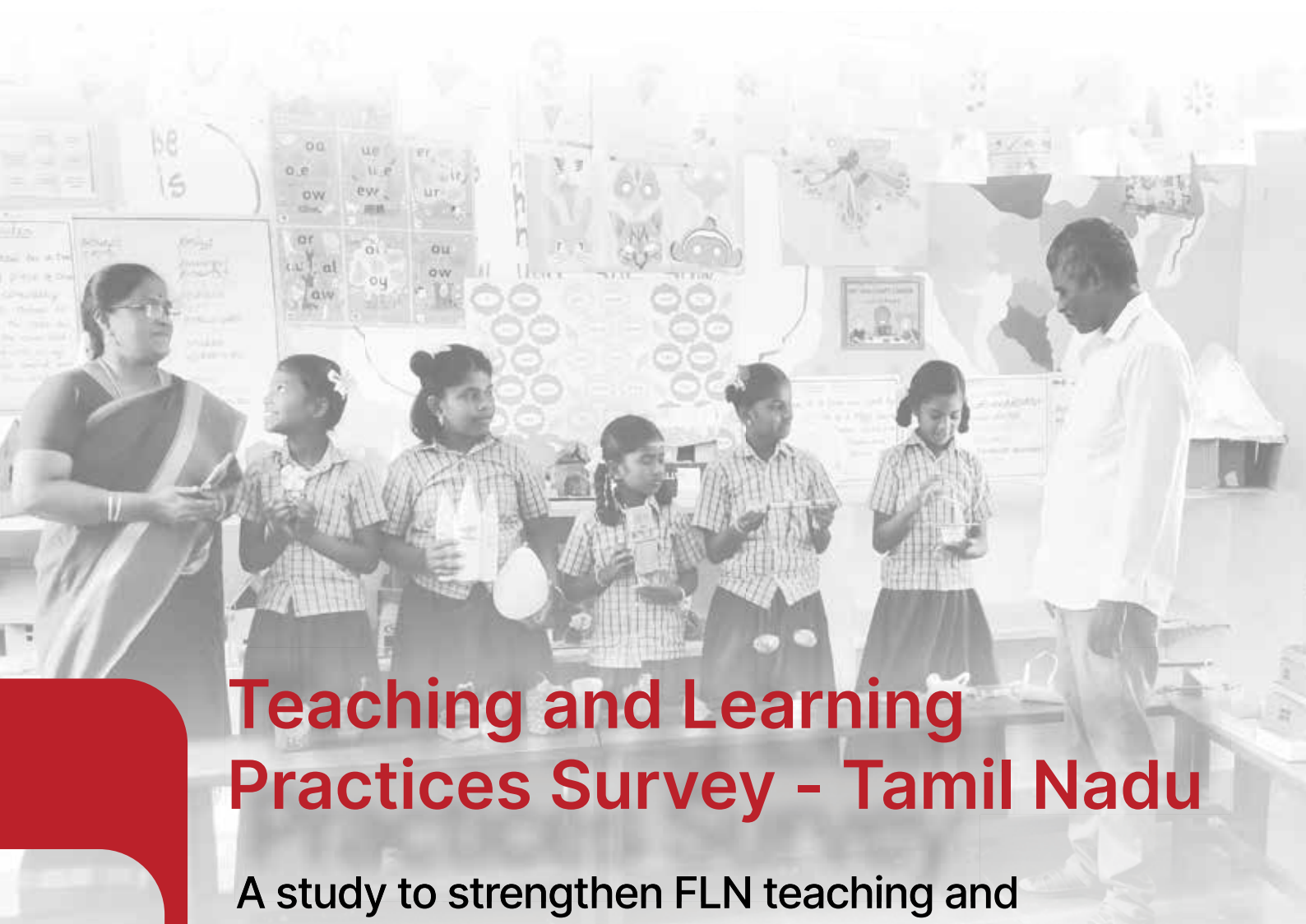




Teaching and Learning Practices Survey - Tamil Nadu

A study to strengthen FLN teaching and
learning practices in India

2025

SUMMARY

Implemented with



TLPS 2025

Teaching and Learning Practices Survey 2025. Tamil Nadu

December 2025

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Government of Tamil Nadu launched the Ennum Ezhuthum Mission in June 2022 with the aim to ensure that every child in the State is able to read with comprehension and perform basic arithmetic operations with confidence by the age of eight. The State Government also tracks progress in student learning through the Ennum Ezhuthum Mission. TN SEP 2025 emphasises the need to sustain mission practices and further strengthen Basic Literacy and Numeracy (BLN) skills.

