

Social Development and Public Utility Services: A Study of Hamirpur District of Himachal Pradesh

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Abstract

Public utility services form the basis of any developed society. In the present paper correlation between access, usage and satisfaction with respect to these services and level of social development of the end users has been attempted.

KEYWORDS: public utility services, access, utility, satisfaction

The concept of social development is an umbrella concept incorporating development in economic, social, cultural, ecological and political aspects. Aim of social development is the well-being of individuals, consequently resulting in the development of communities. Social development is the sum of human development. Such a paradigm of social development envisages the empowerment of people for whom investment in public utility services like education, health, housing, food, water and transport are essential. Moreover, in this paradigm of social development, the delivery mechanism of various welfare services also becomes important, and the state must ensure that the benefits of its welfare policies and programmes reach the disadvantaged groups for whom they are intended. In this sense, social development must aim at reducing wide disparities not only in the lifestyles of people within the community but also in assets that they possess. Apart from the delivery mechanism, true social development must devise ways and means to get feedback from the people to know the level of their satisfaction with various state sponsored welfare programmes. This will enable the state to have a human balance sheet. In this conception of social development, the distribution of public social services becomes key to harmonious, happy and creative life of the individuals.

The emphasis of this paradigm of social development is on people's participation including the role of self-help groups and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) emphasizing on the satisfaction of basic needs with a view to improving the quality of life. The important dimension of this model is the issue of "Good Governance" for an effective and efficient delivery of basic utility services like education, health care, safe drinking water, roads and transport and public distribution system. Thus, the emphasis has shifted now to the human development. The five basic public services such as primary education, health care, drinking water, road transport and public distribution system with which the present study deals, matter a great deal to the weaker sections of society. The emphasis of this paradigm of social development is on people's participation including the role of self-help groups and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) emphasizing on the satisfaction of basic needs with a view to improving the quality of life. The important dimension of this model is the issue of "Good Governance" for an effective and efficient delivery of basic utility services like education, health care, safe drinking water, roads and transport and public distribution system. Thus, the emphasis has shifted now to the human development. The five basic public services such as primary education, health care, drinking water, road transport

and public distribution system with which the present study deals, matter a great deal to the weaker sections of society.

In the present paper correlation between access, usages and satisfaction with respect to different public utility services and level of social development of the end users of these services has been attempted. The purpose of this analysis is to ascertain the extent/degree to which the two reinforce or cut-across each other. The responses of the respondents belonging to different level of social development have been taken into consideration to ascertain whether their views on public utility services are uniform or there is variation in their opinions and if yes, then with respect to which services and to what extent?

Access refers to the proximity of service facility to the household or the user of the service. Government norms for access often tend to be based on population criteria. For example, the location of primary health centres is based mainly on the population norms. However, from the user perspective, it is the distance or nearness to the facility that matters the most.

Use of a service tells us whether a household utilizes a public service. In a monopoly situation, access and use may be identical. However, when other options are available, people may prefer to use facilities other than the ones provided by the government.

Satisfaction refers to overall assessment of service by the user, based on his/her experience. It reflects the personal judgements of the users and can be measured only through information provided by them.

Methods

Objective of the Study: The major objective of the study is to find out the relationship between the level of socio-economic development of the respondents and five public utility services availed by them.

Hypothesis of the Study: keeping in view the research problem and the objectives set for the study, following hypotheses have been tested:

1. The higher the socio-economic status of the respondents in terms of the caste hierarchy, family income, occupational status, education etc. the greater will be their access to and the utilization of public utility services.
2. The higher the socio-economic status of the respondents, the lower will be their level of satisfaction from these services.

Area of the study: The selection of Himachal Pradesh as the area of study has been mainly guided by the fact it has remained largely under researched one. The research done so far in respect of evaluation of social development and the public utility services in the state is scanty, sporadic and sketchy. So far, no micro level study has been conducted independently. Himachal Pradesh consists of 12 districts namely Kangra, Mandi, Shimla, Solan, Sirmour, Hamirpur, Una, Kullu, Chamba, Bilaspur, Kinnaur and Lahaul-Spiti. The present study is a micro level study, which has been carried out in Nadaun Block of Hamirpur district. In this Block there are 58 Panchayats, 447 villages and 22,364 households. This block consists of largest population, highest number of panchayats, villages and households among all blocks of the district. The present study has been conducted with limited time and resources;

hence the findings will have only limited application to other areas of the state or country.

