



A STUDY ON IMPACT OF DIGITALIZATION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS ON THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of digitalization and socio-economic status on the academic achievement of secondary school students in the rural areas of Medinipur district, West Bengal. With the growing integration of digital technology in education, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic, rural education systems have faced significant transformations and challenges. While digital tools such as online learning platforms, mobile applications, and virtual classrooms offer opportunities to enhance learning outcomes, their accessibility and effective utilization largely depend on the socio-economic background of students. In this context, the present research aims to explore how digitalization—measured through students' access to digital devices, internet connectivity, and digital literacy—interacts with socio-economic factors like parental income, educational background, and occupational status to influence students' academic performance. Employing a mixed-method approach, the study draws data from a representative sample of secondary school students across various rural blocks in Medinipur district. Statistical tools such as correlation analysis and multiple regression are used to analyze the quantitative data, while qualitative insights are gathered through interviews with teachers and students to understand the ground realities and contextual nuances. The findings reveal that although digitalization has the potential to bridge educational gaps, students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds often face infrastructural and motivational

barriers that hinder their academic growth. Moreover, the digital divide reinforces existing inequalities, with students from higher socio-economic strata reaping more benefits from digital education.

Keywords: Digitalization, Socio-Economic, Academic Achievement, Secondary School

INTRODUCTION

Both the biological and the social perspectives are available when it comes to human existence, which is considered to be the best work of God. Because of education, both the social and biological aspects, which are connected to feeding and reproduction, are preserved and passed down from generation to generation. A person can only improve his intellect and obtain the information necessary to move in the world for his normal existence by being aware of the positive and negative aspects of society if he or she gets this knowledge via education. In point of fact, education is one of the true "life forms" of the people, in the same way as there are some essential and necessary processes of life in a natural sense. Consequently, instruction might be considered a crucial procedure in the field of sociology. The individual would be inadequate for gathering life if they did not receive training, as instruction is fundamental to everyday existence. It is the most essential weapon that may be used to bring about changes in society by removing uniformity and superstitions, as well as by making individuals intelligent and discerning. In order to make the general population of a state or nation competent and socialised, training is the most important piece of equipment. It is also the primary driver of the development of a country through the individual improvement of its constituents.

No nation can make progress in the fields of science and technology, which are the most important prerequisites for the growth of a nation, if they do not have subjects that are taught to them. Throughout the entirety of the educational process, the academic achievement of the pupils is the primary focus. In other words, it is the culmination of the teaching and learning process. Because education is the only tool that can educate national and social characteristics

and liberate folks from false preferences, obliviousness, and portrayals, it is imperative that the importance of training for the development of a nation not be minimised. This is because education is the device that alone can teach these qualities. It is via training that individuals acquire the necessary knowledge, system, expertise, and data. It is beneficial for individuals to make sure that they are aware of their rights and requirements with regard to their families as well as their country. Training broadens their perspective and perspective, incites the spirit of sound challenge, and creates a yearning to advance for the accomplishments of their awareness recovering truth. Along these three lines, training gives them the ability to combat ignorance, shamefulness, debasement, brutality, difference, and communalism, which are the most significant threats to the progress of the nation. Instruction is therefore a means of working up the consciousness of the general people against foul play, violence, and difference, which, in general, has the effect of bringing about misery and savagery.

The process of development is inextricably linked to education. It is hypothesised that education should make it possible for individuals to gain information and skills. In life, it is anticipated that those who possess these attributes would be successful in completing their work and achieving higher occupational standing. As a result, education is considered to be an essential method for the development of human capital, which focusses on the social productivity of a person as well as the economic growth of a community. The people who live in rural areas are seeing a quick transformation in their ways of life and their views as a result of education. As a result, it has emerged as one of the primary drivers of social transformation. As a result, modernisation has occurred. There is a widespread belief that education has the potential to play a significant part in this process of transformation.