The State has developed and implemented classroom observation tools for observing teaching and learning in Grades 1 to 3. The current Survey strengthens this practice by using more comprehensive tools allowing for deeper insights into how teaching and learning take place in early grade classrooms.



About TLPS 2025

The Survey was conducted between November 2024 and March 2025 in nine states—Assam, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh—covering 21 districts and 1050 classrooms. By capturing a wide range of contexts, the Survey provides a rich snapshot of the current teaching and learning practices for BLN.

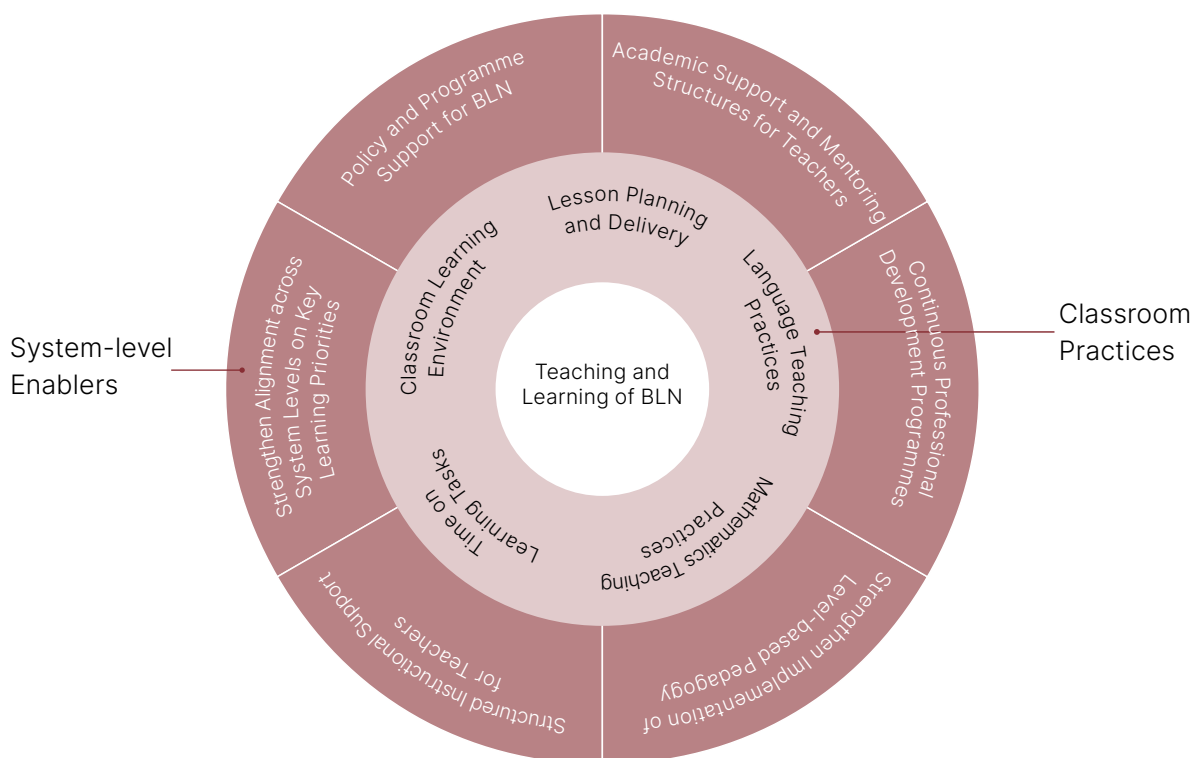
This document serves as a status report on the current state of teaching and learning practices in the sampled schools of Tamil Nadu, informing how system-level efforts translate into classroom-level pedagogical change and where further improvement is needed. A total of 150 classrooms were surveyed across Krishnagiri, Ramanathapuram and Villupuram districts of the State.



