



Project Report

Topic: Education of West Bengal
Vivekananda Mahavidyalaya

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Content

Topic	Page No
Introduction	1
Review of Literature	2
Objective of study	5
Data and methodology	5
Analysis	6
Conclusion	13
Reference	14

I. Introduction

India is a land of diversities including its geographical features. It is a country with the second largest population. In India, a combination of discrimination, social attitudes, poverty, lack of political will and poor quality of human and material resources leave the children with disabilities more vulnerable to being excluded from education. “*A healthy population is a pre-requisite for successful development*” this was the conclusion that Jhon Strauss and Duncan Thomas came to in their study “*health. Nutrition and economic development*”, 1988. Poor or lack of education causes poverty and slow economic growth of a country especially developing country like India. The role of education in poverty reduction is huge. It boosts the economic growth and increases the GDP of a country. It even reduces mortality rate. Education promotes peace.

Education is a very basic essential requirement of any individual. It is very important for society to accommodate their education system to ensure that the children get educated and have better future. It is also the principal instrument in awakening the child to cultural values and thus is the strongest force in the development and growth of children in preparing them to be responsible, smart and capable citizen. Every child should have the right to quality education to have better chances in life, career opportunities and health.

In India, although the literacy is rising but the number of illiterate children in the age group of 6 to 14 years is also increasing. In 1990 at the World Conference on Education for All, governments agreed to a broad range of education goals including that of attainment of Universal Primary Education (UPE) by the year 2000. Sadly, the millennium year had come and gone, but the UPE goal is still a distant dream, more so in developing countries like India.

Normally, elementary education begins with the initiation of a child into a formal school. In other words, the beginning for formal education is called the elementary education. It refers to the first form of five years of schooling. In most Indian States it includes class I-V covering children in the age group of 5-10 years. Elementary education covers the primary (6-11 years) and upper primary (11-14 years) age groups. In most Indian states, this translates into successful completion of prescribes educational requirement till class VII. The essence of goal is for every 14-year-old to have acquired foundation skill such as the ability to read

and write with fluency, numeracy, comprehension, analysis, reasoning and social skills such as a team work, Equally, elementary education should instill in acquired, curiosity, independence, resourcefulness, resilience, patience and understanding. While this is recognized by Indian policy documents in practice the formal elementary education system is always accused of not developing these skills in children.

Swami Vivekananda said, “*Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man*”. Thus, education develops a person from inside. Economic entitlement of the individual is strongly related to the level of education. Similarly, the economic and social development of a country will largely depend on the education of the citizen of a country. Level of education in a society not only decides the level of social and economic development but also has much impact in bringing equality in the society.

II. Review of Literature

Tarak Nath Bhunia (March,2016) focused on education is the key for a human being's potential to develop in a positive way. According to Dr. Ravi Agrawal-Gandhi, a society's level of education determines its level of social and economic growth. From childhood, an education system has emerged to help children gain knowledge and skills. West Bengal has a very low level of devolution. By the conclusion of class VII, every 14-year-old should have learned basic skills. However, some contend that this does not occur as a result of decentralised primary education planning and monitoring. The analysis is based on secondary data gathered from numerous sources such as books, journal articles, and reports from various government organisations and commissions. The SarvaShikshaAbhiyan remains the country's flagship initiative. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) of 2009 came into effect on April 1, 2010. According to the RTE Act, primary education must eventually be delivered by official and recognised institutions. Enrolment at all levels of schooling has increased significantly since independence. India is one of the nations with a high prevalence of child labour, which has a negative impact on the universalization of primary education. In West Bengal, there is a persistent gender difference in literacy. Access to education, instructor availability, and physical infrastructure remain major issues. The National Literacy Mission (NLM) was created for those aged 15 to 35. There are 49,986 primary schools, 1283 junior high schools, and 3,954 high schools in the country. To achieve education democratisation, the government must take steps to remove

these impediments. The government is responsible for providing free education to all children up to the eighth grade, regardless of class or gender. It has opened the path for the development of a robust, literate, and empowered young.

