

**A Comparative Study of School Facilities Availability in Siliguri  
Subdivision and West Bengal: Secondary Data Analysis**

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***Abstract:** Education is a powerful tool for the economic and social development of a country. For sustained learning, school physical infrastructure plays a crucial role. However, there are variations in the availability of school facilities in different regions. Meanwhile, state averages cannot reflect the actual condition in lower administrative units. Here in this paper, we will analyse the variation in school facilities between the state of West Bengal and its lower administrative unit, Siliguri subdivision. It is seen that, throughout the year, functional girls' and boys' toilet facilities are almost similar in West Bengal as a whole and in the Siliguri subdivision. However, functional electricity shows a moderate similarity, and access to the library and ramp depicts a huge gap between these two. Here, in this paper, we have analysed these differences from the year 2019-20 to 2024-25 with the help of secondary data by using the descriptive research method.*

***Keywords:** Electricity, Library, Ramp, School, Toilet etc.*

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**Introduction**

Education is the driving force behind economic and societal development. In addition to increasing the number of educational institutions, especially in underserved areas, it is also important to ensure basic facilities in schools, such as functional boys' and girls' toilets, functional drinking water, functional electricity, libraries, and ramps. In India, data depicts there are schools which still not equipped with these basic facilities. According to the World

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Bank, a good school infrastructure can lead to economic development by fostering human capital. Girls' enrollment is positively influenced by the separate girls' toilets and availability of adequate safety infrastructure in schools (Herz, B & Sperling, G., 2004). Learning outcomes are also positively related to the school infrastructure (Muralidharan, K & Kremer, M, 2008).

## **Literature Review**

A study done by Duflo, E. (2001), pointed out that school construction positively influences the years of schooling and school enrollment, which generally helps people to earn comparatively higher wages in the future, and it helps to enhance the development of that country. It is seen that sometimes, for the more developed states, the disparities among the different districts persist in school infrastructure (Asadullah, M.N. & Chaudhury, N., 2013). A study done by Mehta, A.C. (2014) states that the average can hide some deprived districts in school infrastructure. Swaminathan et al. (2020) also said the state aggregate cannot show the intra-state variation in school infrastructure. Meanwhile, Shukla, S. & Tiwari, S. (2023) said the state average cannot portray the development of all districts because, even though some districts are not equipped with good school infrastructure, it cannot be seen by the state average performances. Banerjee, S & Chakraborty, T. (2025) stated that if a state is performing well in access to basic facilities in schools, that does not guarantee that every district of this state is performing well. There can be disparities among the different districts of a particular state. The state averages cannot depict these disparities. Patra et al. (2025) stated that state averages hide the block-level disparities in a state. In order to verify access to school infrastructure properly, we need to study the block-level data.

## **Research ap**

It is seen that there is a lot of literature available that describes the inequalities within the state. But there is limited literature available that has taken West Bengal in this matter, nor do they actually take Siliguri subdivision as its lower administrative units, nor do they compare school facilities between West Bengal as a whole and Siliguri subdivision.

## **Significance of this Study**

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School enrollment rates significantly improve with better school infrastructure (Grover, 2023). From the literature, it is proven that the state averages in school infrastructure facilities cannot reveal the inequalities within the state. Within the state, some districts may perform well, while others cannot reach that point. So, it is important to examine how the state average differs from the lower administrative units. Here in this paper, we will analyse how the West Bengal average on school facilities differs from that of the Siliguri subdivision.

## **Methodology**

### **Study area**

West Bengal is an Indian state situated on the eastern side of India. Area-wise, it is the thirteenth largest, and it ranks as the fourth most populous state in India in the 2011 census. According to this census, the literacy rate in West Bengal is 76.26 percent with 76.26 percent of males and 70.54 percent females being literate. Currently, it has 30 districts as compared to 19 districts in the 2011 census. Siliguri subdivision is the major subdivision in the Darjeeling district of West Bengal. According to the 2011 census, the literacy rate of Siliguri subdivision is 73.6 percent. It has four blocks and one municipal corporation area. It is a mixture of both rural and urban areas in the Darjeeling district.