Universe and Sample Size: The sample for the present study has been drawn in stages. Out of the 12 districts of Himachal Pradesh, Hamirpur district has been chosen. At the next stage out of six Development Bolcks of Hamirpur, Nadaun Development Block has been selected. Then out of the 58 Panchayats present in Nadaun only 10 per cent panchayats, which comes out to be 6 panchayats have been selected randomly for the fieldwork. These panchayats are Jalari, Bhumpal, Saproh, Choru, Rail and Rangas. The total number of households at the time of field survey in these panchayats are 499,298,491,432,285 and 263 respectively which adds up to 2268 households. Out of these households, a sample of 15 per cent has been taken randomly. The sample is roughly proportionate to the total number of households in each of these six panchayats, which comes out to be 340 households. Thus, the actual sample size of the study is 340 households.

Unit of Investigation: In the study, the head of the household is the unit of our investigation. He/she has been interviewed to get the necessary information relating to public utility services.

Research Design: The study has been carried out with the help of a descriptive research design because the main thrust of the study is on whether or not there is any significant relationship between the delivery of these services and the level of social development in the area of study.

This paper is divided into two sections. The first section deals with the construction of composite index of social development on the basis of identified indicators. In the second section the correlation between the social development and public utility services of the *aggregate* data is analysed.

INDEX OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) has developed some indices of development in the last thirty years. Along with mounting attention towards multidimensionality of development, there are growing number of composite indices that have been proposed worldwide by the scholars and institutions. Composite index of human development considers three dimensions: (i) well-being, (ii) knowledge, (iii) standard of living. Council for Social Development in its three reports, 2006, 2008 and 2010 has taken into account six important dimensions of social development namely: demographic parameters, health indicators, educational attainments, basic amenities, economic deprivation and social deprivation. The social development index used by Mehta (1981) to study social development in Mauritius has been used in the present study.

It is the contention of the present study that social development consists of primarily two dimensions: development of the individual and the development of the unit in which one is placed such as village, block, tehsil, district, nation and so forth. Accordingly, the thrust of the social development is analysed in terms of selected village panchayats of Hamirpur district in Himachal Pradesh. A person's level of social development has been measured by several inter-related variables such as the socio-economic category to which he/she belongs, his/her actual living conditions, material objects possessed by him/her and the extent of exposure to the

outside world etc. Keeping in view the socio-cultural setting of the area of this study appropriate indicators of the social development possessed by the respondents have been identified to assess their level of social development. The six identified indicators are: caste status, level of education and occupation, level of living, exposure to mass media and land holding pattern etc. In the area of our study these set of factors and sub factors within them are indicative of the level of social development of the respondents. Hence, an attempt has been made to construct a 'Social Development Index' to assess the level of social development of the household families of our study. The household families are considered as the basic unit of the village social organization. The items identified to develop the *index of social development* and the score values assigned to these items table 1.1.

TABLE 1.1
Values Assigned to Various Indicators of Social Development

Indicator	Score assigned
1) Caste	
1. Brahmins	4
2. Kshtriyas/Rajputs	3
3. Vaishya/Khatris	2
4. Shudras and others	1
2) Educational Level	
1. Degree/Diploma and above	4
2. Matriculation/10+2	3
3. Primary/ Middle	2
4. Illiterate	1
3) Occupational Category	
1. Government Job	4
2. Agriculture/Horticulture	3
3. Small Business/Private Job	2
4. Caste related occupation/wage Labourers	1
4) Level of Living	
i) Gross Monthly Income of the Family	
1. Rupees 5001 and above	3
2. Rupees 3001-5000	2
3. Up to Rupees 3000	1
ii) BPL Status	
1. No	2
2. Yes	1
iii) Structure of House	
1. Pacca	3
2. Semi Pacca	2
3. Kachcha	1
iv) Availability of Toilet	
1. Yes	2
2. No	1
v) Availability of Bathroom	
1. Yes	2
2. No	1

