

Short Communication

Modified Kuppuswamy socioeconomic scale: 2022 update of India

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ABSTRACT

The term "socioeconomic status" (SES) refers to a measurement that takes into account a family's income, level of education, and the occupation of the family's primary breadwinner. This helps to evaluate the family overall health as well as their access to resources. Kuppuswamy SES is one of the commonest scales used to determine SES of people residing in urban areas, but it requires updating because of steady inflation in the value of rupees based on change in consumer price index. The updated version of modified Kuppuswamy socioeconomic scale for the year 2022 in India is thus presented.

Keywords: Socioeconomic status, Scale, Consumer price index, Inflation, Income

INTRODUCTION

The socioeconomic position of a family is an essential indicator for determining the state of their health and nutrition, and it also plays a role in facilitating access to the resources available to them. It is defined as "a position attained by any individual within a system of hierarchical social structure".¹ An individual's socioeconomic status (SES) has a substantial impact on a number of factors, including their quality of life, their health, their social standing, and their social class. The SES of a person or family who lives in an urban area can be determined using a composite index, which is created by combining a number of different indicators. Various systems or scales, such as the Rahudkar scale from 1960, the Udai Parikh scale from 1964, the Jalota scale from 1970, the Kulshrestha scale from 1972, the Kuppuswamy scale from 1976, the Shrivastava scale from 1978, and the Bharadwaj scale from 2001, have been proposed as methods or scales for classifying different populations according to their socioeconomic status.² Each of these scales incorporate based upon the specifics of a person or any family and have

inbuilt scoring system and categories for either urban and/or rural locations.

METHODS

Kuppuswamy created Kuppuswamy scale in 1976 (Table 1).³ It is most popular scale for figuring out a person's SES in urban areas. In this scale total income, educational status, and employment are three of the most prevalent types of indices that are taken into consideration.⁴ On the Kuppuswamy scale, families are placed into one of five categories: upper class, upper middle class, lower middle class, upper lower class, and lower class. A family's total score can range anywhere from three to twenty-nine points, and it can only be determined by combining information about the members of the family's education level, occupation level, and income level. Further to figure out the social and economic status of the family, we use 2012 as the base year to figure out how much money that family makes. When determining the consumer price index (CPI), the current rate of inflation in urban areas as of March 2022 is included. It comes to 6.12 for the month of March in 2022, based on 2012.⁵

Table 1: Socioeconomic status scale of Kuppuswamy (Urban 1976).³

Parameters	Score
Education	
Professional degree	7
Graduate	6
Intermediate/diploma	5
High school	4
Middle school	3
Primary school	2
Illiterate	1
Occupation	
Professional	10
Semi-professional	6
Clerical/shop/farmer	5
Skilled worker	4
Semi-skilled worker	3
Unskilled worker	2
Unemployed	1
Family income per month (Rs.)	
≥2000	10
1000-1999	6
750-999	5
500-749	4
300-499	3
101-299	2
≤100	1
Total score	Socioeconomic class
26-29	Upper (I)
16-25	Upper middle (II)
11-15	Lower middle (III)
5-10	Upper lower (IV)
<5	Lower (V)

RESULTS

Multiplying the income scale values for the year 2012 by the conversion factor of 6.12 will result in an updated Modified Kuppuswamy socioeconomic scale for the year

2022, where b is CPI of current year and a is CPI of last year (Table 2).

$$\text{Inflation rate} = [(b - a/a) \times 100]$$

Where b is CPI of current year and a is CPI of last year.

Table 2: Total monthly income of the family.

S. no	Updated monthly family income in rupees (2012)	Updated monthly family income in rupees (2018)	Updated monthly family income in rupees (2020)	Updated monthly family income in rupees (2022)	Score
1	≥ 30,375	≥ 126,360	≥199,862	≥185,895	12
2	15,188–30,374	63,182–126,359	99,931–199,861	92951-185894	10
3	11,362–15,187	47,266–63,181	74,755 –99,930	69535-92950	6
4	7594–11,361	31,591–47,265	49,962–74,755	46475-69534	4
5	4556–7593	18,953–31,590	29,973– 49,961	27883-46474	3
6	1521–4555	6327–18,952	10,002–29,972	9308-27882	2
7	≤1520	≤6326	≤10,001	≤9307	1

DISCUSSION

Among the many scales that may be used to determine socioeconomic status, the “updated modified Kuppuswamy SES” is one of the most extensively used and well-known in India. In spite of this, the available SES has been less effective over the course of these years as a result of the persistent and intrusive economic expansion as well as social evolution necessitating yearly updating of income criteria due to steady inflation in the value of Rupees based on all India consumer price index of current year.

On the other hand, the fall in the value of the rupee has made some of the income levels on the scale less important. Because of this, the scale needs to be updated often so that the socioeconomic status of research populations can be correctly categorized. In this article, our goal was to revise the “Kuppuswamy SES” scale for the year 2022.

Table 3: Occupation of the head of the family.⁶

Parameters	Score
Education	
Professional degree	7
Graduate	6
Intermediate/diploma	5
High school	4
Middle school	3
Primary school	2
Illiterate	1
Occupation	
Professional	10
Semi-professional	6
Clerical/shop/farmer	5
Skilled worker	4
Semi-skilled worker	3
Unskilled worker	2
Unemployed	1
Family income per month (Rs.)	
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≤100	1
Total score	Socioeconomic class
26-29	Upper (I)
16-25	Upper middle (II)
11-15	Lower middle (III)
5-10	Upper lower (IV)
<5	Lower (V)

In addition to the updating of scale according to CPI for base year some modification under the categories of

occupation were also done as shown in (Table 3).⁶ The income scale “as per change in the consumer price index (CPI) for industrial worker” as projected by the government of India’s ministry of statistics and programme implementation on their website. In order to carry out and perform the regular generation of the scale each year, the income scale “as per change in the CPI for industrial workers”.⁷ The numbers of the CPI are “explained in reference to a base year”.

However, it must be noted that according to the Labour Bureau of the Indian government, “current base year to be considered is 2012.”⁸

CONCLUSION

A person's health can be predicted in a big way by how they are grouped by their socioeconomic status. Because of inflation, the prices of goods and services in the country change all the time. This means that the income-based socioeconomic scales need to be updated regularly. So, the Kuppuswamy scale, which is often used in health studies to figure out people's socioeconomic status, has been updated for the most recent CPI for the year 2022. The current exercise will help make it more likely that classification will be used in a way that makes sense for current prices and will allow for real-time updates for a long time in the near future.

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