



Original Article

The Integration of Artificial Intelligence in Contemporary Education: A Comparative Analysis of India and Global Practices

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Abstract

The integration of artificial intelligence into educational systems worldwide represents one of the most consequential shifts in contemporary pedagogy, yet the conditions under which this integration succeeds or stalls vary profoundly by national context. This paper presents a systematic comparative review of AI adoption in education across six countries — India, the United States, China, Finland, South Korea, and the United Kingdom — with particular emphasis on India's developmental trajectory relative to global leaders. Drawing on a systematic literature review of peer-reviewed studies published between 2019 and 2024, supplemented by government policy documents and international educational indices, the study examines five comparative dimensions: AI infrastructure and digital accessibility, policy support and public investment, teacher training and professional development, student learning outcomes, and ethical challenges including algorithmic bias and the digital divide. Findings reveal that while India has articulated strong policy intent through the National Education Policy 2020 and platforms such as DIKSHA and SWAYAM, substantial gaps in rural infrastructure, teacher preparation, and research-practice translation continue to constrain equitable AI adoption. Advanced economies demonstrate that sustained public investment, mandatory teacher training in AI literacy, and explicit ethical governance frameworks are the structural preconditions for realizing AI's educational potential. For India, the path forward requires coordinated action across infrastructure investment, regulatory reform, and professional development, informed by lessons drawn from Finland's equity-centred model and South Korea's institutional scale-up approach. The review concludes by identifying priority directions for future research, including longitudinal outcome studies, culturally adaptive AI tool design, and the development of context-specific ethical frameworks for AI deployment in diverse, multilingual educational settings.

Keywords

artificial intelligence in education; adaptive learning systems; digital equity; India education policy; personalized learning; teacher professional development; AI ethics; comparative education



INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence has moved rapidly from a peripheral experimental application to a structurally embedded feature of contemporary education systems in many parts of the world. Intelligent tutoring systems, adaptive learning platforms, automated assessment tools, and predictive analytics are no longer speculative technologies – they are operationally deployed across universities, secondary schools, and vocational training institutions at population scale, fundamentally altering how instruction is delivered, how learning is monitored, and how institutions allocate educational resources (Chen et al., 2020; Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). The pedagogical promise of this transformation is substantial: AI systems can personalize learning at individual granularity, identify at-risk students before failure rather than after it, reduce the administrative burden on educators, and extend quality educational access beyond the geographic and socioeconomic boundaries that constrain traditional schooling (Holmes et al., 2022; Luckin et al., 2016).

The conditions under which this promise is realized, however, are not universal. The trajectory of AI adoption in education is deeply shaped by national infrastructure, policy frameworks, institutional culture, teacher capacity, and the socioeconomic stratification of student populations – all of which vary dramatically between high-income and developing nations, and within those nations between urban and rural settings (Roll & Wylie, 2016; Williamson & Eynon, 2020). In the United States, commercially developed platforms such as Carnegie Learning and DreamBox Learning have been integrated at scale into mathematics instruction, with documented learning gains in controlled trials (VanLehn, 2023). China has invested in excess of USD 2 billion in AI education infrastructure, producing platforms such as Squirrel AI that serve tens of millions of students through adaptive tutoring (Bhutoria, 2023). Finland and South Korea, operating within strong institutional frameworks for teacher quality and educational equity, have leveraged AI as an extension of their established educational excellence rather than as a corrective to systemic deficits (Vincent-Lancrin & van der Vlies, 2020).

India occupies a distinctive and analytically important position in this global landscape. With the world's largest school-age population – approximately 250 million students enrolled in primary and secondary education – India's engagement with AI in education carries implications not only for national development but for global educational equity (Kumar & Singh, 2023). The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) explicitly identifies AI integration as a strategic priority, and government platforms including DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing), SWAYAM, and NPTEL have expanded digital learning access to millions of learners (Ministry of Human Resource Development [MHRD], 2020). Private ed-tech companies – most prominently BYJU'S, Unacademy, and Vedantu – have attracted substantial international investment and serve urban student populations preparing for competitive examinations with AI-driven personalized content (Malhotra & Singh, 2022).

Yet India's progress toward equitable, effective AI-integrated education remains uneven in ways that existing literature has not fully characterized through systematic comparative analysis. The digital divide between urban and rural India is profound: internet penetration in rural areas lags significantly behind urban centres, and the quality of AI tools available to students in under-resourced government schools bears little resemblance to the commercially developed platforms marketed to premium urban learners (Kamala & Kamalakar, 2023). Teacher preparation for AI-integrated pedagogy remains nascent, data governance frameworks are insufficiently developed to protect student privacy at scale, and the research evidence on AI's actual impact on learning outcomes in Indian classrooms – as distinct from platform engagement metrics – is limited and methodologically heterogeneous (Sharma & Gupta, 2022).