Importance of Education

When it comes to the cultivation of human resources, education is an extremely important factor. According to the study that was compiled by the National Education Commission between the years 1964 and 1966, "If this change on a grand scale is to be achieved without violent revolution, there is only one

instrument, and that is education." It is possible that other organisations might be of assistance, and in certain cases, they can even have a more noticeable influence. On the other hand, the only tool that is capable of reaching all of the people is the national education platform. According to John Dewey, "what nutrition and reproduction are to physiological life, education is to social life." Education serves a multitude of purposes, and the aim of education is multifaceted. The Kothari commission's report on Indian education, which was published between 1964 and 1966, states that "in a world based on science and technology, it is the education that determines the level of prosperity, welfare, and security of the individuals: and the amount and number of people leaving our schools and universities will depend upon our achievement in an extraordinary venture of national reproduction whose rule target is to raise the way of life of our kin." Education should be connected to the lives, needs, and ambitions of the people in order for it to be a strong tool of social, economic, and cultural development, according to the Indian Education Commission (1964–1966). At the same time that a strong academic performance may bring about success and joy during the years spent in school, it can also bring about the same rewards in the working world.

Need for Education in India

One of the most significant populations of illiterate people in the world is found in India, and the government is making enormous efforts to guarantee that all individuals between the ages of 15 and 35 are at least literate in a functional sense by the year 2022. According to statements made at the time, it was anticipated that by the year 2000, children between the ages of 8 and 14 who were born on March 1, 1990 would have received primary education through non-formal means to the extent that it was practical. On the issue, there would be a whole different emphasis placed on it. In this context, it is important to emphasise the need of rethinking educational materials and techniques in order to achieve the Minimum Level of Learning (MLL). It is possible that some students would find it repetitive and futile to listen to their professors talk in the same manner on a daily basis. To meet the requirements and expectations

of today's students, teacher education must be refocused and broadened. This is necessary not only to enhance students' knowledge but also to enhance their ability to make effective use of a wide range of contemporary forms of media. The National Professional Education Act of 1986 and its revised version from 1992 are required to place a significant emphasis on the education of teachers.

SECONDARY EDUCATION IN INDIA

When it comes to education, the secondary school level is considered to be the most important stage available. Two objectives are intended to be accomplished by the curriculum of secondary schools: to prepare pupils for upper secondary school, college, and the workforce. In the year 1952, the Central Government appointed Dr. Lakshman Swami Mudaliar to the position of Chairman of the Secondary Education Commission. Significant suggestions were made by the committee with the purpose of enhancing and reorganising secondary education. These suggestions included the diversification of courses to cater to the various aptitudes, interests, and abilities of students. It was agreed by the panel that secondary education should have four goals:-

- Development of democratic citizenship.
- All round development of personality.
- Development of vocational efficiency.
- Development of leadership quality

The report that was published in 1950 by the Commission on Higher Education said that secondary schooling is the sector of our educational system that is the most vulnerable. Secondary education has become the weakest link in the education chain for many nations. This is because these countries are working towards the goal of universal literacy and primary education for all people while simultaneously expanding and improving the quality of their post-secondary education system. It is essential to have an education throughout the secondary school years since this is a time of tremendous change. When

children gain the ability to think abstractly, it becomes simpler for them to comprehend and create information that extends beyond the present instant. By providing pupils with access to national and global economics, secondary school contributes to the cultivation of a citizenry that is both well-informed and well-educated. Secondary school education has a big influence on a child's future because of the education they get during that time.

From the perspective of the child, it will shape and direct them towards a more promising tomorrow. Secondary school education has a more substantial influence on the allocation of income than primary school education does. Education at the secondary level is one of the important linkages that connects the educational system at the lower level to the educational system at the higher level. Many people believe that giving all children the option to attend primary and secondary school is a "effective step of an ongoing process." This is something that should be made available to all children. According to Articles 5-14 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (1966), everyone should be able to receive secondary education in any of its forms, including technical or vocational secondary education, and this education should be made available to them in any way that is legal. This education should be accessible to them in any context. Therefore, secondary education is considered to be an operation that involves several facets. When a person is between the ages of 13 and 16, they are said to be going through the transitional and adolescent years of secondary education. The body goes through fast changes during adolescence, and emotional development and maturation also take place during this time.

