



## A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON IMPLEMENTATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF SHISHU SHIKSHA KARMASUCHI AND MADHYAMIK SHIKSHA KARMASUCHI IN WEST BENGAL

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**Paper Received On:** 25 SEPT 2021

**Peer Reviewed On:** 30 SEPT 2021

**Published On:** 1 OCT 2021

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### *Abstract*

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*The Shishu Shiksha Karmasuchi (SSK) and Madhyamik Shiksha Karmasuchi (MSK) initiatives in West Bengal has been instrumental in advancing the goal of universal primary education, particularly in underprivileged and remote areas. The SSK & MSK programs were established to provide accessible, quality education to children in habitations lacking formal schools. The SSK was for the primary section from class I to Class IV and MSK is for students belongs to the Upper primary section from class V to VII level. Through community involvement and localized educational strategies, the program has effectively increased enrollment rates, reduced dropout rates, and bridged educational gaps among marginalized populations. The study highlights the development of Shishu Shiksha Kendras (SSK) and Madhyamik Shiksha Kendras (MSK) in West Bengal, revealing significant infrastructural disparities between districts.*

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**Keywords:** SSK, MSK, Universal Primary Education, Primary Education, Upper Primary education.

### **Introduction:**

Education plays an important role in eradicating poverty and fostering shared wealth is education, which also has a positive impact on gender equality, health, peace, and stability. At developmental stage a learner goes through the changes in physical, social and emotional development on the other hand they also move to the cognitive stage of development at that stage they have more family responsibilities like take care of the elder siblings in the family, engaged in earning money etc. Girl children are been forced to assist mother in house and

child marriage is also found in many cases. After independence, both the Central and State Governments have made significant efforts to expand primary and non-formal education to achieve the goal of universalizing elementary education. The Constitution (86<sup>th</sup> Amendment) Act 2002, enacted in 2002 seeks to make a free and compulsory education a fundamental right to all children in the age group 6-14. Since independence, the Central and State Govt. have put their great effort for expanding the provision of primary and non-formal education to set the goal of universalization of elementary Education. According to Article 45, the state must make an effort to provide all children free, compulsory education until they turn 14 years old. The issue of "out of school" children is a complex and multifaceted one, reflecting a diverse range of circumstances and challenges faced by different groups. These children may come from remote areas without nearby schools, be engaged in various forms of labour, or face socio-economic challenges that hinder their access to education. The provision of educational facilities in areas lacking formal schools is crucial to addressing this problem. In 1993, the Sixth All India Educational Survey revealed a significant gap in access to primary education, with 1.8 lakh habitations across India without primary schools. Over the subsequent six years, concerted efforts were made to bridge this gap through the establishment of new primary schools and alternative educational institutions. Initiatives like the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) and state-specific programs such as the Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) in Madhya Pradesh, Rajiv Gandhi Swarna Jayanti Pathshalas in Rajasthan, Shishu Shiksha Karmasuchi in West Bengal, and Community/Maabadi Schools in Andhra Pradesh played a pivotal role in expanding educational access. Despite these efforts, there remain areas that still lack adequate schooling facilities. Ensuring that the remaining habitations without schools receive necessary educational provisions is an urgent priority to ensure that all children, regardless of their circumstances, have access to quality education. This comprehensive approach is essential for addressing the heterogeneity among out-of-school children and ensuring that educational opportunities are accessible to all segments of society.

#### **Implementation of SSK and MSK:**

The Paschim Banga Rajya Shishu Shiksha Mission has indeed become a household name in West Bengal due to its comprehensive approach towards the