This paper addresses these concerns through a systematic comparative review of AI



integration in education across India and five comparator nations. The review pursues four interrelated objectives: first, to characterize the current state of AI adoption in education across the six study countries along five comparative dimensions; second, to identify the structural enablers and barriers that differentiate more and less successful AI integration contexts; third, to extract transferable lessons from advanced-adoption contexts that are contextually applicable to India's institutional and developmental environment; and fourth, to identify priority directions for future empirical research in AI-integrated education in developing country contexts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on AI in education has expanded considerably since 2018, reflecting both the acceleration of AI deployment in educational settings globally and the methodological maturation of educational technology research. This review synthesizes the published evidence across five thematic domains – AI applications in education, personalized and adaptive learning, administrative applications, teacher professional development, and ethical challenges – with particular attention to the Indian context and its comparators.

AI Applications in Education: Global Perspectives. The scholarly literature consistently identifies personalized learning, intelligent tutoring, automated assessment, and predictive analytics as the four most consequential categories of AI application in educational contexts (Chen et al., 2020; Holmes et al., 2022; Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). Within each category, the evidence base from high-income economy deployments is considerably richer than that from developing country contexts, reflecting both the differential pace of adoption and the differential capacity for educational research infrastructure.

Zawacki-Richter et al.'s (2019) systematic review of AI in higher education, examining 146 studies from 2007 to 2018, identified profiling and prediction as the most prevalent AI application category, followed by assessment and evaluation, and intelligent tutoring. The authors noted a systematic underrepresentation of faculty and student perspectives in the research literature – a gap subsequently highlighted by Crompton and Burke (2023) in their review of AI in K-12 contexts. Holmes et al. (2022) provided the most comprehensive cross-sector analysis to date, documenting that while evidence of AI's positive effects on learning engagement and motivation is reasonably consistent, evidence of durable gains in deep learning and transferable skills remains contested and methodologically fragile. This distinction between engagement effects (more robustly demonstrated) and deep learning effects (less consistently established) is particularly important for evaluating national AI investment strategies.

In the Indian context, empirical research on AI outcomes in education is predominantly focused on higher education and competitive examination preparation, with the K-12 government school sector substantially underrepresented (Jaganathan et al., 2022; Kumar & Singh, 2023). Bhutoria (2023), in a systematic comparative review of AI in education in the United States, China, and India, found that while Indian platforms demonstrated strong engagement metrics particularly among urban examination-preparation students, evidence of learning effectiveness beyond engagement was limited and not systematically collected. Malhotra and Singh (2022) documented the rapid growth of India's ed-tech sector while noting that the privatized nature of most AI tool development created access asymmetries aligned with existing socioeconomic stratification rather than compensating for them.



Personalized and Adaptive Learning. Personalized learning – the calibration of content, pacing, and instructional modality to individual learner characteristics – represents both the most technically sophisticated and the most pedagogically consequential application of AI in education. Adaptive systems such as Carnegie Learning's MATHia (United States), Squirrel AI (China), and BYJU'S (India) use machine learning algorithms to construct models of individual student knowledge states and adjust content delivery accordingly, with the theoretical aim of maintaining each learner in a state of productive challenge (VanLehn, 2023; Bhutoria, 2023).

The evidence on adaptive learning's effectiveness is nuanced. VanLehn's (2023) updated meta-analysis of intelligent tutoring systems found average learning gains comparable to human tutoring under controlled conditions, but noted that real-world deployments – in which implementation fidelity varies and teacher integration is inconsistent – produced considerably more heterogeneous results. In China, Squirrel AI's large-scale randomized controlled trials have reported significant gains in mathematics achievement, though methodological concerns about comparison group equivalence and outcome measure selection temper these findings (Bhutoria, 2023). In India, BYJU'S and similar platforms have reported strong learning engagement metrics particularly among students preparing for competitive entrance examinations, but independent evaluations using externally validated outcome measures are scarce (Malhotra & Singh, 2022; Sharma & Gupta, 2022).

A structural challenge for equitable personalized learning in India is the digital infrastructure prerequisite. Effective adaptive systems require consistent high-bandwidth internet connectivity, compatible device availability, and reliable platform access – conditions that cannot be assumed for large proportions of India's rural student population (Kamala & Kamalakar, 2023). The ASER Report (2023) found that while smartphone ownership among rural households had increased substantially, the quality and consistency of internet connectivity in rural areas remained markedly inferior to urban areas, constraining the effective reach of even well-designed adaptive platforms.

