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A Study on the Performance of PGI with Reference to West Bengal

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The Ministry of Education created the Performance Grading Index (PGI) to measure the quality of school education in all of India's States and Union Territories. This study looks at PGI reports to find out why performance varies, what strengths and weaknesses there are, and what factors affect differences between states. The PGI framework examines aspects such as learning outcomes, access, infrastructure, equity, teacher availability, and governance. Recent PGI cycles show significant differences between states. Some perform well due to strong governance and robust infrastructure, while others face challenges such as inadequate teacher availability, low learning levels, and limited resources. The study highlights the importance of PGI in encouraging evidence-based reforms, accountability, and transparency. It also identifies patterns, gaps, and opportunities for targeted interventions that can improve education across the country.

This study further examines methods to enhance West Bengal's Performance Grading Index by benchmarking it against higher-performing states in India. PGI evaluates parameters such as access, infrastructure, equity, teacher management, and governance. The study identifies specific strategies for improvement by analysing best practices from other states. These include enhancing teacher professional development, expanding digital and classroom infrastructure, improving early grade learning programs, and implementing data-driven governance. If these changes are implemented, West Bengal's PGI performance can improve significantly, along with the overall quality of education in the state.

Keywords: Performance Grading Index, Learning Outcomes, Infrastructure

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1. Introduction

The quality of School Education imparted in India varies widely across states and UTs, and there are no standardised yardsticks to evaluate and measure the performance of school education, which necessitates the introductions of a comprehensive assessment and evaluation tool for holistic evaluation and grading of school education across the length and breadth of the Nation. To address this long-standing chronic issue, The Ministry of Education launches the PGI's framework to give state/UT s a comprehensive, data-driven tool to assess the quality of school education being imparted and rank states and UTs with reference to school education across 6 domains (Learning Outcomes, Access, Equity, Infrastructure and Facilities, introduction Governance Processes and Teacher Education& Training). PGI also brings to the surface evidence-based data indicating strengths, weaknesses and progress in school education systems in key areas. West Bengal despite having significant progress in some key domains like access ,equity and governance processes, still has a long way to go in other thrust areas like learning outcomes, digital infrastructure and Teacher education and Training compared to other major states like Kerala, Punjab, Tamil Nadu etc.

2. Literature Review

Vidyashankar Gourishankar, Prakash Sai Lokachari (2012). In pursuit of achieving the Education-For-All goals of universal primary education and improving the quality of education, the Indian Government has been providing substantial resources to Indian states. The responsibility of providing access and quality remains the state's responsibility. Pragyan Monalisa Sahoo, Himanshu Sekhar Rout, and Manini Biswal (2025)**,** The Sustainable Development Goals, the Indian Constitution, and policymakers have emphasised the importance of providing elementary education for children aged 6–14 to achieve full literacy. Banalata Saikia (2025)**,** Inter-state disparity among the states is one of the major issues in the Indian economy, especially the Special Category States, which are backward in terms of various development indicators within the regions.

Anurupa Mukherjee and Pravat Kumar Kuri (2025), The Education Development Index (EDI) is a vital metric for assessing regional educational progress by incorporating both access and outcomes in primary education. Indicators representing Spatial density and availability of primary schools per 10000 populations have been given importance as access and enrolment of girls, backward caste children, along with overall enrolment and primary completion rate, have been incorporated in the Education Outcome Index. This study constructs a composite district-wise EDI with the help of factorial analysis for Kerala and West Bengal over the period 2006–2016, using two sub-indices: Access Index and Education Outcome Index. Saikumar Reddy (2023), The Indian Education System is one of the largest in the world with more than 1.5 million schools, 8.5 million teachers and 250 million children from varied socio-economic backgrounds. The system strives to maintain standards and uniformity across the country while giving ample scope for the country's diverse culture and heritage to grow and flourish.

3. Objectives of the Study

Our research objective is to undertake a comparative analysis of the performance of PGI of West Bengal vis-à-vis other major states to find out unaddressed loopholes, explore causes for such differences and prescribe data-centric strategies to improve the situation and enhance the quality of education in West Bengal by reflecting trends and best practices.

4. Research Methodology

The present study is descriptive and exploratory in nature and is based on the secondary sources collected from related websites, case studies, working papers, reputable journals, etc.

5. Performance of PGI with Reference to West Bengal

The West Bengal Government is taking transformative steps to strengthen its education sector through massive investments in both primary and higher education infrastructure. Recognising education as the backbone of socio-economic growth, the government has allocated substantial funds to modernise schools, enhance learning environments, and establish advanced higher education facilities.