Sebak Kumar Jana (September, 2017) pointed out the state of West Bengal has a rich history of higher education. The higher education system is significant to a country's social, economic, and scientific growth. It provides people with the skills they need to find work and increases productivity and incomes. Education is an investment in people. In the domain of higher education, India has implemented a number of initiatives. The West Bengal State Council of Higher Education was founded in 1995. West Bengal has 44 universities, including 20 state-aided institutions. West Bengal has the greatest proportion of students studying the arts, followed by science, commerce, and engineering. Until recently, higher education regulations restricted profit-making in the industry. Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) was founded in 1998 to offer disadvantaged classes of students with higher education in the vernacular media. West Bengal is ranked 17th out of 32 in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) Report, which displays the colleges in West Bengal with the lowest average grade point. The state-level results are lower than the national average of 2.52. More than 98 graduates are unemployed for every 1000 graduates, compared to 100 in India. The ratio of teachers in West Bengal estimated for full-time teachers, guest teachers, and contractual instructors is 32:27:6. For the country's progress, the state has to invest more in higher education. West Bengal's higher education system is hampered by a facilities and infrastructure. India should aim to create its own type of integration between colleges and the corporate sector.

Sateesh Gouda M. (December, 2014) finds education is the most basic necessity for human growth. India spends 3.5 percent of its GDP on education, far less than China's 8 percent. The primary issues include high dropout rates, low levels of learning and accomplishment, insufficient educational infrastructure, poorly running schools, and teacher absenteeism. Choudhury stated that when a kid progresses from elementary to secondary school, the likelihood of dropping out increases 2.7 times. In India as a whole, around 14% of youngsters had never attended school. Bihar had the greatest percentage (34%), followed by Meghalaya (26%), Jharkhand (22%), and Arunachal Pradesh (21%). Kerala has the largest percentage of school-aged children (95.6 percent). According to the study, SC and ST children had a higher dropout rate than OBC and general children. Child-related causes account for 44 percent of

dropouts among males and 34 percent of dropouts among girls. Only 75% of pupils aged 6 to 16 years old were enrolled in school. Girls dropped out at a greater percentage (15%) than boys (11%). The main reasons given by families for dropout were that their children were uninterested in academics and that the expense was extremely expensive. It is critical to emphasise that upgrading school infrastructure, education quality, and massive investment in school education can only lower dropout rates to a certain level. Unless and until there is a significant increase in home economic position and a shift in parental social views, accomplishing the aim of universalizing school education will remain a challenge.

Kumar Rana, Samantak Das with Amrita Sengupta and Abdur Rafique (January, 2003) pointed out that the reports the main findings of a study on the delivery of primary education in West Bengal conducted by the Pratichi (India) Trust, under the guidance of Amartya Sen. The first phase of the study was conducted in 18 villages. Eighteen primary schools and 17 Sishu Siksha Kendras (SSK) were examined in these three districts. The preliminary findings from a further 20 schools and the same number of SSKs confirm the findings of the first phase of the study. Primary education in West Bengal, as all over the country, suffers from many deficiencies including problems of infrastructure, shortage of schools, shortage of teachers, the financial handicap of the parents, and so on. These deficiencies have long been recognized and formed part of the popular discourse on the shortcomings of primary education in the state. The governance of primary schools and SSK should be devolved as far as possible to the hands of local communities and they must be freed from bureaucratic and political interference. The success of the government of West Bengal's SSK experiment in providing cost-effective primary education, particularly to the most underprivileged sections of society must be recognized. Similarly, the benefits of all the incentive schemes presently in force in primary schools need to be extended to the children studying in SSKs and these need to be properly administered. The lack of facilities is particularly acute in the SSKs and steps need to be taken to at least bring them in line with primary schools. Some scheme like mid-day meal must become a proper means for providing adequate nutrition to children of all primary education institutions in addition to the encouragement it gives to school attendance. Given that there is a direct correlation between levels of nutrition and educational achievement, this needs to be implemented on a priority basis. To ensure that free primary education is available to all children a fundamental right granted to them by the Constitution of India there has to be a qualitative improvement in the delivery of primary education.