AI in Administrative and Institutional Functions. Beyond direct instructional applications, AI is increasingly deployed in educational institutions for administrative and management functions: automated grading, attendance monitoring, scheduling optimization, early warning systems for student disengagement, and learning analytics dashboards for institutional planning. These applications typically involve lower pedagogical complexity than instructional AI but affect institutional efficiency and teacher workload in ways that have direct implications for educational quality.

Automated assessment tools, of which Gradescope (widely used in United States and United Kingdom higher education) represents the most studied example, have demonstrated reliable performance in evaluating structured responses and coding assignments, with documented reduction in grading time and improvement in feedback consistency (Lodge et al., 2023). In India, adoption of automated assessment at scale is concentrated in elite higher education institutions – notably IITs and IIMs – with limited penetration into government secondary schools where teacher workload is highest and the potential efficiency gains most consequential (Malhotra & Singh, 2022). The barriers to broader adoption are primarily institutional and financial rather than technical: implementation requires hardware investment, staff training, and institutional change management that underfunded government institutions lack the capacity to execute.

Early warning systems – AI tools that identify students at risk of failure or dropout based



on engagement patterns, attendance, and assessment performance – represent a potentially high-value application for India's secondary education system, where dropout rates remain significant particularly among girls, first-generation learners, and students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. However, the implementation of such systems requires the integration of student data across multiple institutional systems, robust data governance frameworks, and teacher capacity to act on AI-generated risk flags – preconditions that are not systematically present in Indian government schools (Sharma & Gupta, 2022; NITI Aayog, 2021).

Teacher Professional Development and AI Literacy. The evidence on teacher preparation for AI-integrated pedagogy consistently identifies this as the most critical and most underfunded dimension of AI adoption in education across all national contexts (Crompton & Burke, 2023; Miao et al., 2021). Teachers are not merely conduits for AI tool deployment – their pedagogical judgment, disciplinary expertise, and relational knowledge of individual students determine whether AI tools are used in educationally appropriate ways or become disruptive substitutes for professional teaching engagement. The UNESCO-endorsed AI Competency Framework for Teachers (Miao et al., 2021) specifies six competency levels ranging from basic AI awareness to active AI system design, providing an internationally benchmarked reference for teacher development programs.

Comparative evidence reveals substantial variation in the quality and scope of AI teacher preparation across the six study countries. In Finland and South Korea, teacher professional development programs have been redesigned to incorporate AI literacy as a foundational component, with pre-service programs covering AI concepts, ethical implications, and pedagogical integration strategies alongside subject matter training (Vincent-Lancrin & van der Vlies, 2020). The United Kingdom has introduced mandatory AI professional development components through its Continuing Professional Development framework, and the United States has federally funded programs through the National Science Foundation targeting AI literacy for K-12 teachers (White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, 2023). In India, teacher development programs in AI remain largely absent from the formal pre-service curriculum and are available mainly through competitive online courses on platforms like SWAYAM and Coursera, which reach self-motivated teachers in urban areas disproportionately (Kamala & Kamalakar, 2023; Malhotra & Singh, 2022).

This asymmetry in teacher preparation creates a compounding disadvantage: students in schools with the greatest need for AI's potential equalizing effects – high-poverty, rural, linguistically diverse settings – are most likely to be taught by teachers with the least access to professional development in AI-integrated pedagogy. Addressing this gap requires not merely the creation of training content but the development of delivery mechanisms that reach teachers in low-connectivity environments, the integration of AI professional development into formal pre-service programs, and the creation of institutional incentives for continued professional learning (Miao et al., 2021).

Ethical Challenges in AI-Integrated Education. The ethical dimensions of AI in education have received growing scholarly attention since 2020, with researchers, policymakers, and advocacy organizations identifying algorithmic bias, data privacy, the digital divide, and the risk of commercialized surveillance as the primary concerns (Williamson & Eynon, 2020; European Commission, 2022; UNESCO, 2021). These concerns are not hypothetical: documented cases of AI assessment tools performing systematically less accurately for students from minoritized racial and ethnic backgrounds, and of learning management systems



monetizing student data without adequate disclosure or consent, have demonstrated that AI's educational benefits are not automatically equitably distributed (Holmes et al., 2022).

