

# ACHIEVEMENT OF STUDENTS IN ENGLISH WITH REFERENCE TO THEIR SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

<sup>1</sup>Krishnendu Roy

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar

<sup>1</sup>Department of Education

<sup>1</sup>University of Kalyani, Kalyani, India

**Abstract :** This study shed lights on the facts about the overall achievement of the students of West Bengal in English Education based on their Socio-Economic Status. In this study, an overall development of English Education can be found from the British era. Apart from that, socio-economical prospect has been added to estimate the overall impact of English Education. However, the factors of merit is required to achieve more in Education, the Socio-Economic Status is a mandatory element, now a days.

**IndexTerms -** British bengal, State Board, Central Board, Socio-economic background, State Government, achievement of the students.

## Introduction

In present India, English Language has become the official language and that is why learning of this language has become most important aspect for the students. Bilingualism is the overall scenario of India due to its language diversity. In respect to West Bengal, it can be said that the diverse nature in geographical, communal and lingual prospects have influenced the socio-economic background and educational structured. Apart from that, the English Language is influencing the various field of education, official and communication structure. As a lingual diverse state, West Bengal is focusing on a common language apart from Bengali and Hindi and that is why English is playing a vital role for proper communication (Written and Oral).

This study is mainly based on the achievement of students in English Language referencing to their socio-economic status within the state of West Bengal. In this study, a section of literature review is being added to present explanations on various factors like historical development of English language along with present scenario. Moreover, the literature review part is going to highlight on the socio economic status of West Bengal as well as the prospect of educational infrastructure. Based on the literature review a number of thematic findings is going to be mentioned which is possibly helping to summarize the whole study. In short, it can be said that, the overall achievement in English of the students of West Bengal is going to be established considering their social and economic background, with brief analysis of historical and present prospect (*Refer to the Appendix 1*).

## Literature Review

### 2.1 Past and present status on the acceptance of English Language in India and West Bengal

English is not a regional language of India and it was introduced by the British people, who came to India for the purpose of trading and reigned over a century. The Britishers have made English the official language in order to maintain significant administration across the country. In fact, today, the scenario has not changed as English is still being used as the official language in this country. From the past to present, the usage of English language in India mainly West Bengal will be discussed through the exploring process of historical as well as present context.

#### 2.1.1 Entry of English Language in India

English language flourished in West Bengal after the British started trading with the local people. On 31st December of 1600 AD, Queen Elizabeth granted the charter to trade in India after that some merchants travelled to India in order to trade with Indians. Chatterjee (2015) has described this as the first entry of the English in India. Through various ups and downs, Britishers started to rule India and controlled the economy, education and administration up to 1947 (Upto 1858 East India Company and Upwards the Queen along with British Parliament). Even though there were another traders like Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese, they failed to establish their control in India (Dubey, 2017).

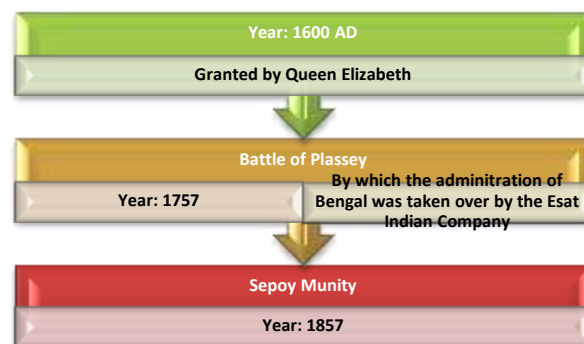


figure 1: entry of english in india and its development  
(source: influenced by chatterjee, 2015, p.17)

**2.1.2 Spread of English Language in Bengal Region**

Britishers made their entry in West Bengal in 1681 through the Hooghly district and started trading with local merchants with the intention of grasping the total market of the place for their product. After the Battle of Plassey (1757), the total administration was taken over by the East India Company and by then usage of English in Bengal started increasing (Strand, Malmberg & Hall, 2015). East India Company was less interested in educational development as their main aim was to extract the financial gain from the native people. Some missionary organization started distributing elementary education so that they can convert the local into Christian Religion. On the other hand, the establishment of English printing press in Hooghly in the second half of eighteenth century (1778), the circulation of English Newspaper took place in Bengal region (Bengal, Bihar and Orissa).