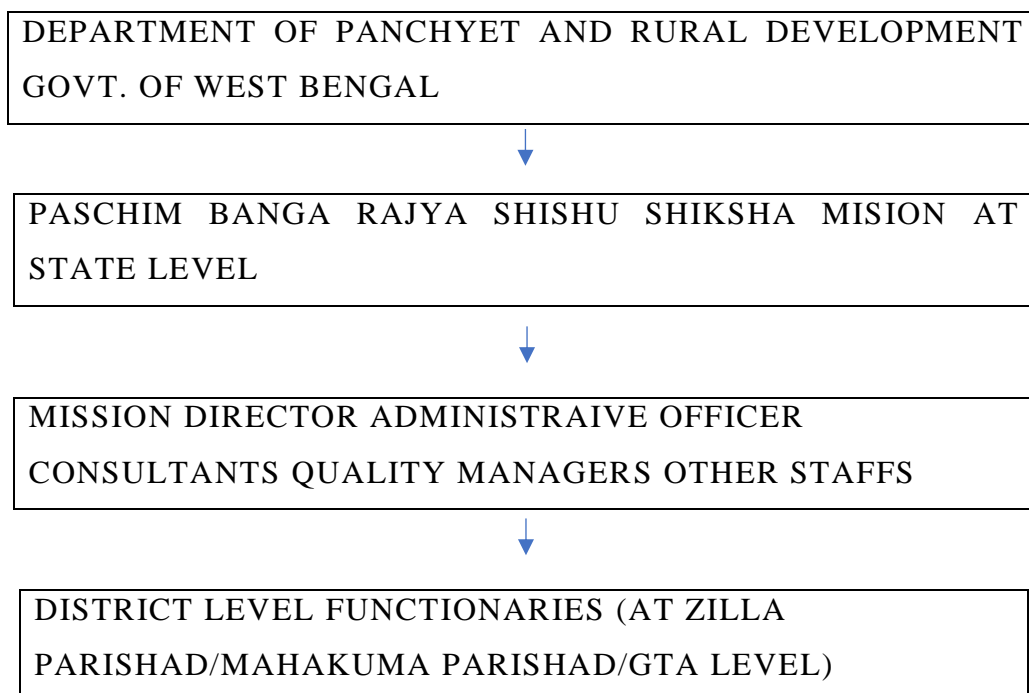
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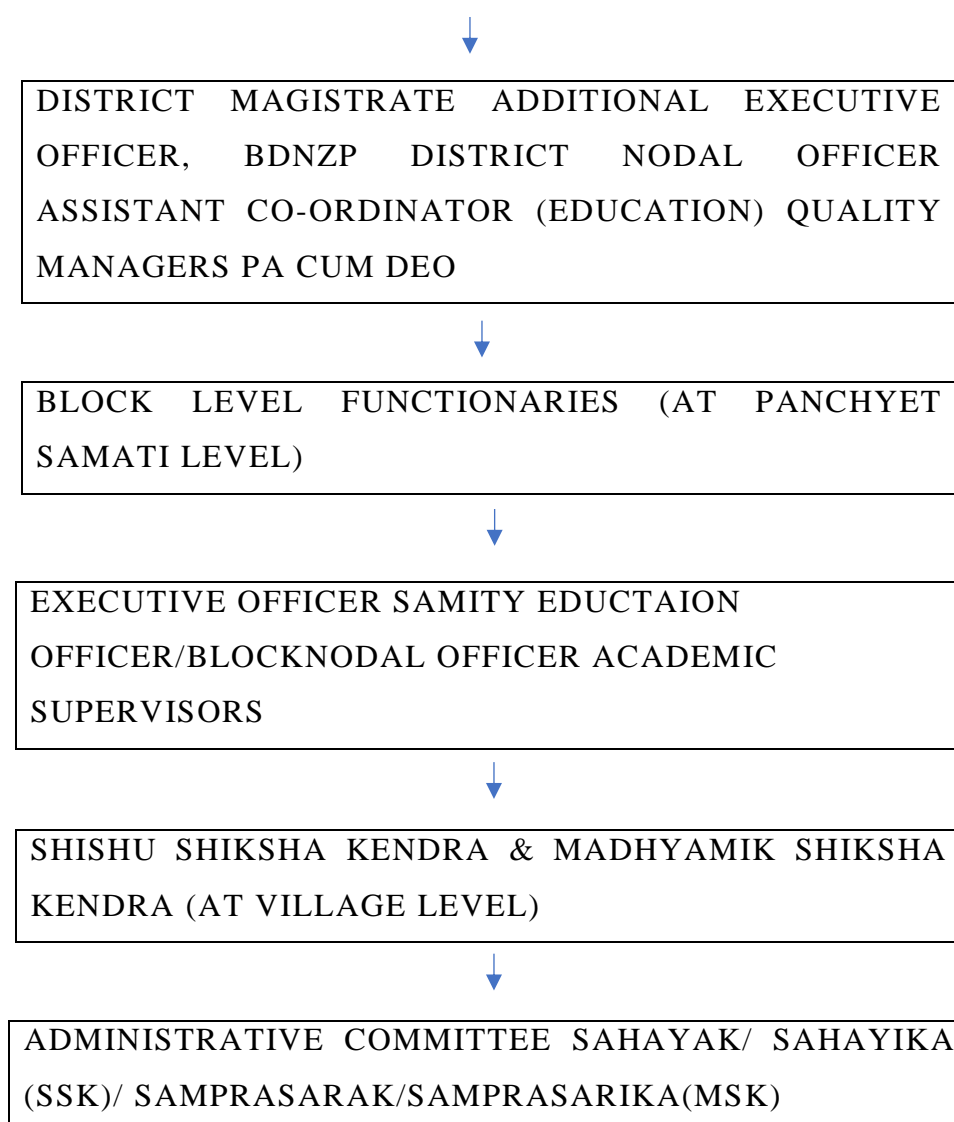
universalization of elementary education in the state. This mission has played a crucial role in expanding access to education, particularly in underserved and marginalized communities. The mission's success can be attributed to its all-encompassing strategy, which includes setting up alternative schools and community-based educational programs that cater to children who are otherwise excluded from the formal education system. These initiatives have been instrumental in reaching out to children in remote areas, those engaged in labor, and those belonging to socio-economically disadvantaged groups. The focus of the Paschim Banga Rajya Shishu Shiksha Mission on inclusivity, community involvement, and localized educational solutions has significantly contributed to the broader goal of achieving universal elementary education in West Bengal. Its impact is evident in the increased enrollment rates, reduction in dropout rates, and the overall improvement in educational outcomes across the state. By addressing the unique challenges faced by different communities and ensuring that educational facilities are accessible to all, the mission has established itself as a pivotal force in the state's educational landscape. Shishu Shiksha Karmasuchi was initially launched by Paschim banga Rajya Shishu Shiksha mission under the panchayet and rural development department for class I to IV. In 1997 panchayet and rural development department planned to open 1000 child education centre but after two years in 1999 the panchayet and rural development department govt of West Bengal formed Paschim banga Rajya Shishu Shiksha Mission under the society registration act 1961(Registration No.S/96500 of 1999-2000).To look after the child education centers the programmed named Shishu Shiksha Karmasuchi has been implemented. After implementation of SSK still there were a large number of children unable to attend secondary education and a demand from community also rose to open upper primary schools like SSK model. Keeping all in mind Govt. of West Bengal in 2001 decide to set up community managed secondary education programmed to provide access to elementary education. in 2003 programmed named Madhyamik Shiksha Karmasuchi under the supervision of P&RD department implemented. The centers opened under Shishu Shiksha Karmasuchi named Shishu Shiksha Kendras and the centers opened under Madhyamik Shiksha Karmasuchi named Madhyamik Shiksha Kendras.