In the Indian context, ethical challenges are intensified by structural conditions. India's Personal Data Protection Bill, while advancing through legislative processes, has not yet established the comprehensive regulatory framework needed to govern the collection, processing, and commercial use of student data by the large commercial ed-tech platforms that dominate the AI-in-education market (NITI Aayog, 2021; Sharma & Gupta, 2022). The risk of algorithmic bias is compounded by India's linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity: AI tools trained predominantly on data from urban, higher-income, English-medium educational contexts may perform systematically differently for students from vernacular-medium rural schools, potentially amplifying rather than reducing educational inequality (Kamala & Kamalakar, 2023). The European Commission's (2022) Ethical Guidelines for AI in Education provide a reference framework, but their application requires adaptation to India's specific regulatory, institutional, and cultural context rather than wholesale transplantation.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a systematic literature review (SLR) combined with a structured comparative analysis of AI integration in education across six national contexts. The SLR component follows the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines (Page et al., 2021) to ensure methodological transparency and reproducibility. The comparative analysis component uses a standardized five-dimension framework applied consistently across the six study countries to enable valid cross-national comparison.

Systematic Literature Review Protocol. The literature search was conducted in February 2024 across four academic databases: IEEE Xplore, Scopus, ERIC, and Google Scholar. Search strings combined the following terms in Boolean combinations: ("artificial intelligence" OR "machine learning" OR "adaptive learning") AND ("education" OR "teaching" OR "learning") AND ("India" OR "United States" OR "China" OR "Finland" OR "South Korea" OR "United Kingdom"). To ensure currency and relevance, the search was restricted to publications between 2019 and 2024. Sources were limited to peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings indexed in Scopus or IEEE Xplore, and official government and international organization reports. Initial search results were screened by title and abstract for relevance to AI applications in K-12 or higher education. Full-text review was conducted for studies meeting relevance criteria, with data extracted using a standardized template capturing study design, national context, AI application type, and key findings. Studies focused exclusively on non-educational AI applications, lacking primary or secondary educational data, or published in languages other than English without available translations were excluded.

Comparative Analysis Framework. The comparative analysis was structured across five dimensions drawn from the international AI-in-education literature and selected for their coverage of the structural determinants of successful AI integration: (1) AI infrastructure and digital accessibility, encompassing hardware, connectivity, and platform availability across urban and rural settings; (2) policy support and public investment, capturing national AI



education strategies and funding commitments; (3) teacher training and professional development for AI-integrated pedagogy; (4) student learning outcomes attributable to AI interventions; and (5) ethical and equity challenges. Data for each dimension and each country were compiled from government policy documents, international organization reports (OECD, UNESCO, ITU), national statistics agencies, and peer-reviewed literature, and are presented in summary comparison tables with source documentation. A SWOT analysis of India's position is provided to synthesize the cross-dimensional findings into strategic implications.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following tables present the structured comparative data across the five analytical dimensions for all six study countries. The tables are followed by an integrated discussion that synthesizes patterns across dimensions and draws implications for India's AI education strategy.

Table 1. AI infrastructure and digital accessibility across study countries

Country	AI Infrastructure Status	Internet Penetration	Rural AI Accessibility
India	Expanding in urban schools and higher education; nascent in rural government schools; DIKSHA and SWAYAM provide public platform infrastructure	Urban: ~70%; Rural: ~40% (ITU, 2022; TRAI, 2023)	Limited; significant device and connectivity deficits in rural and tribal areas (ASER, 2023)
US	Advanced commercial AI infrastructure in most schools; federal EdTech programs supporting under-resourced districts	Urban: ~97%; Rural: ~88% (Pew Research, 2023)	High, supported by E-Rate federal program; persistent gap in tribal and deep-rural communities
China	Extensive urban AI infrastructure; active rural expansion program through MOE initiatives; Squirrel AI operational in 2,000+ cities	Urban: ~85%; Rural: ~60% (CNNIC, 2023)	Improving rapidly through government rural connectivity programs
Finland	High-quality national digital infrastructure; equity emphasis ensures comparable urban-rural quality	Urban: ~97%; Rural: ~92% (Eurostat, 2023)	High; consistent quality across regions due to national equity mandate
South Korea	Advanced AI infrastructure at national level; integrated into educational system through Smart Education policy	Urban: ~99%; Rural: ~96% (KISDI, 2023)	Universal access; rural-urban parity largely achieved
UK	Advanced school-level AI infrastructure; Digital Strategy includes education as priority; variation across schools by funding level	Urban: ~97%; Rural: ~90% (Ofcom, 2023)	High overall; persistent gaps in most deprived rural localities

Sources: ITU (2022); TRAI (2023); ASER (2023); Pew Research (2023); CNNIC (2023); Eurostat (2023); KISDI (2023); Ofcom (2023).