1. Focus on Primary Education

- Modern Classrooms: Hundreds of government schools across rural and semi-urban areas are being renovated with modern classrooms, proper sanitation facilities, and clean drinking water.
- Digital Learning: Introduction of smart classrooms with interactive digital boards and e-learning tools to make lessons engaging and future-ready.
- Midday Meal Expansion: Strengthening of the Midday Meal scheme to ensure better nutrition and increased student retention.
- Teacher Training: Comprehensive teacher development programs are being rolled out to equip educators with updated teaching techniques and digital skills.
- School Connectivity: Upgrading school infrastructure in remote areas to reduce dropout rates and ensure every child has access to quality education.

2. Digital Push and Technology Integration

- Launch of online learning platforms for students in rural areas.
- Distribution of free tablets and laptops to students under various state schemes to bridge the digital divide.
- Use of AI-enabled education management systems for better monitoring of schools and colleges.

3. Government's Vision and Impact

According to senior officials, the state's vision is to ensure universal access to quality education and to build West Bengal as a hub of talent and innovation.

4. Expected Impacts

- Increase enrolment rates at both primary and secondary levels.
- Reduce dropouts in rural and underprivileged regions.
- Improve employability through skill-based education and advanced training.
- Boost the state's economy by creating a skilled and educated workforce.

5. Challenges and Recommendations

In recent years, government schools in West Bengal have unfortunately earned infamy due to poor infrastructure management and ill-management systems, lacking the delivery of quality education. In urban areas, students have shifted to private schools for better education.

6. Identified Problems

- High differences in student-teacher ratios.
- Poor lab infrastructure and hygiene deficiency.
- Subpar food and lack of librarians.

7. Recommended Strategies

- Form a committee including stakeholders to empathise with problems and propose effective policy outcomes.
- Increase focus on recruitment opportunities.

Table 1: Different Welfare Schemes available in West Bengal

Sl. No.	Welfare Schemes	Details
1	Kanyashree Prakalpa Scheme	Annual Grant: ₹1,000 per year to girl students aged 13 to 18. One-time Grant: ₹25,000 to girl students aged 18 to 19 who have passed 12th grade or equivalent.
2	Swami Vivekananda Merit Cum Means Scholarship	₹1,000 per month is provided to Class 11 and 12 students.
3	West Bengal Sabooj Sathi Scheme	Free bicycles are provided to students of Classes 9 to 12.
4	West Bengal Aikyashree Scheme	Scholarships provided for school education with the following annual amounts: Class — Day Scholars — Hostellers 1st to 5th — ₹1,100 — - 6th to 10th — ₹5,500 — ₹11,000 11th to 12th — ₹10,200 — ₹11,900 11th-12th (Technical/Vocational) — ₹13,500 — ₹15,200
5	West Bengal Shiksha Shree Scheme	Class — Amount (Per Year) 5th — ₹800 6th — ₹800 7th — ₹800 8th — ₹800 Launched to reduce dropouts among SC/ST students in Classes 5 to 8.
6	West Bengal Taruner Swapno Scheme	Financial assistance of ₹10,000 provided to Class 12 students to purchase a smartphone, tablet, or PC.

Table 2: Data-Centric Strategies for West Bengal's Improvement

Learning Outcomes (Domain 1)	Digital Infrastructure (Domain 3)	Teacher Education & Training (Domain 6)
Enhancing Educational Quality	Modernising Educational Technology	Building Teacher Capacity
Implement competency-based assessments aligned with learning objectives	Launch targeted program for digital classrooms and labs in all secondary schools	Significantly increase funding for in-service training programs
Adopt a portfolio-based assessment to track student progress comprehensively	Promote adoption of digital resources like JADUI PITARA in classrooms	Mandate participation in training focusing on new pedagogical approaches
Integrate experiential and arts-integrated learning in classrooms	Establish science and geography labs with modern equipment	Provide training on digital tools and contemporary teaching methodologies

West Bengal has a strong foundation in Access and Equity, but must urgently address gaps in Learning Outcomes, Digital Infrastructure, and Teacher Training.

6. Key Insights

- Performance of benchmark states (Chandigarh, Delhi, Punjab, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana) provides a clear roadmap.
- Targeted, data-centric policy interventions can drive measurable improvement
- Best practices are replicable and context-adaptable for West Bengal

7. Future Outlook

- By adopting best practices in infrastructure development and teacher professional development, West Bengal can significantly enhance its PGI ranking and the overall quality of school education.
- The path forward is clear. Strategic investments in teacher training, digital infrastructure, and learning outcomes will position West Bengal among India's leading states in school education quality.

8. Conclusion

Since the PGI score of West Bengal is very low and unsatisfactory compared to the other 11 states of the country, and because PGI score is based solely on school education, adequate and concrete efforts should be made on the ground at the school level education in West Bengal, as school education serves as the foundation for higher education, if the base remains shaky, then any structure made over it shall collapse in the long run.

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