### Organizational structure of the Scheme:

The organizational structure of the Paschim Banga Rajya Shishu Shiksha Mission under the Department of Panchayat and Rural Development, Government of West Bengal, is designed to ensure effective implementation and management of educational programs across the state. At the state level, the Mission Director leads the mission, supported by an Administrative Officer, Consultants, Quality Managers, and other staff, ensuring that the mission's objectives are met. Moving down to the district level, the District Magistrate, along with an Additional Executive Officer, District Nodal Officer, Assistant Coordinator (Education), Quality Managers, and other support staff, oversees the mission's activities within each district. At the block level, Executive Officers and Education Officers coordinate the mission's efforts at the Panchayat Samiti level, assisted by Academic Supervisors who ensure that educational standards are maintained. Finally, at the village level, the Shishu Shiksha Kendras (SSKs) and Madhyamik Shiksha Kendras (MSKs) are managed by local Administrative Committees, with Sahayaks/Sahayikas and Samprasarak/Samprasarikas providing education directly to students. This multi-tiered structure allows for a comprehensive approach to delivering quality education, from the state headquarters to the grassroots level.

### Organization chart:

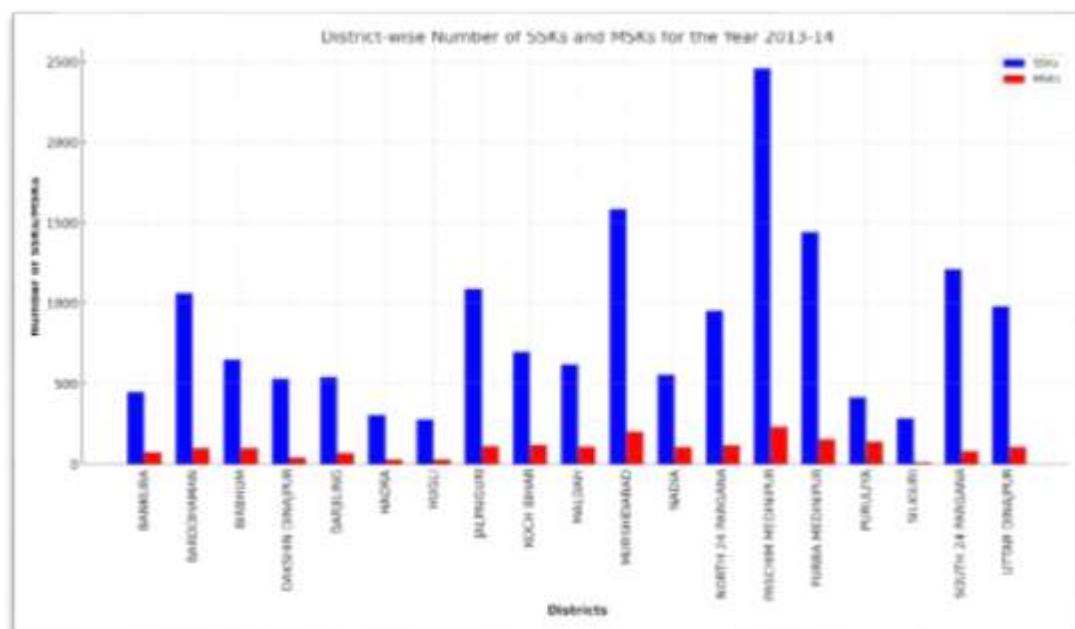




**Distribution of Shishu Shiksha Kendras (SSKs) and Madhyamik Shiksha Kendras (MSKs) across various districts for the year 2013-14.**

Paschim Medinipur emerges as the district with the highest number of both SSKs and MSKs, boasting 2,459 SSKs supported by 6,373 Sahayikas/Sahayaks, and 232 MSKs with 1,173 Sahayikas/Sahayaks. Following closely are Murshidabad and Purba Medinipur, with Murshidabad hosting 1,584 SSKs and 5,645 Sahayikas/Sahayaks, and Purba Medinipur accommodating 1,442 SSKs with 3,961 Sahayikas/Sahayaks. These districts not only have a substantial number of educational centers but also a significant support staff presence. On the other hand, districts like Puruliya, Siliguri, and Haora display much lower figures, indicating a disparity in the distribution of educational resources across the state. This

visualization underscores the concentration of educational facilities in certain districts.



Source: Panchayet and Rural Development Department, Government of West Bengal.