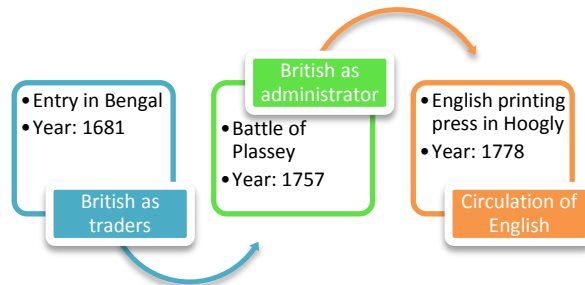


figure 2: spread of english language in bengal  
(source: based on the opinion of strand, malmberg & hall, 2015, p.124)

**2.1.3 English education and Socio-economic status of British Bengal**

In nineteenth century, various English medium private schools were being established in Bengal for the European and Anglo-Indian children. Some children from wealthy Indian family, got chance to pursue English Medium education as their family were able to pay the high fees. In this respect, Oriental scholarship can be mentioned as this name helped in expansion of English education. People from lower socioeconomic status failed to achieve the education as they were struggling to arrange their foods.

In the year 1774, establishment of Asiatic Society helped in spreading the education and later on the Renaissance of Indian Education and Culture has taken place with the help of Raja Rammohan Roy, Radhakanta Deb, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Keshab Chandra Sen. They encouraged and described the importance of English education in the society of Bengal. The British government also helped in the process of educational development mainly in English medium.

On the other side, the establishment of school and colleges like Fort William College, Hindu College, Hindu School as well as Hare School enhanced the English education along with other languages like Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic (Das & Deb, 2016). In the year 1835, Lord Thomas Macaulay made the English Language as the medium of Higher Education and since then English is playing a significant role in the educational infrastructure of India and Bengal. Various Universities like Calcutta University and Viswavarati University helped in the growth in the practice of English Language. Around 1920s the official language of India becomes English, even though M.K Gandhi was in favour of Hindustani Language (Umansky & Reardon, 2014).

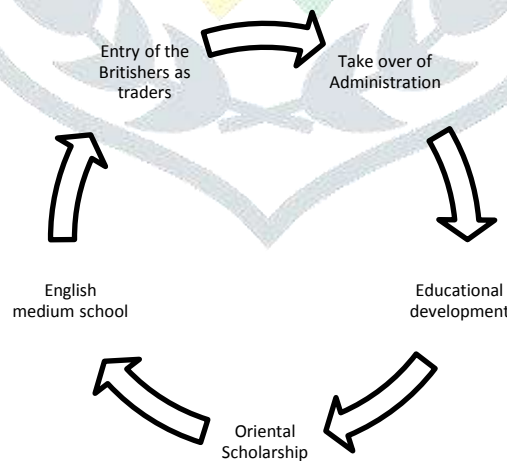


figure 3: english education in british era  
(source: based on the viewpoint of das & deb, 2016, p.39)

**2.1.4 The Role of English After Indian Independence**

After the Independence of India, Hindi became the official language of India as there was a phase of nationalism in the political level. However, due to variety in language in India, English has become the official language alongside Hindi. On the other hand, the emergence of provincialism in Indian Politics helped to grow the concept of Three-Language-Formula (Hindi-English-Provincial Language) and the concept was adopted in the field of official work. This concept was responsible for the development of first language (Regional language) system in the

schools under the state boards. In fact this system is still present in the educational system of Bengal and other states like Maharashtra as well as Tamil Nadu.

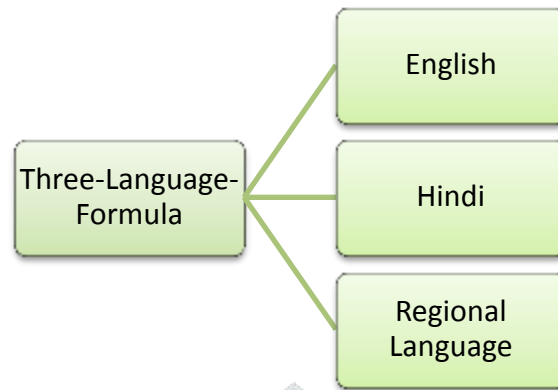


figure 4: three-language-formula  
(source: based on the viewpoint of umansky & reardon, 2014, p.145)

**2.1.5 Background of Bengali and English in West Bengal**

Bengal region used to be the Capital of British India and most administrative works was being controlled from this place. That is why, most of the government employee of British India used to be from this province only. Based on this it can be said that, the language English become more important alongside of Bengali so that they become able to precede the work effectively.