Findings and Recommendations

The Survey presents findings under the following themes: classroom learning environment, lesson planning and delivery, language teaching practices, mathematics teaching practices, and time distribution for different classroom activities for both teachers and children. It also presents teachers' perceptions on some aspects of BLN and their professional development.

Priorities for classroom practices and system-level enablers



TLPS 2025 includes two types of recommendations:

- > Recommendations for strengthening classroom teaching practices, drawing directly on the Survey's main findings. These are presented in the following section along with the related classroom-level findings.
- > Recommendations for system-level changes that will enable and sustain effective teaching practices are presented in the section after the one on classroom teaching practices.

Findings and recommendations for classroom practices

Classroom learning environment

The Survey examined the following: classroom physical environment, teacher-child relationships, opportunities for children to participate, and the use of children's home languages.

Main findings

Most of the observed early-grade classrooms had a functional blackboard. Around three-fourths of classrooms displayed print-rich materials at eye level.

In over half of the classrooms, children were seated in rows and columns, and the arrangement changed in only 17% of classrooms during the observation.

In over half (60%) of the classrooms, at least a few children had opportunities to speak freely, engage in conversation with the teacher, or learn from one another. Around 43% of the teachers in observed classrooms asked questions to individual children.

Tamil is the medium of instruction at the primary school level as well as the home language for most children in Tamil Nadu. However, there were considerable pockets of children speaking other regional languages like Kannada and Telugu as well.

Recommendations

There is further scope to ensure that print materials are thoughtfully placed and actively used during instruction to support learning.

Teachers should be encouraged to adopt flexible seating and grouping arrangements to foster more interaction and collaboration among children.

There is scope to strengthen teacher-child relationships in early-grade classrooms to help children become more confident, participate in discussions, and engage meaningfully in learning.

Using children's home or most familiar languages consistently and strategically is a critical practice for improving children's self-confidence, participation, and comprehension.

Lesson planning and delivery

The Survey examined the following: teachers' use of clear instructions with children, observation and monitoring of children's independent work, feedback on writing tasks, use of check-for-understanding (CFU) strategies, and use of differentiated instruction for different learning levels in the classroom.

Main findings

Almost all the observed teachers (99%) reported planning for their lessons in advance and had documented lesson plans during the classroom observation.

Teachers in over three-fourths (79%) of the classrooms gave children instructions before or during the activity. Few teachers checked if the children understood the instructions.

In close to three-fourths (71%) of the observed classrooms, teachers did not check written work or provide feedback to help children improve.

Recommendations

In addition to giving clear instructions, teachers should model expected responses and verify that children have understood so that they can participate meaningfully and learn successfully.

Observation and feedback practices need strengthening through regular checking of children's work and giving timely support in the form of adjusting instruction, clear explanations of errors and simple steps for improvement.

In almost 70% of classrooms, teachers either did not check for children's understanding during the lesson or relied on asking questions to the whole class, which elicited a group response from the children. Few teachers checked for individual children's understanding through varied methods.

As the Survey was conducted during March-April in Tamil Nadu (which are the revision months), only around 10% teachers were seen using differentiated teaching strategies to support children at different learning levels.

Multigrade teaching was observed in 85% of the sampled classrooms.

During lessons, teachers need to use simple and varied checks for understanding, such as asking individual children to explain their thinking or giving children a quick task to demonstrate their learning.