### **Objectives of this Study**

1. To see the school facilities' availability in the Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal as a whole from the year 2019 to 2024.
2. To compare the availability of facilities between the Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal (2019-2024)

### **Data Sources**

This paper entirely relies on secondary data. Data are collected from the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) from the year 2019-20 to 2024-25. Here, the total number of schools combines the government schools, government-aided schools, private and other schools.

### **Methods**

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It is based on the descriptive research method. After collecting the data from the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+), the data are analysed with the help of descriptive methods such as preparing tables and bar graphs.

## Data Analysis

### Number of Schools

The number of schools in both Siliguri Subdivision and West Bengal are presented in the following table 1.

**Table 1: Number of schools**

Area	Year					
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Siliguri subdivision</b>	1139	1110	1110	1119	1092	1194
<b>West Bengal</b>	95755	95135	94744	94402	93865	93635

Source: Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+)

From 2019-20 to 2020-21, the total number of schools in both the Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal demonstrated a decline from 1139 and 95755 to 1110 and 95153, respectively. Then, in 2021-22, this number was the same for the Siliguri subdivision, but it showed a decline to 94744 for West Bengal as a whole. However, in 2022-23, there was a rise in this number to 1119 for the Siliguri subdivision, but the number contracted to 94402 for West Bengal. In the 2023-24, both Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal showed a downward trend to 1092 and 93865, respectively. Meanwhile, in the year 2024-25, data depict an expansion from the previous year to 1194 and contraction to 93635 in Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal, respectively.

### Functional girls' Toilet Facility

Functional girls' toilet facilities are presented in the following table 2 and graphically represented in the bar graph 1.

**Table 2: Functional girls' toilet facility (in percent)**

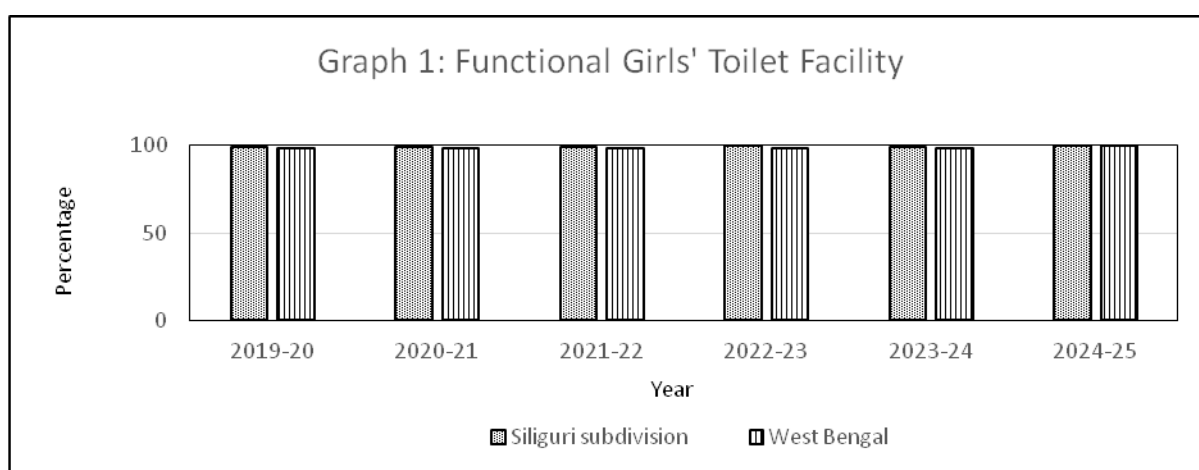
	Year
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Area	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Siliguri subdivision</b>	99.34	99.19	99.29	99.76	99.27	99.91
<b>West Bengal</b>	98.78	98.79	98.81	98.84	98.85	99.64

Source: Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+)

From 2019-20 to 2020-21, the data depicted a fall in the percentage of schools having functional girls' toilet facility from 99.34 percent to 99.19 percent in Siliguri subdivision, but a slight rise in West Bengal from 98.78 percent to 98.79 percent. In 2021-22, data showed a growth to 99.29 percent and 98.81 percent respectively, for Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal. Meanwhile, in 2022-23, this percentage also demonstrated a growth to 99.76 percent



Source: Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+)

and 98.84 percent in Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal, respectively. However, in 2023-24, this percentage depicted a decline to 99.27 percent and increase to 98.85 percent in Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal, respectively. Then, in the 2024-25, data showed a slight upward trend to 99.91 percent and 99.64 percent for Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal, respectively.