During this period of one's life, one will experience the most excitement, trauma, and chaos. As they make the journey from adolescence to adulthood, adolescents are confronted with a variety of psychological challenges. When adolescents are just starting out on their path of self-discovery, they should be continually adapting to new experiences as well as changes in their biological and social environments. It is possible for it to be both overpowering and anxiety-inducing. Emotional, physical, cognitive, and moral development are

all areas that are impacted by these psychological shifts. The individual's personality starts to take shape, and a life path is gradually created, which helps the individual get ready for a variety of tasks. It is essential for both the individual and the community life to have a secondary education in order to be prepared for something. The academic achievement of secondary school students is influenced by a number of different elements. The level of academic success that a student achieves has a significant impact on the long-term goals and objectives that they have. The decisions that students make regarding their future careers, the classes that they will take in college and university, and the schools that they will attend are all made throughout their secondary schooling.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Definition of Academic Achievement

The degree of education that a student has successfully finished and the capacity to achieve success in his studies during the course of the academic year are both components that are included in the definition of academic accomplishment.

Meaning of Academic Achievement or Academic Performance

Academic performance refers to the extent to which a student, professional, or organisation has achieved their short-term or long-term educational goals during the course of their academic career. An individual's academic performance may be measured by their cumulative grade point average as well as their completion of instructional degrees that are comparable to high school and bachelor's degrees. Academic achievement is often evaluated by assessments or continuous evaluations; nevertheless, there is no universal agreement about the most appropriate method of evaluation or the perspective that is widely considered to be the most important. Examples of such perspectives are procedural learning, abilities, or revelations, and, in a broader sense, realities. Therefore, while developing models of faculty achievement, it is necessary to take into consideration the following elements: components, parenthetically, check tension, condition, inspiration, and sentiments.

Furthermore, there are uncertain outcomes about the success of individual aspects in predicting academic performance.

Importance of Academic Performance

The educational process is a means of achieving progress. Educational research is tasked with the goal of identifying the determinants of development from many parts of life, both in the past and in the present, which appear to have led the general life styles in the social, economic, political, and religious sectors, among other spheres. Accomplishment implies achievement in any endeavour. The term "scholastic achievement" refers to the success of a student's performance in the classroom based on their academic performance. This accomplishment is judged by the scores that are assigned to test items in a variety of topics, and the scores that are awarded to these things vary from student to student and from teacher to instructor. There were a variety of test items that were included in the accomplishment test that was created by the instructor. These test items included paper type, short answer, and target type enquiries based on the exercises that were considered by the examples. Both the schedule and the assessment example are same for all of the schools, regardless of the kind of instruction that is being utilised.

The schedule is the same for all of the schools. Alterations are taking place in the organisation, the educational plan, and the instructional approach right now. It is appropriate to seek for data that is both efficient and remarkable on the significant connections that are associated with student achievement. During the process of analysing factors that are associated with academic achievement, it is appropriate to take into account factors that have an impact on academic achievement. These factors include the understudy's financial foundation, knowledge, language, and character. Additionally, it is important to investigate the different examples that may be applicable, including those that pertain to sex and the various courses of investigation in the fields of craftsmanship and sciences. There are a significant number of people who have maintained outstanding academic records and have been retained into career choices that are neither shocking or uncommon, only to discover later that they

are not very excited about what they are doing. When one is so detached from the task that they are performing, it leads to a tremendous sense of disillusionment and sadness. Due to the fact that they are unaware that they can start a new career without any prior preparation, a significant percentage of them have remained permanently employed in jobs that they do not particularly enjoy.

The development of hubris, which is a natural consequence of the process of advancement, is still another way in which excellent academic performance may be detrimental to the personalities of young people. There are, without a doubt, a great number of students who were diligent in their studies and are now achieving remarkable success in their chosen field. The majority of the people who did not have particularly stellar academic records, on the other hand, appear to have made a genuine effort after graduation, pushing beyond their financial means and selecting career paths that are not yet widely recognised and are not as crowded. Despite the fact that education is not the primary means by which one might attain success in the working world, a significant amount of effort is put forth in order to identify, evaluate, monitor, and encourage the development of students in educational institutions. The educational performance of their children is a concern for guardians because they believe that successful outcomes will result in more opportunities for employment and greater job security. Schools, despite the fact that they invest resources into cultivating positive propensities for the same reason, are also frequently impacted by concerns regarding the school's notoriety and the possibility of receiving financial support from government foundations, which can depend on the general scholarly exhibition of the school. They are accused of improving schools, and as a result, they build ways for assessing accomplishment in order to establish plans for development.