vi) Availability of cattle shed	
1. Yes	2
2. No	1
vii) Owning a Telephone/cell phone	
1. Yes	2
2. No	1
viii) Mode of transport owned	
1. Own truck/jeep	4
2. Own a light Four –wheeler	3
3. Own a light Two –wheeler	2
4. Does not own any conveyance	1
ix) Means of fuel for cooking	
1. LPG and Other	3
2. Gobar Gas Plant	2
3. Wood	1
5) Exposure of mass media	
i) listen to Radio	
1. Yes	2
2. No	1
ii) Frequency of radio listening	
1. Regularly	2
2. Occasionally	1
iii) Watch T.V	
1. Yes	2
2. No	1
iv) Frequency of T.V viewing	
1. Regularly	2
2. Occasionally	1
v) Reading Newspaper	
1. Yes	2
2. No	1
vi) Frequency of Newspaper Reading	
1. Regularly	2
2. Occasionally	1
6. Land holding Pattern	
1. Medium and Large (More than four hect.)	4
2. Semi-Medium (Two to Four hect.)	3
3. Marginal/Small farmers (less than two hect.)	2
4. Landless	1

The point score has been given to each of these items after ascertaining the frequency distribution of each item among the households. In determining the class intervals for some of these items for scoring purposes, consideration has been given to the frequency distribution of household on the highest and lowest values in each item. It may be pointed out that the point score for each of these items to group the household families into high and low development levels has been given according to the notion that the villagers have of social development in the rural localities. The lowest score of zero and the highest score of four has been assigned to the responses of each of the identified item; however, in some of these indicators the scores are even less than four. A total score per household is calculated by adding up the scores earned for

these items by each household. Based on point score given to different items for each of the household family, the minimum score of 19 and the maximum score 51 has been obtained for these families. Based on the total score for 340 household families, the average social development score has been worked out. In the present study, the head of the household has been asked questions related to the family since he/she is the one who knows about the family as well as has the major say in the matters relating to the family issues.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Average development score} &= \frac{\text{Total score of all household families}}{\text{Number of households}} \\ &= \frac{13371}{340} = 39.3 \end{aligned}$$

The average social development score has come out to be 39.3 which is further rounded off to 39 to avoid complex statistical calculations. This has been used as a cutting line to divide the household families into high and low development levels. Those getting a score of 39 and above have been categorized as families with high social development and those getting a score of 38 and below have been grouped as families with low social development level. Based on this cutting line, out of the total of 340 households of our study, 179 of them (52.65 percent) belong to the high social development level and 161(47.35 percent) belong to the low social development level as shown in the table 1.2.

TABLE 1.2
Distribution of Respondents based on Levels of Social Development

Level of social development	No of respondents	Percentage
Low	161	47.35
High	179	52.65
Total	340	100.00

In the design of our study the questionnaire consisting of most significant questions numbering about 19 questions has been undertaken. The responses have been clubbed into manageable categories e.g., respondents falling in different income categories have been condensed into two categories: APL and BPL. Similarly, respondents belonging to various educational levels have been put in to three categories: low educated, medium educated and high educated. For correlation only some significant questions have been taken into consideration. Hence, we have tried to correlate the two levels of social development with the accessibility, utility and satisfaction of five utility services, namely drinking water, health care, primary education, road transport and public distribution services. We have tried to see if the findings of our study substantiate the hypothesis that we have formulated, or these hypotheses are null or do not prove.

ACCESSIBILITY OF PUBLIC UTILITY SERVICES AND THE LEVEL OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Accessibility of a service to one's convenience is very important. A person can comfortably utilize a service if it is near his/her house. Do people belonging to different levels of social development have same access to basic public utility services or not? Does a person's level of social development determines/affects his/her accessibility (proximity) to a basic public utility service or not? These are some of the

questions which need to be answered. To analyse the above stated questions, respondents belonging to two levels social development are asked a few questions regarding water, health, education, transport and public distribution services.