### Functional boys' Toilet Facility

Functional boys' toilet facilities are presented in the following table 3 and graphically represented in the bar graph 2.

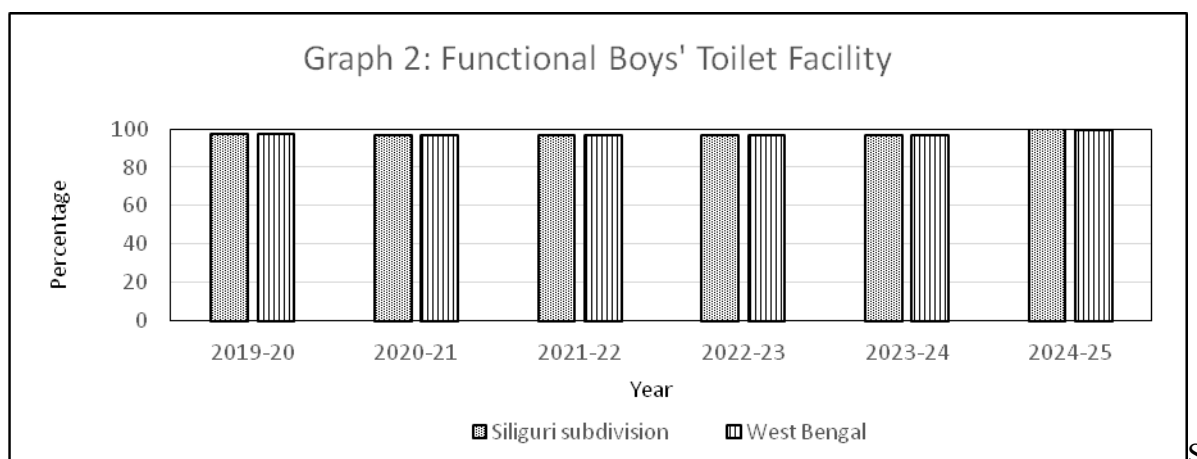
**Table 3: Functional boys' toilet facility (in percent)**

	Year

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Area	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Siliguri subdivision</b>	97.04	96.94	96.95	96.98	96.89	99.81
<b>West Bengal</b>	97.18	96.93	96.93	96.95	96.93	99.53

Source: Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+)



Source: Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+)

It was seen that, from 2019-20 to 2020-21, the percentage of schools having functional boys' toilet facilities demonstrated a decrease to 96.94 percent and 96.93 percent, respectively, in Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal. In the 2021-22, this percentage slightly rose to 96.95 percent in Siliguri subdivision and remained unchanged for West Bengal as a whole. Meanwhile, in 2022-23, both these percentages showed a slight upward trend to 96.98 percent and 96.95 percent, respectively, for Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal. In 2023-24, this percentage change marginally for Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal to 96.89 percent and 96.93 percent respectively. However, in 2024-25, this percentage showed an upward trend to 99.81 percent and 99.53 percent respectively for Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal.

### Schools with Functional Electricity

Schools with functional electricity are presented in the following table 4 and graphically represented in the bar graph 3.

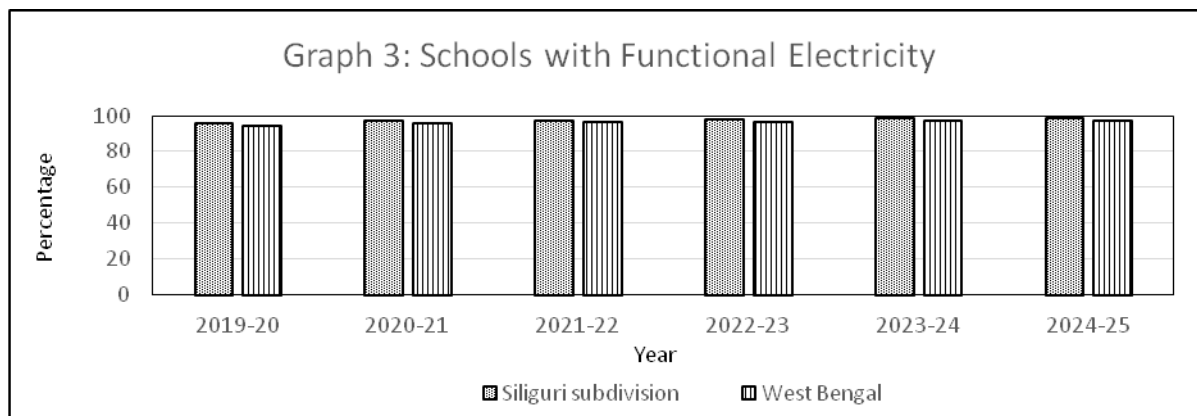
**Table 4: Schools with functional electricity (in percent)**