On the other hand, the English Education system has been developed based on the merit of the students along with huge fees structure. That is why, people from lower sociological and economical background failed to pursue further education in English. Apart from that, the caste and religious factor also affected the educational system and the people from lower caste or Muslim community was unable to have sufficient English Education even though they used to possess a good fortune. In this respect, lack of enlightenment is important as these communities were rigid in the acceptance of other culture as they used to think their culture is best (Majumder & Mitra, 2017).

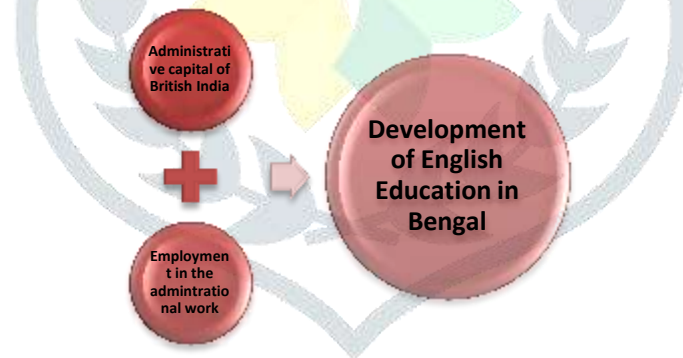
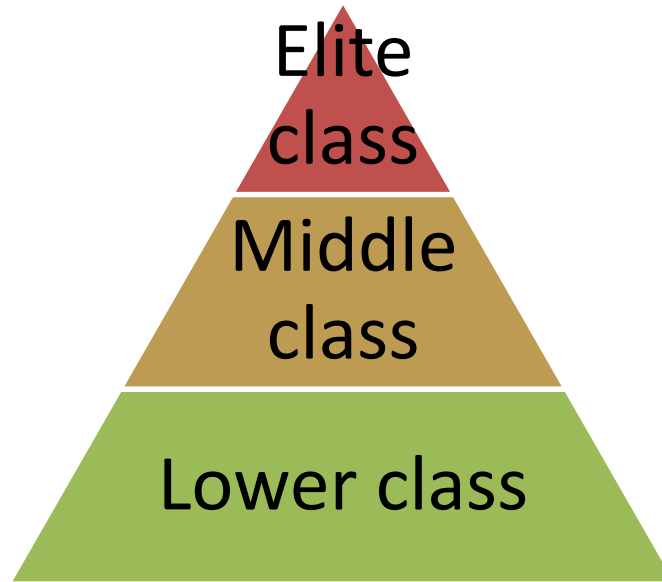


figure 5: background of the development of english education  
(source: based on the viewpoint of majumder & mitra, 2017, p.103)

**2.1.6 English education and Socio-economical and socio-cultural impact in Bengal**

British administration published various educational policies in later 18th century and that influenced the socio-cultural status of Bengal. British educationists and missionaries started spreading oriental language like English and other European languages. Even though, there was availability of oriental education, the lower class failed to avail the service as they were unable to pay the fees.

The aforesaid discussion shows how the English Language has entered in India and how it has been impacted the educational system of the states of India. On the other side, the socio-economic background and how it controlled the academic enrichment in English education has been unveiled. Even though, English is a foreign language, the people of India are using it as the official language.



**figure 6: socio-economic class in british bengal**  
 (source: based on the opinion of saba, chell & ahmad, 2017, p.73)

**2.2 Educational structure of present West Bengal**

The present educational structure of West Bengal is based on Primary Education, Secondary Education, Higher Secondary Education, College and University Degree as well as Higher Study. Due to the application of Three-Language-Formula, the concept of First Language and second Language has been emerged in the West Bengal (Saba, Chell & Ahmad, 2017). The overall impact of educational structure in English Education and the achievement of the student are going to be discussed below.

**2.2.1 Bengal Board and English Language**

The government of West Bengal controlling board is mainly provides Bengali as the first language, even though there is a number of West Bengal Board affiliated schools are providing English as the first language (Das, 2017). In the 1980s, there was a concept that there should be no English Education in the primary level and the students should learn English after 5th standard. This concept has shown a bad impact on the achievement of students from Bengali Medium background. Even though, the students have possessed merits, they failed to shine due to poor English knowledge. Based on that, the Government of West Bengal has started new curriculum so that the base of the students can be improved (Biswas, 2016).