State and government branches of instruction get this accusation. To a greater extent than it is done today, academic success was frequently evaluated based on sounds. The majority of the evaluation was comprised solely on statements made by the instructors. A relatively new innovation that is utilised in

conjunction with teacher assessments of pupils is the summing or numerical approach of assessing how well a student is performing. This method is utilised to determine how well a student is functioning. As a result of the significant degree of subjectivity involved, these grading systems were first criticised when they were first implemented in the United States during the late Victorian period. While some teachers placed a higher priority on some parts of learning than others, the problem persisted despite the fact that certain attempts were made to standardise the system in order to make it more equitable. Changes have been made today to accommodate differentiation for the skills of individual pupils, and the investigation of other methods of assessing performance is still underway.

Research Methodology

The purpose of this research was to investigate the relationship between the use of digital technology and the socioeconomic status (SES) of secondary school pupils in the Medinipur district of West Bengal and their level of academic accomplishment. A descriptive survey approach was used in order to collect information about the existing conditions, the views of students, and the actual academic performance patterns that were impacted by the socioeconomic status of the students.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Socio Economic Conditions Of Secondary School Students

The kids' academic success is contingent upon a variety of factors, including their level of interest, the financial situation of their family, the level of education of their parents, the resources available at the school, the environment at home, the teaching techniques, the regular conduct of classes, the quality of the school environment, the peer groups, the surroundings of their houses, and so on. Through the Indian Constitution, the right to education

was guaranteed to each and every person of India. Education is a remedy for all of the social ills that exist in the world.

Gender

Table 1 contains the information that was gathered on the number of pupils attended by each of the eight schools located within the Medinipur district, where they are now enrolled in school.

Table 1 Gender-wise distribution of Ninth Class Students (Sample Respondents)

S. No	Name of the School	Boys (N)	Boys (%)	Girls (N)	Girls (%)	Total (N)	Total (%)
Government Schools							
1	Nandigram Brajamohan Tewary Sikshaniketan, Purba Medinipur	13	6.5	12	6.0	25	12.5
2	Kaliapara Ramkrishna Vidyabhaban, Paschim Medinipur	12	6.0	13	6.5	25	12.5
3	Midnapore Collegiate School, Paschim Medinipur	12	6.0	13	6.5	25	12.5

4	Jhargram Kumud Kumari Institution (KKI), Jhargram	13	6.5	12	6.0	25	12.5
Private Schools							
5	Vidyasagar Shishu Niketan, Midnapore	12	6.0	13	6.5	25	12.5
6	Contai High School, Purba Medinipur	13	6.5	12	6.0	25	12.5
7	St. Agnes Higher Secondary School, Kharagpur	12	6.0	13	6.5	25	12.5
8	The Vivekananda Mission High School, Panskura	13	6.5	12	6.0	25	12.5
TOTAL	100	50%	100	50%	200	100%	