**Table: 1 Infrastructure of SSK for the year 2014-2015**

District	Classroom Status					Building Status							No. of school having			
	Number of Class room	No. of 1 room SSKs	No. of 2 rooms SSKs	No. of 3 rooms SSKs	No. of $\geq 4$ rooms SSKs	Private	Rented	Government	Rent Free Building	No Building	Dilapidated	Under Construction	Boys Toilet	Girl Toilet	No water	Water
ALIPURDUAR	1220	4	313	131	48	0	8	484	3	0	0	1	272	284	25	471
BANKURA	1024	37	288	77	45	0	1	444	1	0	0	1	394	411	0	447
BARDDHAMAN	2998	138	309	260	356	93	3	956	10	0	0	1	629	407	0	1063
BIRBHUM	1690	70	255	203	118	0	4	635	7	3	0	1	525	602	22	628
DAKSHIN DINAJPUR	1226	89	241	142	55	7	0	519	1	0	0	0	499	516	0	527
DARJILING	1231	179	165	52	139	154	53	221	84	1	26	1	87	76	206	334
HAORA	795	74	87	47	98	3	12	254	34	0	0	3	135	261	4	302
HUGLI	633	80	100	44	53	2	4	267	4	0	0	0	252	277	0	277

JALPAIGURI	140 3	76	290	168	59	0	6	576	10	0	1	0	272	329	30	563
KOCH BIHAR	161 1	133	313	179	73	28	1	667	1	0	0	1	440	573	0	698
MALDAH	125 8	215	192	107	81	7	5	582	12	2	0	10	581	504	8	610
MURSHIDABAD	375 5	143	637	267	376	11	6	128 8	12 2	13 8	0	19	127 3	126 0	0	158 4
NADIA	143 8	96	194	140	125	43	13	479	15	0	5	0	542	534	0	555
NORTH 24 PARGANAS	282 5	137	264	144	398	12	3	837	94	3	0	5	787	552	9	945
PASCHIM MEDINIPUR	520 4	694	956	461	294	13 3	10	224 7	23	18	0	28	103 0	878	0	245 9
PURBA MEDINIPUR	319 1	449	509	250	233	37	8	130 9	77	0	0	10	123 6	127 8	30	141 1
PURULIYA	719	122	197	46	16	4	5	371	8	17	0	10	107	133	14	401
SILIGURI	589	94	104	55	30	5	1	278	0	0	0	1	29	126	10	275
SOUTH 24 PARGANAS	304 3	432	251	146	383	27	5	113 5	25	0	1	19	572	646	81	113 1
UTTAR DINAJPUR	248 9	206	339	226	208	4	2	939	23	0	0	11	686	196	2	977
<b>Total</b>	383 42	346 8	600 4	314 5	318 8	57 0	15 0	144 88	55 4	18 2	3 3	12 2	103 48	984 3	44 1	156 58

The data provides a detailed analysis of the infrastructure of Sishu Shiksha Kendras (SSK) in West Bengal, emphasizing the prevalence of government buildings as educational facilities and identifying areas with infrastructure gaps. The report reveals that there are a total of 38,342 classrooms across all districts, with 3,468 schools having just one room, 6,004 schools with two rooms, 3,145 with three rooms, and 3,188 schools with four or more rooms. Paschim Medinipur leads with the highest number of classrooms, totaling 5,204, including 694 single-room and 956 two-room SSKs, while Siliguri has the fewest classrooms at 589, with 94 single-room and 104 two-room SSKs. Murshidabad also stands out with 3,755 classrooms, featuring a high number of two-room SSKs (637) and 376 SSKs with four or more rooms. Alipurduar and Koch Bihar both have 313 two-room SSKs, while Bardhaman and South 24 Parganas have more schools with four or more rooms, at 356 and 383, respectively. Malda has the most single-room SSKs, with 215. Overall, most schools fall into the two-room category across the districts. The majority of these schools (95.95%) operate in government-owned buildings, with only a small percentage functioning in rented, private, or dilapidated structures. Schools under construction represent less than 1% of the total. Additionally, 182 schools (1.21%) don't have any building infrastructure. Out of 16,099 SSKs, only 10,348 have toilet facilities for boys, and just 984

schools have toilets for girls. While 97.26% of schools have access to drinking water, a small percentage still lacks this basic facility. Table: 2 Infrastructure of MSK for the year 2014-2015