Jhuma Halder (2016) focused on that the provision of schooling facilities within walking distance is one of the key components of universal elementary education. Schooling facilities do not indicate only set up of schools but also provision of infrastructure in the schools. Even after twelve years of implementation of Sarva Sikhsha Abhiyan (SSA) and five years implementation of Right to Education Act, there are still widespread disparities in terms of both school set-up and infrastructure in primary schools. Location of the school plays a vital role in taking education closer to children in rural areas. However, even today there are many habitations in the study area without a single primary school, despite having a large population. The spatial distribution of schools is found that often two schools are located within one km radius in spite of lower enrolment; often while one school attracts huge enrolment, the other suffers from poor enrolment. The parents prefer schools which have good infrastructural facilities for children. Enrolment has increased manifold indicating parental aspiration to send their children to schools. But supply related variables have lagged behind. This disparity is very prominent in the regions which are geographically backward. Using primary and secondary data, a case study has been carried out to explore the scenario of location of schools, habitation wise distribution of schools, infrastructure of schools and attainment of students in schools. The study finds that attainment of children in schools is very much related to quality of schools.

III. Objectives of Study

- a.** To focus on the district and gender wise population status in west Bengal
- b.** To focus on the district and gender wise Literacy Rate in west Bengal
- c.** To focus on the district wise educational infrastructure in west Bengal
- d.** To focus on the district wise enrolment and drop out ratio in west Bengal

IV. Data and Methodology

This Project report is totally based on secondary data. District hand book of Census report of the year 2011 has been used for the collection of data.

In the methodology, district and gender wise population and education statuses are presented in tabulation form.

V. Analysis

(a) Demographic Features

By demographic features we mean the characteristics of population like, size, composition, diversity, growth and quality of population etc. To have basic understanding of the population problem of a specific country, one should have a complete knowledge regarding the basic features of population of that country. The first main feature of Indian population is its large size and rapid growth. According to 2001 census, the population of India is 102.87 crore. In terms of size, it is the second largest population in the world, next only to China whose population was 127 crores in 2001. India's population was 23.6 crore in 1901 and it increased to 102.7 crore in 2001.

In addition to its size, the rate of growth of population has been alarming since 1951. At present, India's population is growing at a rate of 1.9 percent per annum; 21 million people are added every year which is more than the population of Australia. This situation is called population explosion and this is the result of high birth rate and declining death rate.

Table:1 District and Gender wise Population Status in West Bengal in 2011

District	Numbers		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
North 24 Parganas	5119389	4890392	5.60	5.35
South 24 Parganas	4173778	3988183	4.57	4.36
Bardhaman	3966889	3750674	4.34	4.10
Murshidabad	3627564	3476243	3.97	3.80
West Midnapore	3007885	2905572	3.29	3.18
East Midnapore	2629834	2466041	2.88	2.70
Hooghly	2814653	2704492	3.08	2.96
Nadia	2653768	251382	2.90	2.75
Howrah	2500819	2349210	2.73	2.57
Kolkata	2356766	2139928	2.58	2.34
Maldah	2051541	1937304	2.24	2.12
Bankura	1838095	1758579	2.01	1.92
Birbhum	1790920	1711484	1.96	1.87

North Dinajpur	1551066	1456068	1.69	1.59
South Dinajpur	857199	819077	0.93	0.89
Purulia	1496996	1433119	1.64	1.57
Cooch Behar	1451542	1367544	1.59	1.49
Jalpaiguri	1983064	1889782	2.17	2.07
Darjeeling	937259	909564	1.02	0.99
West Bengal	46809027	42204638	51.19	48.62

Source: Census Report 2011

As per details from census 2011 (Table1), West Bengal has populated by 9.13 crores. Total population of west Bengal is 91,276,115 of which male and female are 46,809,027 and 44,467,088 respectively. In detail we can see highest population status in West Bengal is in North 24 Pargana (Male: 5.60 & Female: 5.35) and the lowest one is Darjeeling (Male: 1.02 & Female: 0.99). Top three areas are North 24 Pargana, South 24 Pargana and Bardhaman.

Table:2 District wise Sex Ratio in West Bengal in 2011

District	Sex ratio
East Midnapur	938
Kolkata	908
North 24 Pargana	955
Haora	939
Hooghly	961
Darjeeling	970
West Midnapur	966
South 24 Pargana	956
Bardhaman	945
Nadia	947
Koch Bihar	942
Jalpaiguri	953
South Dinajpur	956
Birbhum	956
Bankura	957
Murshidabad	958
Purulia	957
Maldah	944
North Dinajpur	
West Bengal	

Source: Census Report 2011

Sex ratio in West Bengal is 950, i.e., for each 1000 male, which is below national average of 940 as per census 2011, the sex ratio of female was 934 per 1000 males in West Bengal. According to the report, Darjeeling (970) has the highest and Kolkata (908) sex ratio in West Bengal.