**2.2.2 Availability of Central Board in West Bengal**

In last two decades, the scenario of West Bengal in respect to education system has been changed, as Central Boards like CBSE and ICSE affiliated schools has been emerged in rural, urban and metropolitan places (Ghosh, 2018). Theses board are offering English medium education and has concentrated on organized syllabus so that the students can pursue their study effectively.

**2.2.3 Comparison in the achievement of Students from State Board and Central Board based on Socio-Economic status**

**table 1: comparison of state board and central board from the aspect of class difference**

(source: based on the opinion of halder *et al.* 2016, p.12)

Board	Area	Students from Socio-Economic Group
State Board	Undeveloped area	Lower middle class
	Rural area	Backward class
	Urban area	Oppressed class
	Municipality area	
Central Board	Urban area	Wealthy class
	Metropolitan area	Higher middle class
	Municipal area	

**Analysis**

In respect to the table, it can be stated that, maximum students of West Bengal are pursuing studies from the state board as the state board provides education within low cost and the schools has various scholarship prospect so that the students from poor financial background can complete their elementary education (Barman, 2015). On the other side, the unavailability of English medium school in undeveloped and rural places are main reason, the students are studying in state board. The students from central board mainly belong from the upper classes of the socio-economic prospect. That is why; they are able to pay the huge amount of money against their education

In short, it can be stated following the opinion of Chakraborty & Bakshi (2016) that English education can be achieved from the educational medium of schools as it can develop the base of any student. However, the educational system of West Bengal is more monitory based rather than merit (RANI, 2016). That is why, proper English education is not being provided properly to the lower economic and social classes. On the other hand, the students are achieving the knowledge in English based on their syllabus as their grades in the subject are increasing gradually.

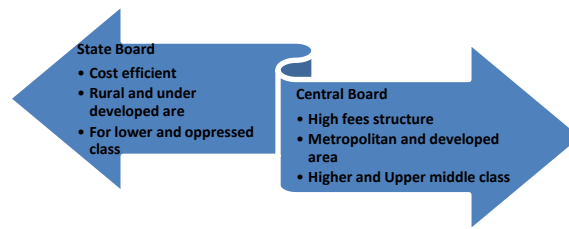


figure 7: difference of state and central board  
 (source: based on the opinion of chakraborty & bakshi, 2016, p.345)

**2.2.4 Socio-economical impact on English education**

The term socio-economic status is mainly a combination of social status and economic status of any individual or a family based on the financial earning, literacy rate, profession and wealth (Islam & Khan, 2017). In broader aspect, it can be said that, the socio-economic status is a part of socio-cultural standard, economical level, education and overall position of family.

As per the position of a family, the future of a student can be determined. The family provides education and choose the medium of the education as well. Thus, the status of the student is influential for the achievement of the student in education mainly in English (Adhya, 2015).

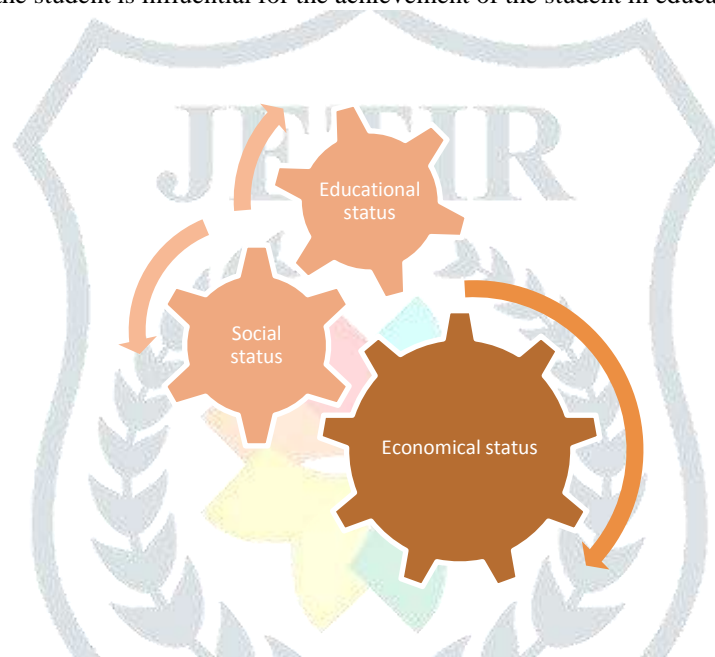


figure 8: socio-economical factors  
 (source: based on the opinion of adhya, 2015, p.201)

**2.3 Socio-economic structure of West Bengal**

West Bengal covers a huge region geographically and that is why there are is diversity in every respect like caste, religion, class, race and language. Based on the diversity, the overall socio-economic scenario can be found in West Bengal. There are around 23 district in West Bengal and each of that has own identification in respect to regional climate, geographical division and economic situation. In fact, the socio-economic prospect is mainly dependent on the factor of economical status, educational background, overall wealth or property and prosperity. As per the HRD report of West Bengal the economic standard is totally dependent on social status of the natives.