	Year
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Area	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Siliguri subdivision</b>	95.47	96.94	97	97.5	98.4	98.35
<b>West Bengal</b>	94.6	95.6	96.16	96.56	97.01	97.1

Source: Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+)



Source: Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+)

It is seen that, from the year 2019-20 to 2020-21, the percentage of schools with functional electricity changes from 95.47 percent and 94.6 percent to 96.94 percent and 95.6 percent in Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal, respectively. In 2021-22, this percentage increases marginally to 97 per cent and 96.16 per cent, respectively, in the Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal. However, also in 2022-23, percentage showed an upward trend to 97.5 percent and 96.56 percent respectively, in Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal. Then in 2023-24, this percentage exhibits a slight increase to 98.4 percent and 97.01 percent respectively, in Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal. Meanwhile, in 2024-25, this percentage changes marginally to 98.35 percent and 97.1 percent respectively, for Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal.

### Schools with Library

Schools with library are presented in the following table 5 and graphically represented in the bar graph 4.

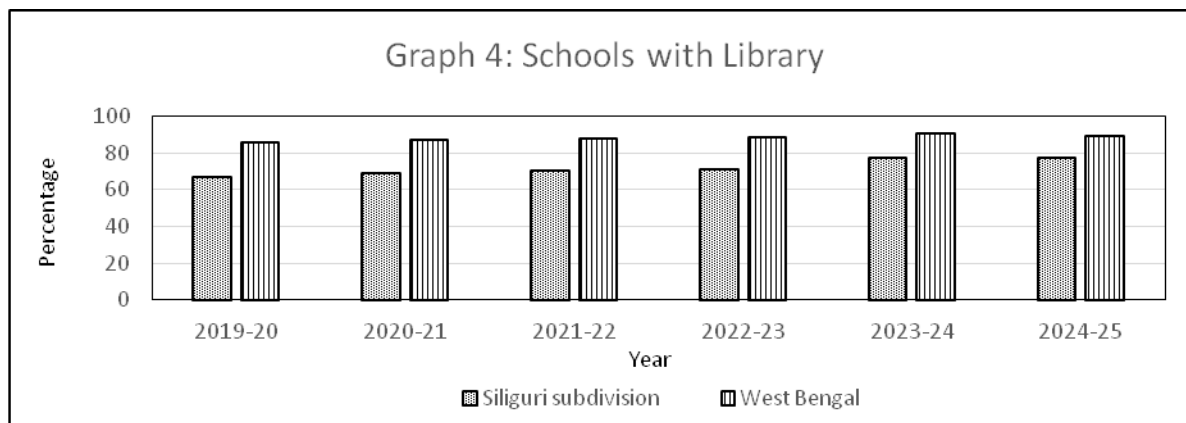
**Table 5: Schools with Library (in percent)**

Area	Year					
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Siliguri subdivision</b>						
<b>West Bengal</b>						

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<b>Siliguri subdivision</b>	66.47	68.8	69.71	70.56	77.28	76.78
<b>West Bengal</b>	85.07	86.6	87.41	87.94	90.24	88.7

Source: Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+)



Source: Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+)

From 2019-20 to 2020-21, the percentage of schools having library showed an upward trend from 66.47 percent and 85.07 percent to 68.8 percent and 86.6 percent for Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal, respectively. Meanwhile, in 2021-22, this percentage increased slightly to 69.71 percent and 87.41 percent respectively, in Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal. However, in 2022-23, this percentage demonstrated a marginal change to 70.56 percent and 87.94 percent respectively, in Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal. Then it is increased to 77.28 percent and 90.24 percent in Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal, respectively. However, in 2024-25, this percentage shows a downward trend to 76.78 percent in Siliguri subdivision and upward trend to 88.7 percent in West Bengal.

