

Making Bureaucracy Work

What makes bureaucracy work for the least advantaged? Across the world, countries have adopted policies for universal primary education. Yet, policy implementation is uneven and not well understood. *Making Bureaucracy Work* investigates when and how public agencies deliver primary education in rural India. Through a multi-level comparative analysis and more than two years of ethnographic field research, Mangla opens the “black box” of Indian bureaucracy to demonstrate how differences in bureaucratic norms – informal rules that guide public officials and their everyday relations with citizens – generate divergent implementation patterns and outcomes. While some public agencies operate in a legalistic manner and promote compliance with policy rules, others engage in deliberation and encourage flexible problem-solving with local communities, thereby enhancing the quality of education services. This book reveals the complex ways bureaucratic norms interact with socioeconomic inequalities on the ground, illuminating the possibilities and obstacles for bureaucracy to promote inclusive development.

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*For my parents
Arun Kumar Mangla and Malti Mangla
who taught me the value of education*

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Abbreviations

ASER	Annual Status of Education Report
BDO	Block Development Officer
BEO	Block Education Officer
BEP	Bihar Education Project
BGVS	Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti
BIMARU	Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BPL	Below Poverty Line
BSA	Basic Shiksha Adhikari (see DEO)
BSP	Bahujan Samaj Party
CPM	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
DC	District Collector
DEO	District Education Officer
DIET	District Institute of Education and Training
DISE	District Information System of Education
DM	District Magistrate
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme
GER	Gross enrollment ratio
GOI	Government of India
HGVS	Himachal Gyan Vigyan Samiti
HP	Himachal Pradesh
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INC	Indian National Congress
JDU	Janata Dal United
KGBV	Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya
KSSP	Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDM	Midday Meal Programme

MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MSUP	Mahila Samakhya Uttar Pradesh
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NFHS	National Family Health Survey
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NIEPA	National Institute of Education Planning and Administration
NPE	National Policy on Education
NPEGEL	National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level
OBC	Other Backward Classes/Other Backward Castes
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institution
PROBE	Public Report on Basic Education
RJD	Rashtriya Janata Dal
RTE	Right to Education (Act)
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
SC	Scheduled Caste
SCERT	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SHG	Self Help Group
SP	Samajwadi Party
SPD	State Project Director (for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan)
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
ST	Scheduled Tribe
TaRL	Teaching at the Right Level
UKD	Uttarakhand Kranti Dal
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UP	Uttar Pradesh
UPBEP	Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project
USN	Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi
VEC	Village Education Committee