(b) Education Status

Till recently economists have been considering physical capital as the most important factor determining economic growth and have been recommending that rate of physical capital formation in developing countries must be increased to accelerate the process of economic growth and raise the living standards of the people. But in the last three decades economic research has revealed the importance of education as a crucial factor in economic development. Education refers to the development of human skills and knowledge of the people or labour force.

It is not only the quantitative expansion of educational opportunities but also the qualitative improvement of the type of education which is imparted to the labour force that holds the key to economic development. Because of its significant contribution to economic development, education has been called as human capital and expenditure on education of the people as investment in man or human capital.

Table:3 District and Gender wise Literacy Rate (%) in West Bengal in 2011

District	2011		
	Male	Female	Total
North 24 Parganas	87.61	80.34	84.06
South 24 Parganas	83.35	71.40	77.51
Bardhaman	82.42	69.63	76.21
Murshidabad	69.95	63.09	66.59
West Midnapore	85.26	70.50	78.00
East Midnapore	92.32	81.37	87.02
Hooghly	87.03	76.36	81.80
Nadia	78.75	70.98	74.97
Howrah	86.95	79.43	83.31
Kolkata	88.34	84.06	86.31
Maldah	66.24	56.96	61.73
Bankura	80.05	60.05	70.26
Birbhum	76.92	64.14	70.68
North Dinajpur	65.52	52.17	
South Dinajpur	78.37	67.01	72.82
Purulia	77.86	50.52	64.48
Cooch Behar	80.71	68.49	74.78
Jalpaiguri	79.95	66.23	73.25
Darjeeling	85.61	73.33	79.56
West Bengal	80.69	68.74	

Source: Census Report 2011

Table3 shows that male literacy stands at 80.69 percent while female literacy is at 64.74 percent i.e., there is noticeable gender gap in West Bengal (In 2011, literacy rate) As per the above chart we can say top literate areas are East Midnapore (male-92.32), Kolkata (female-84.06) and the lowest literate area in West Bengal are North Dinajpur (male-65.52), Purulia (female-50.52). If we look at on a total overview highest three literate places are East Midnapore (87.02), Kolkata (86.31) and North 24 Parganas. (84.06) Bottom three areas are Maldah (61.73), Purulia (64.48), Murshidabad (66.59).

Table:4 District wise Total Enrolment at Govt. Schools in West Bengal in 2011

District	Primary	Primary with Upper primary	Primary with Upper Primary sec/higher sec.	Upper Primary Only	Upper Primary with sec./higher sec.
Bankura	303378	605	759	43316	210894
Barddhaman	556004	0	4685	39065	427441
Birbhum	307604	32	720	37170	204993
Dakshin Dinajpur	148252	0	2082	13733	115300
Darjiling	64797	0	4383	12271	32153
Haora	294638	1415	2022	21805	265989
Hugli	341285	3725	20502	21904	287869
Jalpaiguri	349782	203	2091	46187	253078
Koch Bihar	278327	1417	2964	38164	190807
Kolkata	160179	1459	24292	6423	147690
Maldah	398749	612	754	37549	229812
Murshidabad	736785	237	1075	96612	411205
Nadia	371282	290	1370	46404	342603
North Twenty-Four Pargana	543888	1364	11079	39807	512354
Paschim Medinipur	514041	718	5590	57879	361922
Purba Medinipur	383837	987	1213	39230	335115
Puruliya	305736	449	1911	33991	171783
Siliguri	83130	617	3651	7643	66845
South Twenty-Four Pargan	668579	2676	422	44627	479872
Uttar Dinajpur	385042	602	5094	56668	159378

Source: DSE Raw data 2011-12

According to the table4, total of 1.87 crore students enrolled in schools across West Bengal from pre primary to class 12. As per the report the highest enrolment at Govt. schools in West Bengal is in South 24 Pargana and the lowest on is Darjeeling in average.