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District	Classroom Status					Building Status							No. of school having			
	Number of Class room	No. of 1 room MSKs	No. of 2 rooms MSKs	No. of 3 rooms MSKs	No. of > 4 rooms MSKs	Private	Rented	Government	Rent Free Building	No Building	Dilapidated	Under Construction	Boys Toilet	Girl Toilet	No water	Water
ALIPURDUAR	216	1	2	2	42	0	0	47	0	0	0	0	32	35	0	47
BANKURA	330	0	1	8	64	1	0	70	2	0	0	0	69	71	0	73
BARDDHAMAN	469	0	1	2	96	5	0	93	1	0	0	0	81	89	0	99
BIRBHUM	464	1	4	7	87	0	0	98	1	0	0	0	87	93	0	99
DAKSHIN DINAJPUR	185	0	0	2	38	2	0	36	2	0	0	0	38	39	0	40
DARJILING	281	1	2	5	60	20	2	35	9	0	1	1	30	32	34	34
HAORA	134	0	1	1	25	1	0	26	0	0	0	0	23	27	0	27
HUGLI	115	1	1	2	23	0	0	27	0	0	0	0	27	27	0	27
JALPAIGURI	312	1	0	5	59	0	0	63	2	0	0	0	49	53	2	63
KOCH BIHAR	486	1	9	8	101	3	0	116	0	0	0	0	105	102	0	119
MALDAH	425	4	8	11	85	4	0	104	0	0	0	0	96	94	0	108
MURSHIDABAD	777	1	17	31	152	0	0	178	19	0	0	5	181	179	0	202
NADIA	518	0	3	6	97	6	0	97	3	0	0	0	103	106	0	106
NORTH PARGANAS <sup>24</sup>	510	4	3	13	96	1	0	105	10	0	0	0	107	108	1	115
PASCHIM MEDINIPUR	1071	1	16	21	193	16	1	210	3	1	0	1	210	202	0	232
PURBA MEDINIPUR	657	3	10	16	124	0	0	148	5	0	0	0	149	149	1	152
PURULIYA	596	1	2	7	129	0	0	139	0	0	0	0	58	80	1	138
SILIGURI	61	0	0	1	9	1	0	9	0	0	0	0	8	8	0	10
SOUTH PARGANAS <sup>24</sup>	356	0	5	6	69	0	0	79	0	0	1	0	67	71	3	77
UTTAR DINAJPUR	499	0	5	9	92	1	0	103	2	0	0	0	80	70	0	106
<b>Total</b>	<b>8462</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>1641</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1783</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1600</b>	<b>1635</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>1874</b>

Table 2 shows that in West Bengal, a total of 1,961 Madhyamik Shiksha Kendras (MSKs) were operational during 2014-2015, with 38,342 rooms available across these schools. The majority of MSKs, around 37%, operate with more than two rooms, while only 19.5% have more than four rooms. Most of these schools, approximately 90%, are housed in government buildings, with the remainder

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operating out of rented or private facilities. However, 1% of the MSKs are still functioning without any building. Regarding sanitation, 64.27% of MSKs have boys' toilet facilities, while 61% have toilets for girls. In terms of water access, the majority of schools, about 97%, have drinking water available, although 2.73% of the MSKs still lack this basic necessity.

### **Conclusion:**

The Shishu Shiksha Karmasuchi (SSK) and Madhyamik Shiksha Karmasuchi (MSK) have played significant roles in expanding educational access across West Bengal, particularly in underserved regions. Both initiatives have succeeded in providing schooling infrastructure and resources, with a large majority of schools operating in government-owned buildings. Despite these challenges, both programs have contributed greatly to increasing enrollment and reducing dropout rates. The focus on community-driven management and localized solutions has been critical in reaching marginalized populations. However, to fully achieve the goal of universal primary and upper primary education, continuous efforts are needed to address the remaining infrastructural and resource gaps, ensuring that all children in West Bengal have equal access to quality education.

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