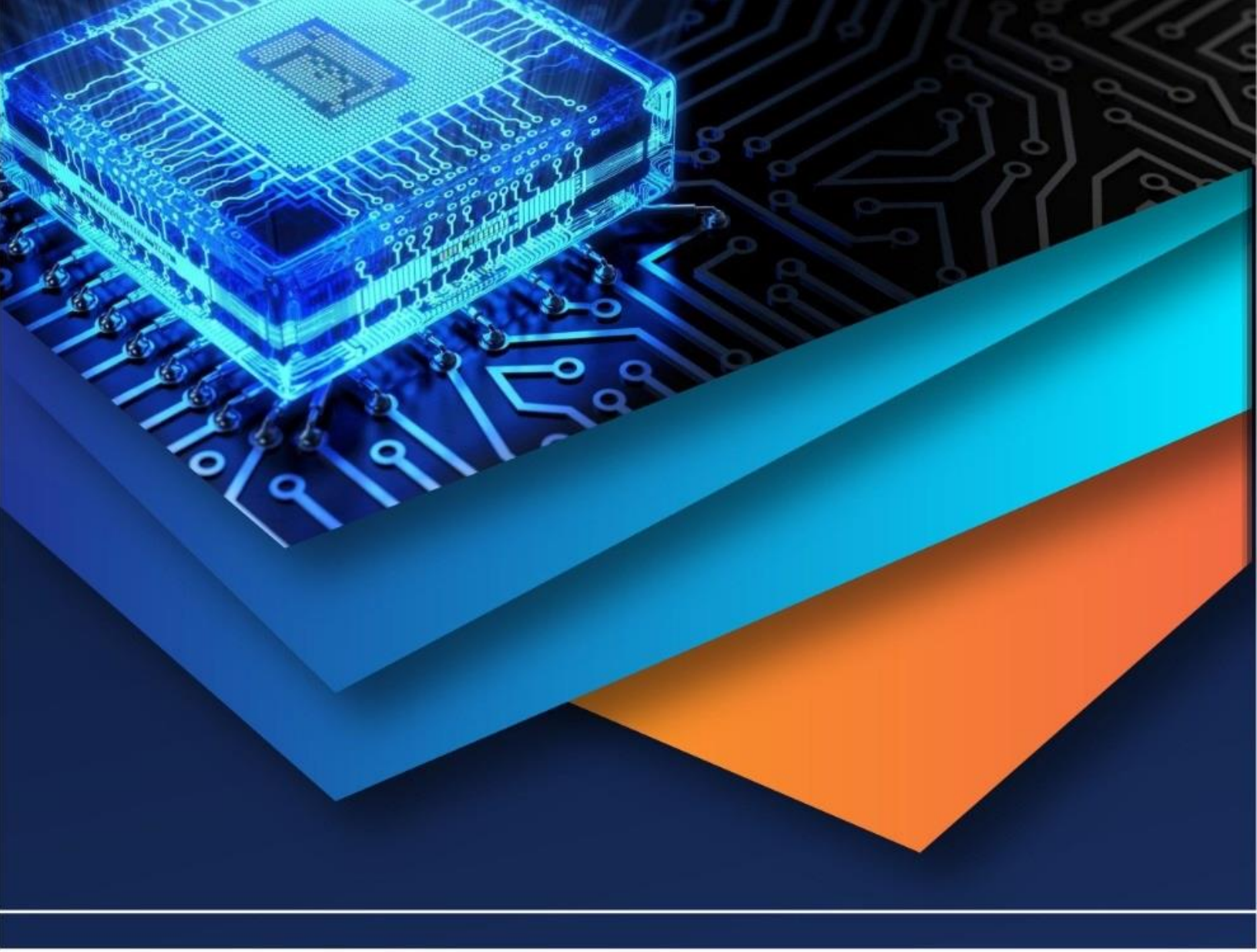
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