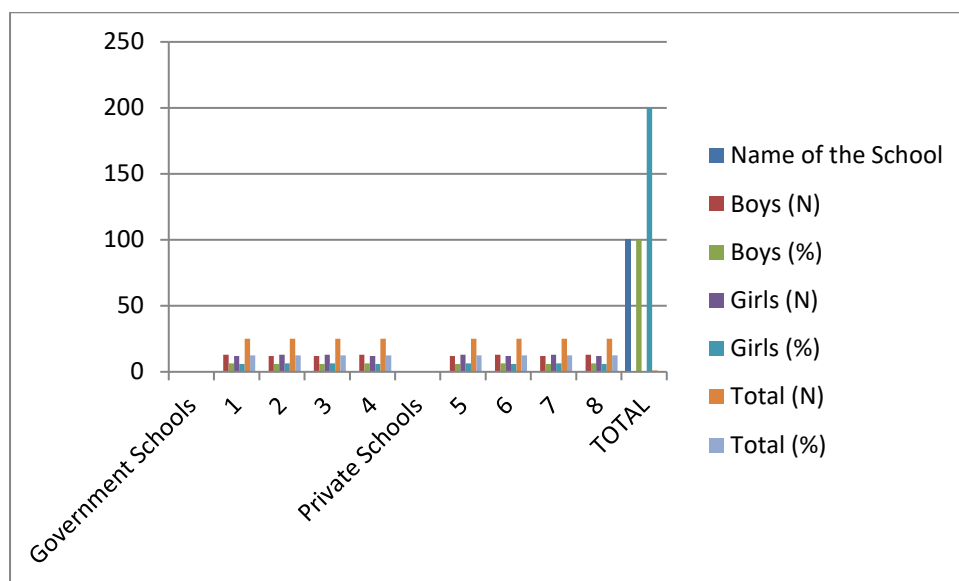


Figure 1 Gender-Wise Distribution Of Ninth Class Students (Sample Respondents)

The findings of the analysis of the data indicate that socio-economic status (SES) has a substantial influence on the academic performance of secondary school pupils in the Medinipur area. On the basis of academic performance, students belonging to the high SES group (mean = 9.20, standard deviation = 0.50) did better than students belonging to the medium SES group (mean = 8.40, standard deviation = 0.62) and students belonging to the low SES group (mean = 6.90, standard deviation = 1.31). It may be concluded that the disparities in academic performance across the different socioeconomic status groups are not the result of random chance, since the F-value that was obtained was 5.666, which is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This shows that kids who originate from socioeconomic situations that are higher likely have greater access to resources, such as digital tools, excellent instruction, and supportive settings, which contribute to the superior academic performance that these students achieve. The findings highlight how important it is to address socio-economic inequality in order to guarantee that all kids have equal access to educational opportunities.

Management

A distribution of the responders according to their management has been elicited and is provided in Table 2.

Table 2 Management-wise distribution of Ninth Class Students (Sample Respondents)

S. No	Management	Boys	%	Girls	%	Total	%
1	Government	50	25%	50	25%	100	50%
2	Private	50	25%	50	25%	100	50%
	Total	100	50%	100	50%	200	100%

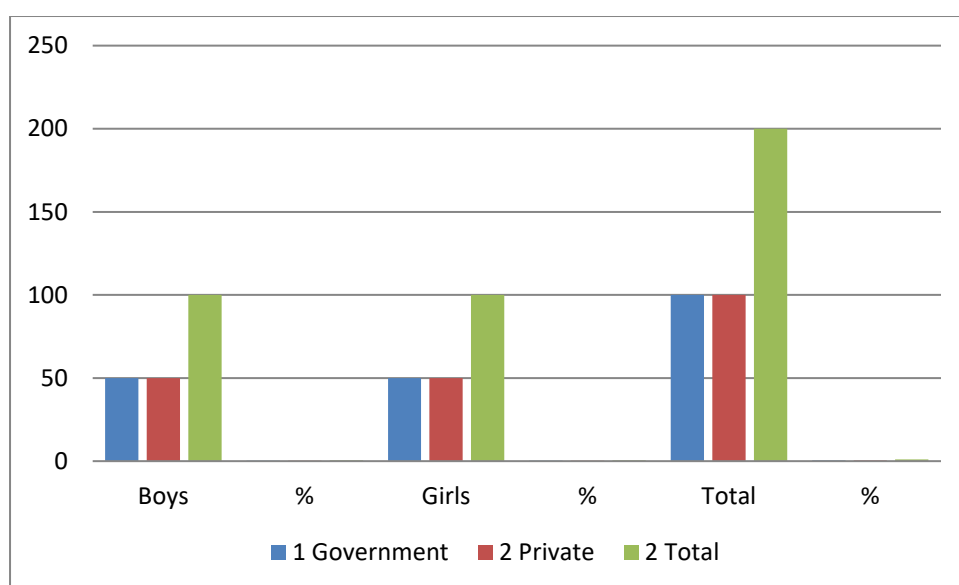


Figure 2 Management-Wise Distribution Of Ninth Class Students (Sample Respondents)

Based on the sample size of 200 respondents, the table that is shown above displays the management-wise distribution of pupils who are enrolled in the tenth grade. The data demonstrates that kids attending private schools and those attending public schools are equally represented. To be more specific, fifty boys and fifty girls, accounting for a total of one hundred students, attended public schools, whereas the same number of students attended private

schools, equalling fifty males and fifty girls. since of this equal distribution, which is fifty percent for each, the sample is suited for comparison study across different types of institutions since it assures fair representation in terms of the type of school administration and gender.