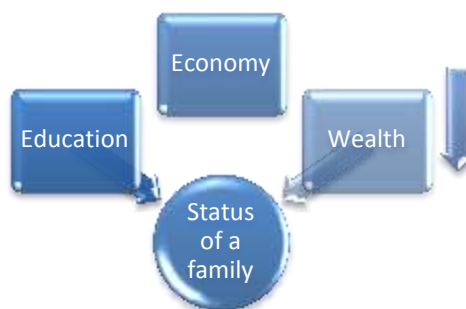


figure 9: factors for family status  
 (source: based on the opinion of faaz & khan, 2017)

**2.3.1 HDI Report and rank**

There is only one HRD report has been published in West Bengal (2014) and the overall socio-economic standard has been ranked as per the findings of the districts. The Human Development Report is being enumerated below mentioning the Indexes of factors for socio-economic status.

table 2: human development indicators of west bengal  
(source: development and planning department of west bengal, 2004, p.28)

Name of the District	Health Index	Income Index	Education Index	HDI Rank
Kolkata	0.82	0.73	0.80	1
Howrah	0.77	0.53	0.75	2
North 24 Parganas	0.72	0.49	0.76	3
Darjeeling	0.73	0.49	0.72	4
Burdwan	0.74	0.47	0.64	5
Hooghly	0.77	0.46	0.67	6
Medinipur	0.68	0.45	0.74	7
South 24 Parganas	0.71	0.40	0.68	8
Nadia	0.65	0.41	0.66	9
Jalpaiguri	0.61	0.38	0.60	10
Bankura	0.67	0.26	0.62	11
Coochbehar	0.65	0.30	0.60	12
Dinajpur	0.62	0.39	0.53	13
Birbhum	0.53	0.27	0.47	14
Murshidabad	0.57	0.29	0.52	15
Purulia	0.61	0.18	0.55	16
Malda	0.49	0.36	0.44	17

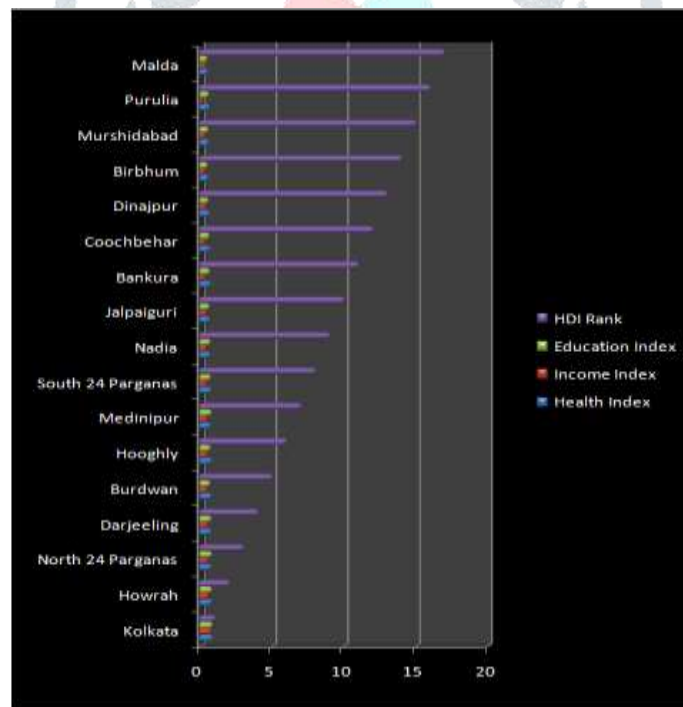


figure 10: human development indicators of west bengal  
(source: as per the report of development and planning department of west bengal, 2004, p.28)

**Analysis**

As per the report, it can be found that, the Kolkata district is in 1st position whereas Malda district have secured the last position due to poor socioeconomic status. The overall report shows that the last five district of the list are either geographically unproductive or near to Bangladesh border by which the educational and economical productivity is being hampered. In fact the places are mostly rustic in the district. On the other hand, the first three districts have proper educational system as well as benefit of professions which helped to maintain the human development index and the socio-economic class. Finally, it is very important to mention that; socio-economic and cultural standard of a family controls the overall educational factor of a student.