Table:5 District wise Total Enrolment at Private Schools in West Bengal in 2011

District	Primary	Primary with Upper primary	Primary with Upper Primary sec/high er sec.	Upper Primary Only	Upper Primary with sec./high er sec.
Bankura	12756	1000	208	603	157
Barddhaman	30404	13479	21109	1090	160
Birbhum	6720	495	422	329	0
Dakshin Dinajpur	21989	4704	991	565	85
Darjiling	0	0	0	204	0
Haora	17144	5453	12578	157	529
Hugli	13231	5855	4673	887	3943
Jalpaiguri	53862	19927	16895	1606	647
Koch Bihar	43373	1744	1299	745	352
Kolkata	18444	5439	45352	1152	10399
Maldah	67423	9315	2193	1370	738
Murshidabad	73570	15655	5437	3467	2327
Nadia	26303	1065	2015	1342	0
North Twenty-Four Pargana	128051	11072	31602	7908	26192
Paschim Medinipur	34720	3262	6731	1093	538
Purba Medinipur	33064	3351	3866	878	925
Puruliya	3041	940	987	0	141
Siliguri	39316	7642	6448	168	4721
South Twenty-Four Pargan	62049	9613	4979	2872	1715
Uttar Dinajpur	10037	1590	581	0	0

Source: DSE Raw data 2011-12

Similarly, if we see the enrolment at private schools (Table5) approximately the highest district is North 24 Pargana and the lowest one is Darjeeling. Now, if we compare both Govt. Schools and private schools then we become to know that the enrolment of Govt. school of South 24 Pargana is far better than private schools. And from the both side Darjeeling is the most underrated enrolment area in West Bengal and Private schools has lowest enrolment.

Table:6 District wise Total Enrolment in West Bengal in 2010-11

District	Grade I	Grade II	Grade III	Grade IV	Grade V	Grade VI	Grade VI	Grade VIII
Bankura	90077	78400	76254	79977	74063	67474	62899	57136
Barddhaman	171137	142685	140942	148656	138217	124655	120183	107568
Birbhum	89438	85577	83953	85719	74559	65522	61708	56875
Dakshin Dinajpur	57847	42016	40941	42287	36101	34245	33211	30960

Darjiling	26673	14520	14065	12708	13242	12478	12784	12332
Haora	102476	88984	87121	88003	89378	79031	77225	69523
Hugli	107519	92619	91488	94852	103579	90875	88862	81931
Jalpaiguri	144072	101724	98629	95820	92874	84118	80981	72714
Koch Bihar	105611	81818	76756	74656	73226	66269	61815	55614
Kolkata	68686	56187	55498	56305	61442	57203	57741	56754
Maldah	175617	122103	109504	105996	95386	85644	78552	67672
Murshidabad	244186	208269	204269	194285	175045	156635	139919	124655
Nadia	121137	105553	105869	109153	119174	103895	104708	96296
North Twenty-Four Pargana	152179	138075	141751	147032	161877	144833	145095	136503
Paschim Medinipur	179407	137575	133774	138270	125515	116040	108707	100372
Purba Medinipur	154804	113902	114382	116670	107824	101959	98071	92003
Puruliya	117365	75504	68497	68560	60876	54084	50771	45748
Siliguri	43733	31596	28549	27622	26846	23208	22621	19847
South Twenty-Four Pargan	243401	177384	167391	162086	162348	137864	130728	117376
Uttar Dinajpur	157015	86986	78605	72575	66671	58393	52046	45264

Source: DSE Raw data 2010-11

From Table 6, we can say that the total enrolment in West Bengal is the highest in Murshidabad and due to the chart lowest enrolment is in Darjeeling (2010-2011).