India's AI education infrastructure challenges are primarily geographic and socioeconomic rather than technical. Urban centers, particularly the metropolitan tier-one cities, have demonstrated the capacity to host and scale sophisticated AI education platforms: the growth



of BYJU'S to over 150 million registered users, Unacademy's expansion across subject areas, and the institutional adoption of platforms like Gradescope in elite higher education institutions all demonstrate that the technical and commercial conditions for AI-augmented education exist in India's urban educational ecosystem (Malhotra & Singh, 2022). The challenge is that this ecosystem is not representative of where most Indian students learn.

The ASER (2023) data indicate that while rural smartphone ownership has grown significantly, the connectivity quality, data cost, and device longevity that effective AI-assisted learning requires remain inaccessible to large proportions of rural and lower-income families. This creates a compounding disadvantage: students in schools with the highest student-teacher ratios, the least experienced teaching staff, and the most limited institutional resources – and therefore the greatest potential benefit from AI's personalization and administrative efficiency capabilities – are precisely the students least able to access quality AI tools. South Korea's achievement of near-universal internet penetration, including in rural areas, and Finland's equity mandate for AI infrastructure access represent the policy destinations that India's rural connectivity investments must target. China's model of centrally funded rural expansion programs, while reflecting a different governance philosophy, demonstrates that dramatic rural connectivity improvement is achievable at scale within a decade with sustained policy commitment.

India's policy documentation on AI in education is substantive and forward-looking: the NEP 2020's emphasis on digital and computational thinking competencies, NITI Aayog's National AI Strategy's education pillar, and the NCF 2023's inclusion of AI literacy represent a coherent policy architecture (MHRD, 2020; NITI Aayog, 2021). The critical gap is between policy articulation and funded implementation. The funding disparities visible in Table 2 are stark: while China's government has committed over USD 2 billion to AI education initiatives and the United States over USD 1.5 billion, India's public investment remains heavily dependent on private sector activity and international partnerships, with limited direct government funding for AI integration in the government school sector where the majority of India's students are educated.

Table 2. Policy Support and Public Investment in AI Education

Country	Key Policy Frameworks	Estimated AI Education Investment
India	NEP 2020 mandates AI integration; NITI Aayog National AI Strategy (2021); DIKSHA and SWAYAM platforms; National Curriculum Framework 2023 includes AI competencies	Limited direct public funding; reliance on private sector and public-private partnerships (NITI Aayog, 2021)
US	National AI Initiative Act (2020); NSF AI Education programs; White House AI Literacy Executive Order (2023); state-level digital learning mandates	USD 1.5+ billion federal allocation; significant state-level and private investment (White House, 2023)
China	New Generation AI Development Plan (2017); AI curriculum in K-12 (2018); national AI textbook series; AI city-level pilots integrated with Smart City initiatives	USD 2+ billion government investment in AI education initiatives (State Council, 2017; MOE, 2023)
Finland	National AI Programme; National Core Curriculum includes computational thinking; AI integration in teacher education reform	EUR 500 million+ for digital education and AI (MOE Finland, 2021)
South Korea	AI National Strategy (2019); mandatory AI in school curriculum from 2025; Digital New Deal	USD 1+ billion in AI-driven education programs (Ministry of



UK	includes education component AI Sector Deal (2018); AI in Education policy (2023); Responsible AI in Education framework; EdTech Strategy	Education Korea, 2021) GBP 1.2+ billion allocated for AI and EdTech (DfE, 2023)
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The consequences of this investment gap are visible across all other dimensions of the comparative analysis: inadequate infrastructure investment produces the rural connectivity deficits in Table 1; insufficient professional development funding produces the teacher preparation gaps in Table 3; and the absence of publicly funded equitable AI tool deployment produces the skewed learning outcomes in Table 4. Public-private partnership models, while valuable, are structurally unlikely to address equity concerns because commercial partners have inherent incentives to serve market segments with higher willingness to pay rather than those with highest educational need. Finland's approach – in which government directly funds equitable AI infrastructure and professional development, leaving commercial providers to serve premium segments above a publicly guaranteed baseline – represents a model better aligned with India's equity imperative than the predominantly market-driven models of the United States or United Kingdom.