While the multigrade-multilevel (MGML) approach in the State already introduces level-based teaching in classrooms, teachers need to provide extra attention and support to children who are struggling to learn, after proper identification.

Language teaching practices

The Survey examined the following: use of children's prior knowledge in discussions, asking open-ended questions, employing a variety of strategies for teaching decoding, use of comprehension strategies during read-aloud, opportunities to practice reading independently, and providing clear prompts for expressive writing.

Main findings

Effective use of children's real-life experiences and open-ended questions to encourage children to think and express themselves during oral language activities was observed in 29% and 8% classrooms respectively.

The teaching of decoding was prevalent in most classrooms but many teachers relied on just one activity to reinforce sound-symbol association. Encouragingly, two or more decoding strategies were used in 45% of the sampled classrooms.

Around a fourth (23%) of the observed teachers supported children's understanding of a text, but most relied on factual questions or repetitions of the text to do so.

Around a fourth of the observed teachers gave children opportunities to practice independent reading but they rarely observed or guided the process.

Recommendations

To develop oral language development and reasoning, teachers should create regular opportunities for extended discussions on a topic of interest, ask open-ended questions, connect classroom conversations to children's experiences, and ask children to respond, predict and infer in response to texts and stories.

Decoding needs to be taught more systematically and should include multiple activities that reinforce sound-symbol associations in different ways, including the use of simple teaching-learning materials (TLMs).

Teachers' read alouds of texts need to encourage greater participation from children, while offering stronger support for building comprehension.

Children need adequate opportunities to practise reading individually or in small groups, with teacher guidance and feedback. Writing activities should move beyond copying exercises to include meaningful opportunities for children to compose their own texts and express ideas and emotions.

Mathematics teaching practices

The Survey examined the following: use of TLMs by teachers and children, opportunities to practise mathematics tasks independently, use of children's real-life experiences for mathematics concepts, and use of 'why and how' questions by teachers.

Main findings

In 61% of the sampled classrooms, teachers used TLMs to explain mathematical concepts in a planned manner. Children used TLMs in three-fourths of the classrooms.

Many teachers (68%) used real-life examples to contextualise mathematical concepts and processes.

Over one-fourth (28%) of teachers posed 'why' and 'how' questions to children, but many did not wait for children's responses.

Around 39% of teachers gave independent practice tasks to children. Many of them did not consistently observe children's work and give feedback.

Recommendations

Teachers should use TLMs more consistently and in a planned manner. This includes both teacher demonstrations of mathematical concepts and processes using TLMs as well as children's use of TLMs.

Mathematical concepts should be introduced using familiar and everyday contexts so that young children can relate mathematics to their daily experiences and develop practical problem-solving skills

Teachers should ask questions that encourage children to explain their thinking and reasoning, helping shift learning away from rote mathematical procedures.

During independent practice, teachers need to actively monitor children's work and provide timely guidance and feedback so that practice goes beyond mechanical repetition and strengthens conceptual understanding and fluency.



Time on learning tasks

The Survey examined the time spent by teachers and children on different classroom activities.

Main findings

In sampled classrooms, children remained 'off-task' (i.e., not engaged in any learning activity) for 25% of the total class time. When they were 'on-task', mechanical or repetitive activities consumed most of their time.

Recommendations

Teachers need to create a better balance between teacher-centred instruction and learner-centred practices to enhance children's engagement with learning.

Teachers should design learning tasks that encourage participation from all children, ensuring that classroom time supports deeper engagement rather than mechanical repetition.

Other findings

- > There is strong awareness among teachers (94%) about BLN goals and learning outcomes.
- > Nearly 98% teachers reported that they have attended an in-person training on BLN in the 3-6 months prior to the Survey.
- > Almost all teachers believe that the Ennum Ezhuthum Mission/BLN Mission is having a positive impact.
- > 87% of surveyed teachers reported receiving academic support at least sometimes or regularly.