**2.4 Achievement of the student in English**

**2.4.1 A comparative study of students from various boards in respect to the achievement**

Achievement in education is the overall academic outcome by which the overall situation can be measured. In fact the progress or achievement can be found through the result or grades. In this respect, it can be said that, the last five years the Metropolitan region has achieved and secured top position in Joint Entrance Exams and most of the students are from either CBSE or ICSE board. On the other side, The districts like Cooch Behar or Malda have scored more number than the metropolitan schools under state board, even though they are unable to score good rank in the competitive exams.

From the above mentioned data, it can be said that, the overall achievement in English of the students of state boards are less than the students of central board. In fact, they have less stock of vocabularies in compared to the central board students. However, the quality of education is mainly based on the availability of economic background and social status, the achievement of the students in the English language is affecting badly. Thus it can be said that, the socio-economic status has a significant influence in the achievements of the students.

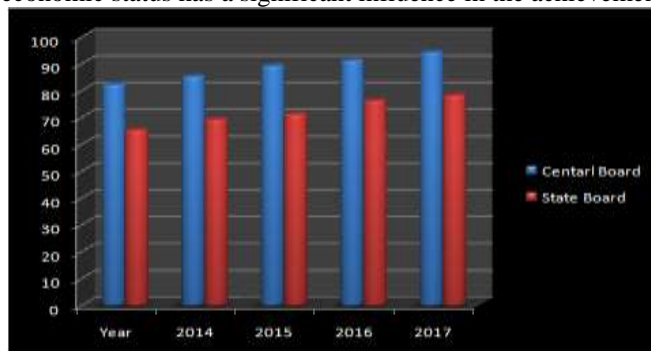


figure 11: achievement of the students of central board and state board in english (source: based on the opinion of faaz & khan, 2017)

### 2.5 Conceptual Framework

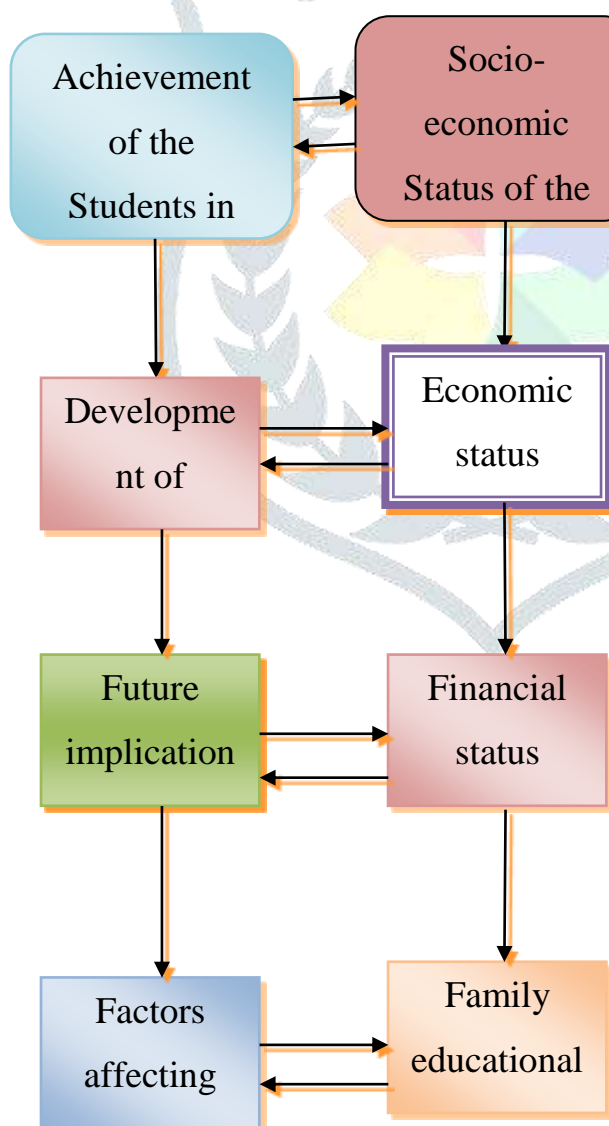


figure 12: conceptual framework (source: based on the opinion of chakraborty & bakshi, 2016)

## Findings

From the above discussed study it has been found that, West Bengal is a diverse state from each of the angles like profession, geographical division and type of people. A number of things have been found through the analysis of various factors which are being discussed below.