Table 3. Teacher Preparation for AI-Integrated Pedagogy

Country	Training Program Characteristics	Key Competency Foci
India	Primarily voluntary online training through SWAYAM and NISHTHA; limited AI components in pre-service B.Ed. programs; ad hoc state-level initiatives	Basic digital literacy; introductory AI awareness; limited pedagogical integration training (Kamala & Kamalakar, 2023)
United States	Federally funded K-12 CS/AI teacher training through NSF; state-mandated professional learning in many states; extensive university certification programs	AI concepts, pedagogical integration, data literacy, equitable AI practice (White House, 2023)
China	Nationwide MOE teacher AI training program; AI integrated into teacher licensure renewal; university-school AI practice partnerships	AI tools operation, computational thinking instruction, STEM pedagogy (MOE China, 2023)
Finland	AI and computational thinking integrated into pre-service teacher education reform; national professional development network; emphasis on pedagogical appropriateness	AI ethics, digital pedagogy, collaborative learning design, equity (Policymakers' Advisory Group, 2022)
South Korea	Comprehensive national AI teacher training program; mandatory annual professional development; AI specialist teacher designation system	AI applications in subject teaching, student engagement analytics, responsible AI use (Ministry of Education Korea, 2021)
United Kingdom	AI included in national CPD framework; AI in Education Fellowships; subject association AI guidance materials; Ofsted inspection criteria include digital pedagogy	AI ethics, curriculum integration, data privacy, critical AI literacy (DfE, 2023)

Of all the dimensions examined, the gap in teacher professional development for AI-integrated pedagogy represents the most actionable near-term priority for India. This assessment is grounded in the substantial evidence base demonstrating that AI tools'



effectiveness in educational settings is mediated primarily by the quality of teacher implementation rather than the inherent capability of the technology (Crompton & Burke, 2023; Miao et al., 2021; VanLehn, 2023). A sophisticated adaptive learning platform deployed by a teacher without the professional knowledge to interpret its recommendations, adapt its suggestions to classroom context, or recognize when its outputs are pedagogically inappropriate will produce few of the learning benefits documented in well-implemented trials.

India's current reliance on voluntary online professional development through SWAYAM and NISHTHA will not produce the systemic change in teacher AI capacity that NEP 2020's aspirations require. Reaching the majority of India's 9.4 million school teachers – many of whom are in low-connectivity rural areas with limited time and institutional support for professional learning – requires the integration of AI literacy into formal B.Ed. pre-service programs, the development of offline-capable professional development materials for low-connectivity contexts, the creation of institutional incentives (within salary structures and promotion criteria) for AI professional development engagement, and the establishment of school-level AI coaching roles modeled on South Korea's AI teacher specialist program. The UNESCO AI Competency Framework for Teachers (Miao et al., 2021) provides an internationally validated reference for designing these programs in ways that address not only technical AI skills but critical evaluation of AI outputs, ethical decision-making, and culturally appropriate AI application.

Table 4. Evidence on student learning outcomes from AI integration

Country	Observed Outcomes	Equity of AI Benefit Distribution
India	Improved examination performance and engagement among urban, higher-income learners using commercial platforms; limited evidence from government school contexts	Strongly skewed toward urban and private school students; rural and government school students largely excluded from quality AI tools (Sharma & Gupta, 2022)
United States	Significant learning gains in mathematics and reading for students in well-implemented adaptive learning programs; documented improvements in graduation rates where early warning systems deployed	Persistent race- and income-based disparities in AI tool quality and access; Title I schools consistently underserved (Crompton & Burke, 2023)
China	Significant STEM improvement documented in Squirrel AI RCTs; high performance in international assessments (PISA) for urban students; rural gains increasing	Urban-rural gap narrowing through government rural AI program but not yet eliminated (Bhutoria, 2023)
Finland	High, equitable student performance; consistent performance across socioeconomic groups; strong problem-solving and collaborative competencies	Most equitable distribution of AI benefits among study countries; policy focus on closing advantage gaps (Vincent-Lancrin & van der Vlies, 2020)
South Korea	Top PISA rankings sustained; enhanced engagement and performance in STEM; AI tools credited with supporting differentiated instruction	High equity; universal access enables consistent benefit distribution (OECD, 2022)
United Kingdom	Improved digital literacy and assessment performance; evidence of gains in early literacy and numeracy using AI tools in primary schools	Modestly equitable; significant variation by school funding level; disadvantaged areas underserved relative to national average (DfE, 2023)



The learning outcomes data in Table 4 highlight both the positive potential and the current inequity of AI-integrated education in India. The evidence of improved examination performance and engagement among urban students using commercial platforms is genuine and meaningful – for those students, AI-assisted learning has provided personalized support and feedback that complements or supplements teacher instruction. But this evidence comes almost entirely from the segment of India’s student population that is already relatively advantaged: urban, higher-income, English-fluent students preparing for competitive examinations (Bhutoria, 2023; Sharma & Gupta, 2022). The literature contains very limited evidence of AI’s impact on learning outcomes for students in government schools serving economically disadvantaged communities – and what evidence does exist is not consistently positive.