Accessibility of Water and the Level of Social Development

Safe drinking water is a basic public utility service. In rural society, water is required not only for the consumption of members of the family but also for domestic cattle and even for agricultural purposes. It is essential that there is easy accessibility of water to people belonging to different levels of social development. It is interesting to see the correlation between easy accessibility of water and the level of social development. Table 1.3 shows the responses of respondents in this regard.

TABLE 1.3

Responses of Respondents Belonging to the Two Levels of Social Development on Accessibility of Public Tap

Distance of public water tap	Low level of social development	High level of social development	Total
Less than 100mts.	99(29.12%)	125(36.77%)	224(65.89%)
More than 100mts.	62(18.23%)	54(15.88%)	116(34.11%)
Total	161(47.35%)	179(52.65%)	340(100.00%)

Note: Figures within brackets represent percentages.

Analysis of data indicates that majority of respondents 36.77 percent (125) who have the easy access (less than 100 metres from their homes) of drinking water belong to the high level of social development while, 29.12 percent (99) respondents belong to low level of social development. However, if we look at data regarding drinking water source being more than 100 metres away from the residence of the respondents it is found that majority of respondents constituting 18.23 percent (62) belong to lower segment, while 54 respondents constituting 15.88 percent belong to high level of social development. Thus, it can be said that respondents belonging to high level of social development have the easier access to drinking water, while majority of respondents belonging to low level of social development have less easier access to drinking water.

Accessibility of Public Health Centre (PHC) and the Level of Social Development

Availability of PHC in proximity is also very important, especially in case of medical emergencies. Respondents belonging to the two levels of social development of our study were asked a question on the accessibility of PHC from their residence. Table 1.4 shows the responses of respondents belonging to the two levels of social development in this regard.

TABLE 1.4

Responses of Respondents Belonging to the Two Levels of Social Development on Accessibility of PHC

	Low level of social development	High level of social development	Total
Less than One km.	67(19.70%)	111(32.65%)	178(52.35%)
1 to 3Km	94(27.65%)	68(20.00%)	162(47.65%)
More than 3Km	0(00%)	0(00%)	0(0%)
Total	161(47.35%)	179(52.65%)	340(100.00%)

Note: Figures within brackets represent percentages.

The above table indicates that out of 178 respondents who have public health centre at a distance of less than one kilometre from their residence, majority of 111 respondents constituting 32.65 percent belong to the category of high level of social development, while 67 constituting 19.70 percent belong to low level of social development. Regarding PHC existing one to three kilometres away from their homes, it is found that majority of 94 respondents i.e., 27.65 percent belong to low level of social development while 68 respondents constituting 20 percent belong to high level of social development. None of the respondents belonging to the two levels of social development fall in the “more than three kilometres” category. Thus, we can conclude by saying that respondents belonging to higher social development segment have better access to PHC than the respondents belonging to lower segment do. The relatively difficult approach to PHC is to more respondents belonging to lower level than to those belonging to higher level.

Accessibility of Primary School and the Level of Social Development

School, especially primary school for small children in a hilly terrain is a must in every society. More important is that access to education is available to all the section of society uniformly. Given equal opportunities, children belonging to lower sections of society can also raise their position in society. So, distance of primary school from one’s residence is quite a significant factor. In order to ascertain whether primary school is accessible to the respondents of the study belonging to the two levels of social development or not, a question was asked from the respondents. Table 1.5 shows the responses of respondents belonging to the two levels of social development in this regard.

TABLE 1.5

Responses of Respondents Belonging to the Two Levels of Social Development on Accessibility of Primary School

Distance of Primary School	Low level of social development	High level of social development	Total
Less than 1 km.	101(29.70%)	143(42.06%)	244(71.76%)
1-3Km	60(17.65%)	29(8.53%)	89(26.18%)
More than 3Km	0(00%)	7(2.06%)	7(2.06%)
Total	161(47.35%)	179(52.65%)	340(100.00%)

Note: Figures within brackets represent percentages.