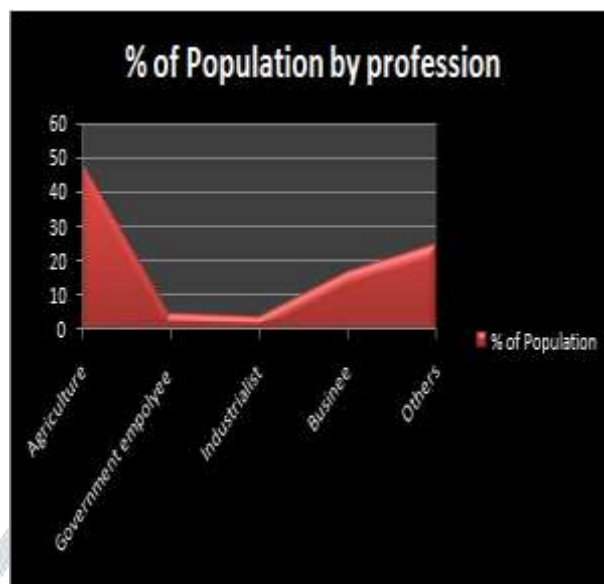


figure 13: professional variety in west bengal  
(source: based on the opinion of sarkar & guha, 2017, p.20)

### 3.1 Usage of English in West Bengal in academics

In West Bengal, the medium of higher study is mainly English and the official language of the state is also the same (Saha & Mandal, 2016). That is why English is being practiced from the initial stage of education. However, this practice depends on various factors like educational and economical status of the family. Apart from that, the government syllabus has been developed based on the usages of English in the state. The main problem occurs with the State Board students as they find English as their second language and they just treat English as another subject like history or biology. From the very childhood they have learnt to memorize the important factors of the subject so that they can score good marks and that is why they are unable to learn this language. However, they are scoring well in the subject, overall performance and application is not up to the mark.

### 3.2 English Language among Metropolitan, Urban and Rural Students

Based on the availability of schools, students joins there as per the status of their families. As the urban area has more option in school and standard of living is high in compared to the rural area, the urban students are getting more chances to learn English than the rural one. As the statement of Banerjee (2015), it can be mentioned that the rural area of West Bengal is mainly tribal area and they are not sound in social status or economical background. In fact, they are not educated enough to understand the importance of literacy and English language. On the other hand Basu & Basu (2016) have stated that, the metropolitan area is more concerned with the achievement of the students in English even if they are staying in slums or belong to the labour class. In order to justify this point, the authors have discussed the impact of overall atmosphere and demand for the English Language. This is the reason; the students of rural region are far behind from the students of students of metropolitan and urban area.

### 3.3 Attitude towards English among the students based on socio-economic standard

The students from various socio-economic backgrounds have different attitude and point of view about English subject. Most of the students from state board have fear of English and they just want to pass in the subject by getting minimum passing marks. On the other hand, the overall subject is not totally clear with them as they just study for grade not for learning purpose (Siegel, 2018).

The overall performance in English from the lower socio-economic status is poor than the students belong from a standard class.

In respect to the attitude, it can be said; students tend to be more attracted to the subject by which they are achieving better grades. From that context, the maximum students from lower socio-economic group have a bitter attitude as they are not doing well in the subject (Shakhari & Singh, 2017).

### 3.4 Growth of English Medium Schools in West Bengal

In last five years the growth of English medium school shows the importance of English in West Bengal Education. In fact, the guardian and the parents are trying to admit their children in English medium schools irrespective all financial problems (Mukherjee, 2015). However, the people from rustic area and too flower background in economy, education and understanding are unable to provide English medium education to their children, either due to financial problem or availability of proper infrastructure.



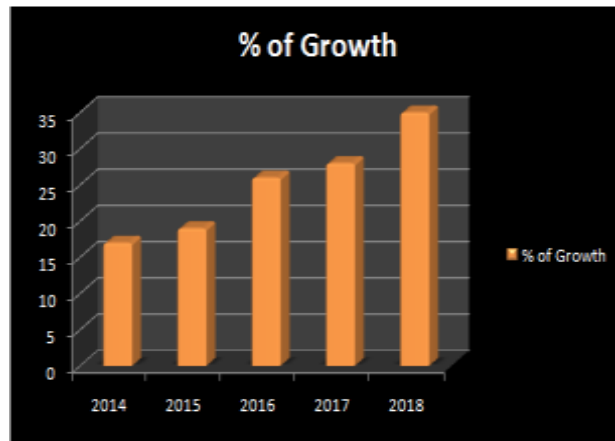


figure 14: growth of english medium school in west bengal  
(source: biswas, das & mandal, 2018, p.13)

