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## **A Comparative Study of Private and Government Schools in Terms of Quality of Education in Murshidabad District (West Bengal)**

**Abstract :** Education is widely recognized as the cornerstone of socio-economic development and human empowerment. In India, the coexistence of private and government schooling systems has created a dual structure that significantly influences educational quality, access, and outcomes. The present study undertakes a comprehensive comparative analysis of private and government schools in Murshidabad district, West Bengal, focusing on key dimensions such as infrastructure, teaching-learning processes, academic achievement, teacher effectiveness, and parental perception. Using a descriptive survey method, data were collected from students, teachers, and parents across selected schools. The findings reveal that private schools tend to outperform government schools in terms of infrastructure, classroom environment, and perceived academic outcomes. However, government schools remain crucial in ensuring equitable access to education, particularly for socio-economically disadvantaged groups. The study highlights the need for systemic reforms in public education to bridge the quality gap while preserving inclusivity.

**Keywords :** Quality Education, Private Schools, Government Schools, Murshidabad, Educational Inequality, Learning Outcomes.

**1. Introduction :** Education is a fundamental human

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right and a key driver of national development. In the Indian context, the education system is characterized by diversity and disparity, particularly between private and government schools. While government schools are funded and managed by the state, private schools are operated by individuals or organizations and often charge fees. This dual system has led to variations in quality, accessibility, and learning outcomes.

Murshidabad district of West Bengal presents a unique case for studying these disparities. Being one of the economically backward districts, it has a high dependence on government schooling. However, in recent years, there has been a noticeable shift toward private schools due to perceived better quality of education.

The growing preference for private schools raises important questions regarding the effectiveness of government education and the factors influencing educational quality. This study aims to explore these dimensions through a systematic comparison.

**2. Review of Literature :** Several studies have examined the differences between private and government schools in India and beyond.

Das (2013) highlighted the emergence of a parallel education system in Murshidabad, where private tutoring and private schools supplement government education. The study pointed out issues such as overcrowding and lack of infrastructure in public schools.

Borah (2023) found that private school students tend to perform better academically than their counterparts in government schools, attributing this to better teaching methods and learning environments.

Kingdon (1996) emphasized that private schools often demonstrate higher efficiency due to accountability and competition, though this advantage is sometimes influenced by socio-economic factors.

Tooley (2009) argued that low-cost private schools in developing countries provide better learning outcomes despite limited resources, mainly due to teacher accountability and parental involvement.

However, other scholars have cautioned that private school advantages may be overstated, as students often come from more privileged backgrounds, which significantly affects performance.

### **3. Objectives of the Study :**

1. To compare the infrastructure of private and government schools
2. To analyze the teaching-learning processes in both systems
3. To examine student academic achievement
4. To study teacher effectiveness and accountability
5. To understand parental perception regarding school quality
6. To identify challenges faced by both types of schools

### **4. Hypotheses of the Study :**

H1: There is a significant difference in infrastructure between private and government schools.

H2: Private schools demonstrate more effective teaching-learning processes than government schools.

H3: Students in private schools show higher academic achievement than those in government schools.

H4: Parental satisfaction is higher for private schools compared to government schools.

## **5. Methodology :**

**5.1 Research Design :** The study adopts a descriptive and comparative research design.

### **5.2 Sample :**

- 5 Government Schools
- 5 Private Schools
- 100 Students
- 20 Teachers
- 50 Parents

**5.3 Sampling Technique :** Simple random sampling method was used.

### **5.4 Tools and Techniques :**

- Questionnaire (Students, Teachers, Parents)
- Observation Schedule
- Interview Method

**5.5 Data Analysis :** Data were analyzed using percentage analysis and comparative interpretation.

**6. Conceptual Framework of Quality Education :** Quality education is a multi-dimensional concept that includes:

- Infrastructure and facilities
- Teaching-learning effectiveness
- Curriculum delivery
- Student engagement
- Learning outcomes
- Inclusivity and equity

## **7. Data Analysis and Interpretation :**

**7.1 Infrastructure Comparison :** Private schools were found to have better infrastructure including smart classrooms, libraries, and laboratories. Government schools often lacked maintenance and modern facilities.

**7.2 Teaching-Learning Process :** Private schools emphasized interactive and activity-based learning, while government schools relied more on traditional lecture methods.

**7.3 Academic Achievement :** Private school students showed better examination results and higher participation in competitive exams.

**7.4 Teacher Effectiveness :** Government school teachers were academically qualified but lacked motivation in some cases due to job security. Private school teachers were more accountable but sometimes less qualified.

**7.5 Parental Perception :** Parents preferred private schools due to English-medium instruction, discipline, and better communication.

**8. Discussion :** The findings reveal that the perceived superiority of private schools is influenced by multiple factors, including socio-economic background and access to resources. While private schools excel in certain areas, government schools play a critical role in ensuring universal education.

**9. Major Findings :**

- Private schools have better infrastructure
- Government schools ensure accessibility
- Teaching methods differ significantly
- Academic performance is higher in private schools
- Parental preference favors private schools

**10. Educational Implications :**

- Need for policy reforms in public education
- Importance of teacher training
- Integration of technology in classrooms
- Focus on equity and inclusivity

**11. Suggestions :**

1. Improve infrastructure in government schools
2. Provide regular teacher training
3. Introduce digital learning tools
4. Strengthen monitoring systems
5. Encourage community participation

**12. Conclusion :** The study concludes that both private and government schools have their strengths and limitations. While private schools offer better facilities and outcomes, government schools remain essential for inclusive education. Bridging the gap between these systems is crucial for achieving educational equity and excellence.

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