The equity imperative for India is therefore to generate evidence about what AI tools and implementation models work for government school students, in rural and peri-urban settings, across India’s linguistic diversity, rather than extrapolating from evidence generated in elite institutional or urban commercial contexts. Finland’s model of treating equity as the primary criterion for AI tool selection and deployment – prioritizing tools that narrow performance gaps rather than tools that maximize average performance – represents an evaluative framework that India’s public AI education investment should adopt. This would require the establishment of rigorous, independent evaluation mechanisms for AI tools used in government schools, the mandatory collection and publication of AI impact data disaggregated by student socioeconomic background and geographic location, and the exclusion of tools with evidence of differential performance across these groups from public school procurement lists.

Table 5. *Key ethical challenges and equity concerns in AI integration*

Country	Primary Challenges	Ethical and Equity Concerns
India	Infrastructure deficit in rural areas; inadequate public investment; fragmented data governance; insufficient teacher preparation	Student data commercialization by ed-tech companies; linguistic and cultural bias in AI tools; risk of deepening socioeconomic AI access inequality (NITI Aayog, 2021; Sharma & Gupta, 2022)
US	Implementation cost barriers for under-resourced districts; high commercial AI tool market complexity	Documented racial bias in automated assessment; FERPA adequacy questioned for AI era; equity gaps in AI quality by school income level (Crompton & Burke, 2023)
China	Balancing national AI advancement with data privacy; managing AI system opacity; government data access concerns	State surveillance dimension of educational data; limited independent ethical oversight; insufficient transparency in AI system decision logic (Bhutoria, 2023)
Finland	Ensuring rural areas benefit equitably from AI innovation; balancing human pedagogical relationships with AI efficiency	Ethical AI use in assessment contexts; data protection under GDPR; maintaining teacher agency in AI-supported decision-making (Vincent-Lancrin & van der Vlies, 2020)
South Korea	Managing over-reliance on technology; maintaining space for human-centred learning relationships	Student data privacy; screen time and wellbeing concerns; equity of access to premium AI tools (OECD, 2022)
UK	High implementation costs limiting school-level uptake; managing commercial AI vendor quality variation	AI bias in automated assessment; GDPR compliance for EdTech vendors; equity of AI benefit distribution across school types (European Commission, 2022)



The ethical challenges identified in Table 5 for India are not merely theoretical risks – several of the conditions that make AI ethics concerns most acute are already present in India's ed-tech ecosystem. Commercial platforms operating in India's education market routinely collect extensive student behavioral data with limited regulatory oversight and, in several documented instances, have engaged in data practices that would not be permitted under European GDPR standards (NITI Aayog, 2021). The linguistic and cultural diversity of India's student population creates conditions in which AI tools trained predominantly on data from English-medium, urban educational contexts may perform systematically differently for students from other linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds – a form of algorithmic bias that is neither measured nor disclosed by most commercial ed-tech providers.

The regulatory response requires action at multiple levels. At the legislative level, the passage and implementation of a comprehensive data protection framework applicable to student data and explicitly regulating the commercial use of educational behavioral data is a prerequisite for ethical AI deployment at scale. At the institutional level, schools and educational authorities need guidance frameworks – analogous to Finland's equity mandate or the European Commission's (2022) Ethical Guidelines for AI in Education – that specify the criteria an AI tool must meet before it can be used with students, including evidence of validated performance across the demographic groups it will serve. At the research level, the systematic measurement of AI bias across linguistic, socioeconomic, and geographic groups in India's educational context is needed to move ethical governance from principled aspiration to evidence-based practice.

Transferable Lessons from Global Practice

The comparative analysis in Table 6 yields several transferable lessons that are contextually grounded rather than generically prescriptive – that is, they are identified on the basis of evidence from specific institutional and policy contexts that share relevant structural features with India's educational environment.

Finland's equity-first approach offers the most directly transferable lesson for India's government school sector. Finland's insistence that AI tool adoption be assessed primarily through equity criteria – whether the tool narrows rather than widens performance gaps – provides an evaluative framework applicable to India's procurement and deployment decisions. The Finnish model of guaranteeing a publicly funded infrastructure baseline that enables universal access to quality digital tools, before commercial premium services are evaluated, is directly relevant to the challenge of ensuring that AI's educational benefits reach India's most disadvantaged learners rather than being concentrated among those already advantaged (Vincent-Lancrin & van der Vlies, 2020).

South Korea's institutional scale-up model demonstrates how a government can move from AI policy articulation to systemic teacher preparation and curriculum integration within a decade. South Korea's AI teacher specialist designation, mandatory AI professional development, and integration of AI into national curriculum frameworks from 2025 represent an institutional change management approach – rather than a purely technical deployment approach – that India's teacher training system could adapt. The specific elements most transferable to India include the creation of school-level AI coaching roles as institutional change agents and the integration of AI literacy as a mandatory component of pre-service B.Ed. programs (Ministry of Education Korea, 2021).