**3.5 Factors affecting the achievement in English among the students**

There are a number of factors which are affecting the significant achievement of the students in English. The factors are mainly lack of knowledge in English, poor educational system, improper infrastructure for learners, fear for the language, presence of a first language and lack of education related to English in family (Demie, 2018) . With these elements, the overall performance and achievement of students are being affected day by day. The most important factor in this regard is socio-economic status which is a bar in English education.

**3.6 Governmental Curriculum for the development**

After Independence, the English Education system of West Bengal was not good enough. At the time of Independence the Bengalis have lost a number of personalities in the clash with the British and that is why a negative impact of the language was in the mind of the Government. Gradually, the government found the importance of the language and have been started to include in the educational curriculum (Rahman & Pandian, 2018). After 2001, the overall infrastructure of education has been changed and the importance of English has been circulated through the syllabus. Thus at this time the English is developing throughout the students of Bengal.

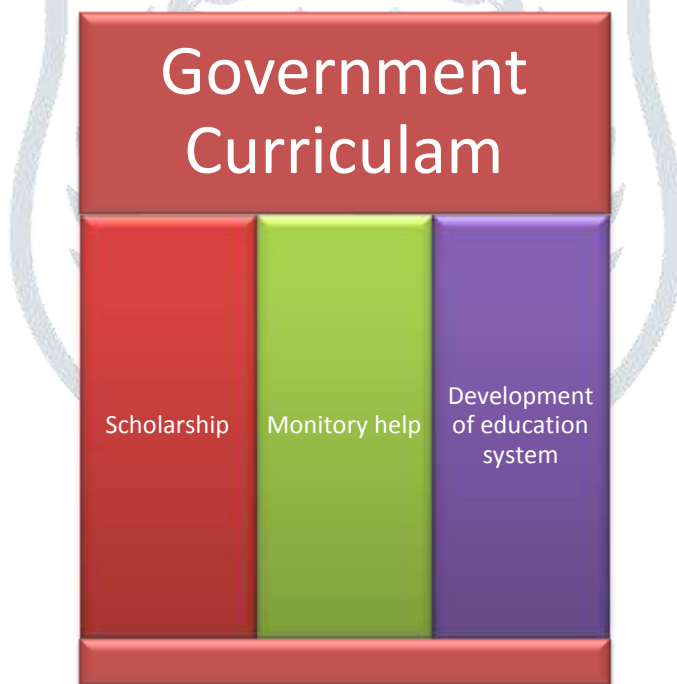


figure 15: government curriculum  
(source: based on the opinion of rahman & pandian, 2018, p.252)

On the other hand, the government of West Bengal has started various scholarships system for the meritorious students by which they are being able to gather proper education in English (Chakraborty & Bakshi, 2016). Apart from that, various monetary helps are being made for the Schedule Caste and Tribes which is enhancing the development of the oppressed class.

From the overall findings, it can be said that the overall performance and achievement of the students in English is good in the academic grades but the overall application of the subject is not good (Rahman, Pandian & Kaur, 2018). The overall fear of the students needs to be abolished by the teacher by which they are going to love the language and can achieve good score along with proper implication

## Conclusion

The aforesaid artifact is based on the overall achievement of students having various socio-economic statuses mainly in English language, from the prospect of West Bengal. This study has been developed to understand the facts and variables of English based education from different socio-economic background. In this study the overall historical background has been analyzed based on the circulation and development of English language. Apart from that, signified discussion has been made on the topic of development process as well as the requirements of English education. However, Britishers enslaved Indians for a long time off period, they enrich the educational system by various implication of rules and regulation. This fact is also being highlighted in this study.

Apart from all, the present scenario of West Bengal has been discussed from the educational along with the socio-economic status as well as divisions. In fact, an elaborate discussion has been made based on the overall achievement of the students in English language focusing on their social, economic, educational and status value. A comparative study on central board student and state board student has been made so that the impact of socio-economic status of the families can be understood. Based on the analysis the factors affecting the achievement and the prospect of government have been found by which the overall result of the study can be established. On the concluding note, it can be said that the family background and status is very much important factor for the achievement of the students in English language.

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Appendices

appendix 1: student achievement factor

