

KUPPUSWAMY'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS SCALE – A REVISION OF ECONOMIC PARAMETER FOR 2012

COMMUNITY MEDICINE

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All community based studies focus on socio-economic stratification as this is the key to understanding affordability of health services, amenities and purchasability. When it is taken as a summation of education, occupation and income it reflects the value system expected for that level of education and occupation. Income is parallel to standard of living. Socio Economic Status (SES) is established determinant of health. Kuppuswamy's socioeconomic status is an important tool in hospital and community based research in India which was originally proposed in 1976[1].

Need for revision: Realising the value of this important tool we need to keep this updated as the price index is increasing (as this scale is consumer price index based). If it is not revised it will lose its utility. Mishra, undertook the important task of revision of family income per month for 1998 using base year 1982=100.3 Presently the base year has been changed from 1982 to current base year 2001[2].

As Kuppuswamy's SES for the urban areas continues to enjoy respect among the public health professionals; an attempt is being made using the new base year of 2001 for CPI-IW (All India Average Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers) to update Kuppuswamy scale as per CPI-IW of november 2012 in order to facilitate the desire of public health workers for an updated version.

Kuppuswamy's original income groups of family for 1976 were based on 1960 as 100 (base) [3].

As the prices for 2012 have increased manifold compared to 1960 and that increase can be obtained by multiplying original income groups with current consumer price index prices with a multiplication factor 0.0735. The multiplication factor is needed to convert the value of 1960 base to the current base of 2001.

Current income groups = original family income groups of Kuppuswamy (1976) X current consumer price index X 0.0735 (multiplication factor)

All-India average consumer price index numbers for Industrial Workers (Base 2001=100) shows the current price index as 218 on november 2012[4]. Hence the current income groups are obtained as follows

$2000 \times 218 \times 0.0735 = 32050$ (rounded off to nearest ten for the lower limits of the respective income groups)

Limitation and utility:

There is an overemphasis on income (no scale is ever complete in assessing actual SES and they are only at the best surrogates and generates uniformity in spite of limitations) rather than educational and occupational factors, but nevertheless income commensurate with education and occupation. This speaks about the utility of Kuppuswamy scale; the revision enables and equips community related scientists in their quest for socioeconomic status.

Revised table (Table 1) for scales in 2012 to define socioeconomic status thus obtained is as follows.

Table: 1. Kuppuswamy's Socioeconomic Status Scale

(A) Education Score				
1	Profession or Honours	7		
2	Graduate or post graduate	6		
3	Intermediate or post high school diploma	5		
4	High school certificate	4		
5	Middle school certificate	3		
6	Primary school certificate	2		
7	Illiterate	1		
(B) Occupation Score				
1	Profession	10		
2	Semi-Profession	6		
3	Clerical, Shop-owner, Farmer	5		
4	Skilled worker	4		
5	Semi-skilled worker	3		
6	Unskilled worker	2		
7	Unemployed	1		
(C) Monthly family income in Rs		Score	Modified for 1998³ in Rs	Modified for 2012 in Rs
1	2000	12	13500	32050
2	1000-1999	10	6750 - 13499	16020 – 32049
3	750-999	6	5050 - 6749	12020 – 16019
4	500-749	4	3375 - 5049	8010 – 12019
5	300-499	3	2025 - 3374	4810 – 8009
6	101-299	2	676 - 2024	1601 – 4809
7	100	1	675	1600
Total Score		Socioeconomic class		
26-29		Upper (I)		
16-25		Upper Middle (II)		
11-15		Middle/Lower middle (III)		
5-10		Lower/Upper lower (IV)		
<5		Lower (V)		

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