### Schools with Ramp

Schools with ramp are presented in the following table 6 and graphically represented in the bar graph 5.

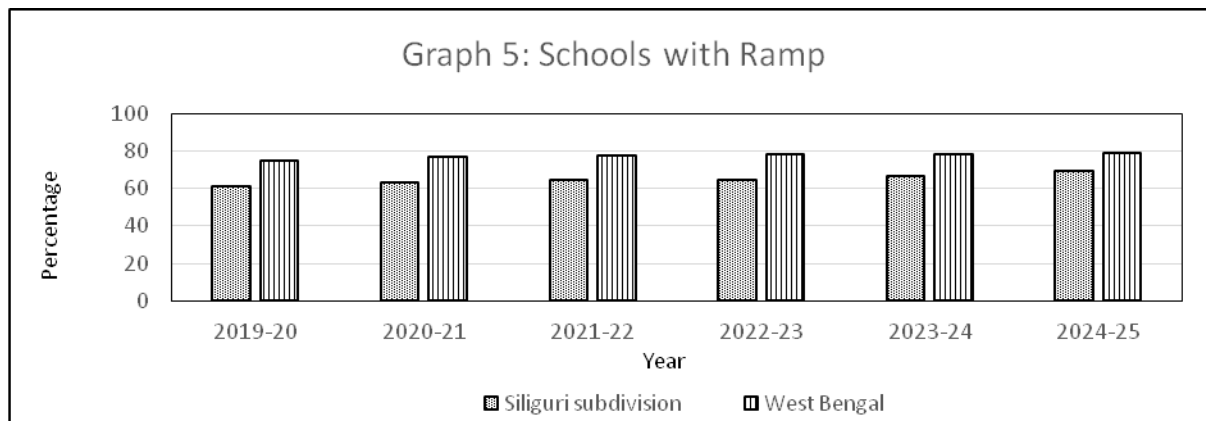
**Table 6: Schools with ramp (in percent)**

Area	Year					
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Siliguri subdivision</b>	60.77	63.3	64.13	64.61	66.21	69.1

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<b>West Bengal</b>	74.85	76.55	77.25	78.02	78.45	78.88
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Source: Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+)



Source: Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+)

It is seen from the data that, from 2019-20 to 2020-21, the percentage of schools with ramps showed an upward trend from 60.77 percent and 74.85 percent to 63.3 percent and 76.55 percent respectively for Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal. Then in the 2021-22, this shifts to 64.13 percent and 77.25 percent respectively for Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal. Meanwhile, in 2022-23, this percentage increased marginally for Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal to 64.61 percent and 78.02 percent respectively. However, in 2023-24, percentage demonstrated a rise to 66.21 percent for Siliguri subdivision and rose marginally to 78.45 percent in West Bengal as a whole. Then in 2024-25, the percentage showed an upward trend to 69.1 percent in Siliguri Subdivision and rose marginally to 78.88 percent in West Bengal.

### Conclusion

It is seen from the data that the number of schools depicted a decline in both Siliguri subdivision and West Bengal from 2019-20 to 2024-25. The functional girls' toilet facility is marginally increased in both West Bengal and in Siliguri subdivision from 2019-20 to 2024-25. Meanwhile, in 2024-25, the percentage of schools with functional girls' toilet facilities is slightly higher in Siliguri subdivision than in West Bengal. The functional boys' toilet facility has improved over the years for both, but in 2024-25, it is higher in the Siliguri subdivision than in West Bengal. Over the years, the percentage of schools with functional electricity has improved for both cases, but in 2024-25, it is seen that Siliguri subdivision is in a better place compared to West Bengal as a whole. In the case of the percentage of schools with a library,

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data showed an upward trend over the years for both cases, but the percentage increase is higher for the Siliguri subdivision than for West Bengal as a whole. But the data depicts, in 2024-25, this percentage is higher for West Bengal than for the Siliguri subdivision. However, the percentage of schools with ramp is increasing in both cases, but it is higher in West Bengal than in the Siliguri subdivision for the year 2024-25. Meanwhile, the percentage increase is higher in Siliguri subdivision than in West Bengal as a whole over the period of 2019-20 to 2024-25.

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