Table:7 District wise Total Enrolment in West Bengal in 2011-12

District	Grade I	Grade II	Grade III	Grade IV	Grade V	Grade VI	Grade VII	Grade VIII
Bankura	88291	74393	74353	77844	74789	66558	63817	58866
Barddhaman	174870	147511	144874	154405	144761	128386	123853	117229
Birbhum	89837	83998	84061	83924	74905	67553	61552	57381
Dakshin Dinajpur	56049	38467	38187	40754	36979	34280	33654	31924
Darjiling	25286	13718	13427	12122	12234	12165	12207	12649
Haora	89017	74600	76494	80839	86679	75701	73153	69043
Hugli	102237	85158	87296	91257	98622	89746	86238	81304
Jalpaiguri	142263	95761	93125	94876	92588	83207	80125	74719
Koch Bihar	103601	75814	73905	72847	71972	62846	60883	55907
Kolkata	62265	49835	50125	49898	55609	51879	52363	52298
Maldah	159503	112313	102986	101569	97206	85570	79426	73210

Murshidabad	234109	203956	198654	204516	178961	153731	144280	127594
Nadia	111092	93151	95761	102193	112298	97508	98455	94626
North Twenty-Four Pargana	191674	169692	175184	186980	178715	160381	155824	150208
Paschim Medinipur	173374	130468	128989	133262	119702	112391	107643	101343
Purba Medinipur	133444	93569	94511	99835	104057	98000	93761	90666
Puruliya	119122	74761	67970	68922	60113	54590	51109	48757
Siliguri	42186	32062	31025	30913	25953	22859	22316	20662
South Twenty-Four Pargan	244043	176344	169407	167486	169871	143207	132978	121230
Uttar Dinajpur	156029	88229	77663	75478	70024	61413	56782	49904

Source: DSE Raw data 2011-12

Table 7 shows the same data for the year 2011-12. In this year, the highest enrolment district is South 24 Pargana and the lowest enrolment district is Darjeeling due to this year.

Now if we compare in these two time periods, we get to know in 2011-12 the total enrolment result of South 24 Pargana is better than 2010-11 because in 2010-11 Murshidabad was top in enrolment but next year this district became second result. But in both year Darjeeling is very low in total enrolment in West Bengal.

Table:8 Dropout Rate of West Bengal 2010-1011

Parameters	Details
Overall dropout rate	6.61%
Dropout rate for boys	7.39%
Dropout rate for girls	5.80%

Source: NITI Ayog 2010-2011

Table8 shows the overall drop out ratio in west Bengal in 2010-11. Here we see that girls' drop out ratio (5.80%) is much lower than boys'(7.3%).

Apart from that, higher education has always been West Bengal's comparative advantage. Whether in the liberal arts, performing arts, or the sciences, men and women of outstanding merit from the state have excelled themselves nationally and internationally. West Bengal has many institutions of higher education of various categories like arts, science, commerce, Technology, Medical, Statistical etc.

Table:9 Types of Universities in West Bengal (2017)

Category	Number of Universities
State-aided Universities	20
State Specialised Universities	6
Deemed University	1
Central Universities and institutes of higher learning	8
Private Universities	9
Total	44

Source: Govt. of West Bengal, 2017

The private expenditure on education is calculated as spending by students in the form of payment and course fees (including tuition fees, examination fees etc.), purchase of books, stationery and uniforms, expenses on conveyance, private coaching etc. Average expenditure (Rs.) per student pursuing general education is shown in figure for rural and urban areas for West Bengal and India. A student on an average spends around Rs 11.5 thousand from his own pocket in an academic session if he/she opts for general education, Rs 12.5 thousand for general education in rural areas and Rs 16.1 thousand in urban areas. It is revealed that private expenses for post graduate studies is less in West Bengal compared to national average both for rural and urban areas.

VI. Conclusion

Our analysis of the situation of Education in West Bengal reveals that the state which was once the foremost one in the country in educational attainment has now been lagging behind the national average in terms of many of the performance indicators. Primary education in West Bengal, as all over the country, suffers from many deficiencies including problems of infrastructure, shortage of schools, shortage of teachers, the financial handicap of parents and so on. There has to be a qualitative improvement in primary education in order to eradicate the practice of private tuition. A great percentage of the population is not privileged enough to carry the expenses of private tuitions. Teachers' dedication, parents' cooperation and proper inspection on part of the government can achieve this.

The gender differential is still persisting in school education. The dropout is higher among girls than boys. But the thing is right that the education must be cater the needs of the learners that can produce the functional literate and enhance the life skills of the learners. The government is responsible for providing education to every child up to the eight standards, free of cost, irrespective of class and gender. It has paved the way for building a strong, literate and empowered youth of this country.

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