Area

The distribution of the respondents according to their respective areas has been gathered and is displayed in Table 3 respectively.

Table 3 Area-wise Distribution of Ninth Class Students (Sample Respondents)

S. No	Area	Boys	%	Girls	%	Total	%
1	Urban	50	25%	50	25%	100	50%
2	Rural	50	25%	50	25%	100	50%
	Total	100	50%	100	50%	200	100%

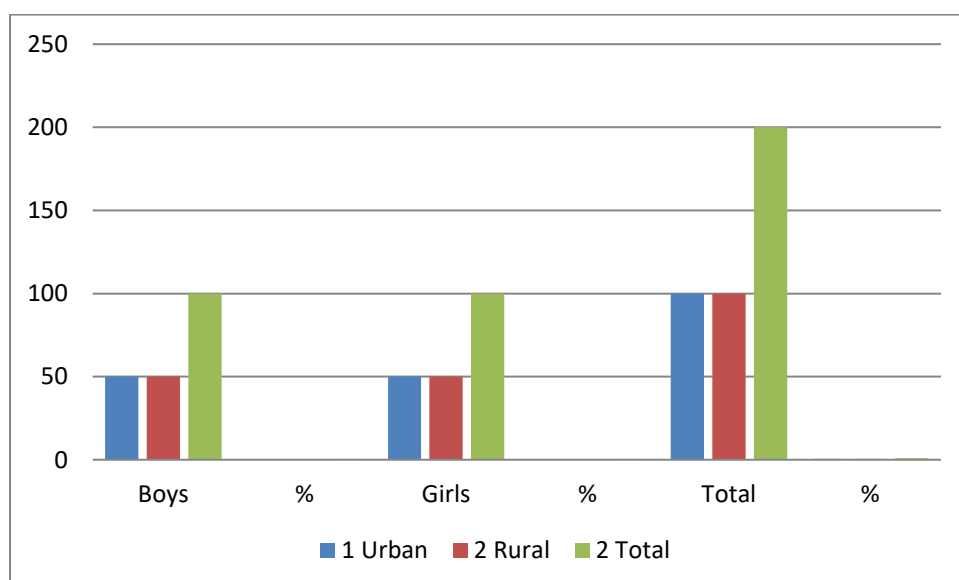


Figure 3 Area-Wise Distribution Of Ninth Class Students (Sample Respondents)

The following table is an illustration of the area-wise distribution of pupils in the tenth grade, based on a sample of two hundred respondents. The sample is spread out evenly across urban and rural regions, with each region providing 100 pupils, which is fifty percent of the total. In addition, there is an equal representation of males and females in both the urban and rural categories, with fifty boys and fifty girls in each category. It is possible to examine the impact of geographical location on students' academic and social aspects by using this balanced distribution by region and gender, which offers a solid framework for these investigations.

Caste:

Table 4 contains the results of the survey that was conducted to determine the respondents' castes and then presents those results.

Table 4 Caste-wise distribution of Ninth class students (Sample respondents)

S. No	Caste	Boys (N)	Boys (%)	Girls (N)	Girls (%)	Total (N)	Total (%)
1	SC	18	18%	15	15%	33	16.5%
2	ST	4	4%	6	6%	10	5%
3	BC	55	55%	48	48%	103	51.5%
4	OC	23	23%	31	31%	54	27%
TOTAL		100	50%	100	50%	200	100%