China's experience with rural AI infrastructure expansion – however different its governance model – demonstrates that dramatic connectivity improvements and AI tool deployment in under-resourced rural educational settings are achievable at the scale of a large, diverse nation within a decade of sustained policy commitment. India's BharatNet rural connectivity initiative, if sustained and resourced at adequate scale, provides the infrastructure foundation. China's experience also illustrates the regulatory risk of state-controlled data infrastructure in education, providing India with a cautionary counterexample for data governance design (Bhutoria, 2023).

The United Kingdom's ethical AI governance framework – including mandatory data protection requirements for EdTech vendors, inspection criteria covering digital pedagogy, and the Responsible AI in Education framework – provides a model for regulatory infrastructure that India's legislative framework can adapt to its own constitutional and cultural context. The fundamental principle that AI tool vendors operating in educational settings have enforceable obligations regarding data protection, algorithmic transparency, and equity of performance across student demographic groups is directly applicable regardless of the specific regulatory instrument through which it is enacted (DfE, 2023; European Commission, 2022).

Table 6. SWOT Analysis of AI Integration in Indian Education

Dimension	Content
Strengths	World's largest English-speaking technical workforce; strong policy commitment through NEP 2020 and National AI Strategy; significant private sector AI innovation ecosystem (BYJU'S, Vedantu, Unacademy); major public platform infrastructure (DIKSHA, SWAYAM, NPTEL); large and growing youth demographic creating scale potential for AI education solutions
Weaknesses	Pronounced rural-urban digital divide; inadequate public investment in AI education relative to population scale; absence of AI literacy in formal teacher pre-service programs; underdeveloped student data governance framework; limited independent evaluation of AI tool effectiveness in government school contexts; linguistic and cultural diversity creating AI localization challenges
Opportunities	Potential to leapfrog legacy infrastructure through mobile-first AI tool design; G20 AI governance leadership position creates international partnership opportunities; large domestic AI research talent pipeline; growing government commitment to rural connectivity (BharatNet); open-source AI tool development model can democratize access; scale of student population creates unprecedented AI training data potential with appropriate governance
Threats	Commercialization-led AI adoption entrenching rather than reducing educational inequity; student data exploitation by unregulated ed-tech vendors; algorithmic bias in tools designed for non-Indian educational contexts; teacher workforce resistance without adequate preparation and support; risk of AI adoption legitimizing reduction in teacher hiring rather than enhancing teacher capacity; geopolitical constraints on access to frontier AI systems

CONCLUSION

The integration of artificial intelligence in education represents a genuine and consequential opportunity to improve the quality, equity, and efficiency of learning at a scale that no previous educational technology has offered. This comparative review has



demonstrated that the realization of this opportunity is not primarily a function of AI technology availability – the tools exist and continue to improve rapidly – but of the structural conditions under which those tools are deployed: the infrastructure that makes them accessible, the policy frameworks that govern their use, the professional preparation that enables teachers to deploy them purposefully, and the regulatory mechanisms that ensure their benefits are equitably distributed.

India's position in this global landscape is one of genuine opportunity and significant risk simultaneously. The opportunity lies in India's combination of strong policy intent, a large and growing technical talent pipeline, a substantial private sector AI innovation ecosystem, and a youth demographic whose educational needs are both urgent and scalable. The risk lies in the possibility that AI adoption in Indian education follows a commercially driven path that serves affluent urban students well while leaving the majority of India's government school students – those with the greatest educational need and the least political voice – on the wrong side of an AI-enabled educational divide.

Navigating this risk requires the policy and research community to treat equity not as a secondary consideration to be addressed after AI's productivity gains have been secured, but as the primary criterion by which AI education strategies are designed, funded, evaluated, and revised. The comparative evidence from Finland, South Korea, and – with appropriate caveats – China demonstrates that equitable AI integration is achievable with sustained political commitment and adequate public investment. India has the institutional capacity, the technical talent, and the policy foundation to chart this path. The question is whether the investment priorities, governance frameworks, and professional development systems needed to realize it will be established before the window of transformative opportunity closes.

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How to cite this article:

Goswami, M.S., & Biswas, S. (2025). The integration of artificial intelligence in contemporary education: a comparative analysis of India and global practices. *Review of Educational Administration, Leadership, and Management* 1(1), 59-75. <https://jmcfiournals.com/index.php/realm/article/view/194>.