Recommendations for system level changes

Continue and extend policy support to BLN

Tamil Nadu has made significant progress in prioritising Basic Literacy and Numeracy (BLN) learning through the Ennum Ezhuthum Mission. Continued policy emphasis on BLN, including sustained focus beyond the early grades, is important for consolidating gains and ensuring that improvements in classroom practices are sustained.

As this support is extended, there is also a need to broaden the vision of foundational learning to include critical thinking, strong oral expression, and independent writing for language, as well as problem-solving and reasoning for mathematics. Such a shift helps move classroom practice beyond mechanical skill acquisition towards meaningful application to real-life situations.

Strengthen academic support and mentoring structures for teachers

Effective classroom change requires regular, supportive academic guidance. Academic visits by cluster- and block-level academic support staff should focus more on observing classroom practices and providing constructive feedback. Teachers should receive regular mentoring

on language- and mathematics-specific pedagogy. The support system should also facilitate sharing of effective teaching practices across schools.

Strengthen teacher training and continuous professional development programmes

Teacher training programmes should place greater emphasis on practice-based pedagogical strategies, including promoting classroom discussion and student participation, systematic teaching of reading and decoding, concept-based mathematics teaching and effective monitoring and feedback during independent work.

Continuous professional development should include regular refresher workshops, with demonstration lessons, and peer learning opportunities. At the session level, greater emphasis on practice-oriented designs—prioritising demonstrations, guided practice, peer-learning among teachers, and reflection—so that teachers can apply new strategies confidently in their classrooms.

Support teaching in multilingual and multigrade classrooms

Given the diversity of children’s linguistic and learning backgrounds, system-level guidance should support teachers to effectively use children’s home languages as a bridge to school language learning, as well as to adopt practical approaches for multigrade classrooms.

Strengthen implementation of level-based pedagogy

Tamil Nadu has taken important steps towards supporting BLN learning through level-based approaches. Continuing and strengthening level-based pedagogy can help ensure that children who are behind in BLN skills receive targeted support. Teachers should be supported to group children based on their current learning levels and provide focused instruction that helps them progress towards grade-level competencies.

Continue structured instructional support for teachers

Providing teachers with structured instructional resources has been an important support for classroom practice. The State should continue to provide teacher handbooks, student workbooks, and TLMs that offer clear lesson guidance, activity suggestions, and opportunities for practise. Ensuring that these materials are consistently used in classrooms can help strengthen the quality and consistency of instruction.

Strengthen alignment across system levels on key learning priorities

Ensuring strong alignment between the state, districts, blocks, and schools is critical for improving learning outcomes. The system can benefit from clearly identifying and reinforcing a set of non-negotiable learning outcomes and pedagogical practices that act as BLN learning result boosters. Regular communication, monitoring, and academic support across system levels can help ensure that these priorities are consistently understood and implemented in classrooms.





About TLPS 2025

The Teaching and Learning Practices Survey (TLPS) 2025 provides systematic, large-scale evidence on teaching practices for language and mathematics in Grades 1 and 2. The Survey was conducted between November 2024 and March 2025 in nine states—Assam, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh—covering 21 districts and 1,050 classrooms. By capturing a wide range of contexts, TLPS provides a rich snapshot of the current teaching and learning practices for foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN).

Anchored by Language and Learning Foundation (LLF) and supported by Tata Trusts, the survey has been implemented in collaboration with a consortium of organisations: Centre for microFinance, Educational Initiatives, Madhi Foundation, QUEST, and Vikramshila Education Resource Society.

The TLPS 2025 Report presents findings that describe and analyse the classroom learning environment, lesson planning and delivery, selected teaching practices for language and mathematics, and time on learning tasks for both teachers and children. It also explores teachers' perceptions of some aspects of FLN and their professional development. The recommendations of TLPS suggest how classroom teaching practices can be improved and the system-level changes that can enable and sustain this change in FLN teaching and learning practices.



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Tools for TLPS 2025 and grade-wise data-tables can be accessed from the QR Code above