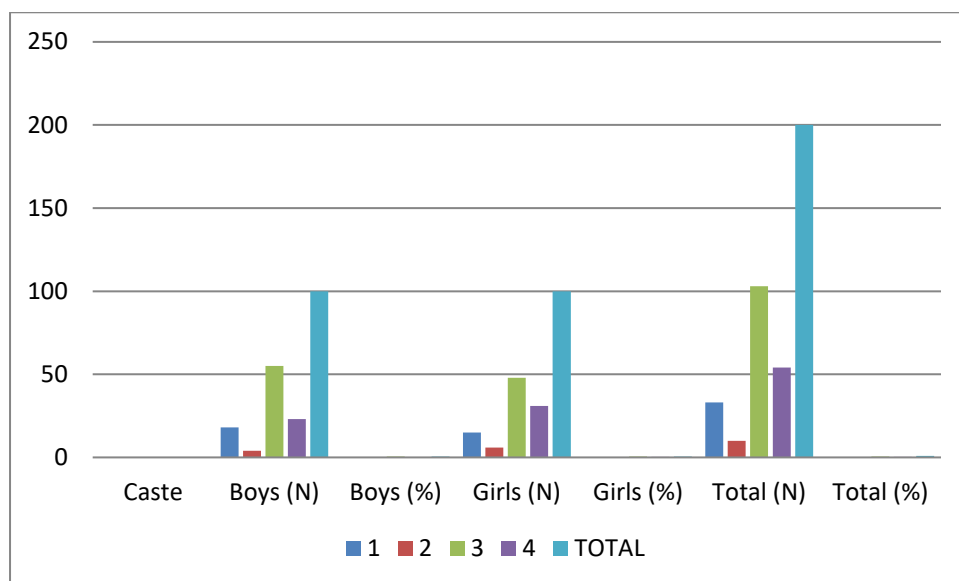


Figure 4 The Distribution of Students in the Ninth Class According to Their Caste (Sample Respondents)

A wide representation of pupils from a variety of social groups is revealed by the caste-wise distribution of the kids in the ninth class who were included in the sample of 200. Backward Classes (BC) make up the biggest sector of the male population, accounting for 55% of the total (55 students). Other Castes (OC) make up 23% of the total (23 students), Scheduled Castes (SC) make up 18% of the total (18 students), and Scheduled Tribes (ST) make up 4% of the total as well (four students). Likewise, among the female students, the majority is comprised of BC students, who make up 48% (48 students), followed by OC students, who make up 31% (31 students), SC students, who make up 15% (15 students), and ST students, who make up 6% (6 students).

SC students make up the bulk of the whole sample, accounting for 51.5% (103 students), while OC students make up 27% (54 students), SC students represent 16.5% (33 students), and ST students make up the smallest group, accounting for just 5% (10 students). Based on this distribution, it can be deduced that the BC category has the most significant presence in the student population of the ninth class within the sample. Furthermore, the gender representation of all caste groups is generally balanced. A minor presence of students from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds is also shown in the data, which

highlights the necessity of inclusive educational policies that guarantee equitable access and assistance for all socioeconomic categories.

Conclusion

A study with the title "A Study on the Impact of Digitalisation and Socio-Economic Status on the Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in Rural Areas of Medinipur District, West Bengal" was conducted with the primary objective of determining the extent to which the use of digital tools and the presence of socio-economic factors have an impact on the academic outcomes of students who are enrolled in rural government and private schools. In particular, the inquiry was based on the rising role of socio-economic justice and digital literacy in affecting educational results, particularly within areas that are disadvantaged and rural. Understanding the ways in which children in rural areas are impacted by the digital economy and knowledge-based society is becoming increasingly important for the creation of educational policies and the implementation of educational programs as India continues its transition into these two types of societies.

Several significant realisations were uncovered during the investigation. To begin, it was discovered that the use of digital technology had a substantial influence on the academic performance of kids. This was accomplished by doing factor analysis and regression modelling, which led to the identification of two significant aspects of digitalisation: digital learning engagement and digital performance result. Both of these dimensions were statistically significant in predicting the academic achievement of students, with performance-related digital use exhibiting somewhat stronger predictive ability than the other variable. Consequently, this highlights the need of not just providing students with digital tools but also ensuring that these technologies are effectively incorporated into learning practices that promote goals that are based on the curriculum.

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