Analysis of data with regard to the accessibility of primary school shows that out of 340 respondents (this question was asked from all the 340 respondents since it is of general nature) for a majority of respondents i.e., 143 constituting 42.06 per cent belonging to high level of social development, the primary school is accessible at a distance less than one kilometre from their homes, while this access is available only to 101 respondents constituting 29.70 percent belonging to low level of social development. Further, for 17.65 percent respondents i.e., 60 belonging to the low level of social development and only 8.53 percent i.e., 29 respondents belonging to high level of social development the primary school is accessible at a distance ranging from one to three kilometres from their homes. Only 2.06 per cent respondents i.e., seven belonging to high level of social development stated that this facility is available to them at a distance of more than 3 kilometres from their homes. Thus, we can conclude by saying that firstly, primary school is more easily accessible to majority of respondents belonging to high level of social development than to the

respondents belonging to lower level. Secondly, for larger number of respondents belonging to low level of social development, the school is one to three kilometres away, while it is so for a smaller number of respondents belonging to high level of social development. The distribution here is quite skewed. However, for a few respondents belonging to high level of social development this facility of education is available at a distance of more than three kilometres. Hence, it is clear that for larger number of respondents belonging to higher level of social development have much easier access to primary school as compared to the respondents belonging to low level of social development.

Accessibility of Roads and the Level of Social Development

All weather roads are important for the smooth travel from one place to another. In a state like Himachal Pradesh, where the population is scattered and the terrain is hilly road network is important for connectivity. Respondents belonging to both the levels of social development of our study were asked about the accessibility of all-weather roads from their residence. Table 1.6 shows the responses of respondents belonging to the two levels of social development in this regard.

TABLE 1.6
Responses of Respondents Belonging to the Two Levels of Social Development on Accessibility of All Weather Roads

Distance of road	Low level of social development	High level of social development	Total
Less than 1 Km	89(26.18%)	102(30.00%)	191(56.18%)
1 to 3 Km	66(19.41%)	60(17.65%)	126(37.06%)
More than 3 Km	6(1.76%)	17(5.00%)	23(6.76%)
Total	161(47.35%)	179(52.65%)	340(100.00%)

Note: Figures within brackets represent percentages.

Analysis of data indicates that out of 340 respondents, 30 per cent respondents belonging to the high level of social development and 26.18 per cent belonging to the low level of social development are of the opinion that all weather roads are accessible to them within a distance of less than one kilometre from their homes. However, 19.41 per cent of respondent belonging to the low level of social development and 17.65 per cent respondents of high level of social development stated that road is one to three kilometres away from their homes. Only 5 per cent respondent (7) belonging to the high level of social development and 1.76 per cent (6) belonging to the low level of social development stated that road is more than three kilometres away from their house. Thus, we can say that for majority of respondents belonging to high as well as low level of social development, road is easily accessible. For almost equal number of respondents belonging to low and high level of social development road is between one to three kilometres from their homes. In fact, to larger number of respondents belonging to high social development the road is more than three kilometres away from their homes.

Accessibility of PDS and the Level of Social Development

Public Distribution System (PDS) which is a joint responsibility of Government of India and state governments aims at providing food grains to the poor at affordable prices, so that people have food security. Not only the availability of PDS is enough but it is also important that it operates at a place which is easily accessible to all irrespective of their social condition in the society. To know whether the public distribution depot is easily accessible to the end-users belonging to two levels of social development or not, the respondents of the study, were asked about the distance at which the PDS outlet is situated from their residence. Table 1.7 shows the responses of respondents belonging to the two levels of social development in this regard.

TABLE 1.7

Responses of Respondents Belonging to the Two Levels of Social Development on Accessibility of PDS Outlet

Distance of depot	Low level of social development	High level of social development	Total
Less than 1 Km	54(15.88%)	89(26.18%)	143(42.06%)
1 -3 Km	101(29.70%)	73(21.47%)	174(51.17%)
More than 3 Km	6(1.77%)	17(5.00%)	23(6.77%)
Total	161(47.35%)	179(52.65%)	340(100.00%)

Note: Figures within brackets represent percentages.

Analysis of data indicates that out of 340 respondents, for majority of respondents 29.70 per cent belonging to low level of social development and 21.47 per cent of high level are of the opinion that the depot is within 1-3 kilometres from their homes. However, 26.18 percent of respondent belonging to the high level of social development and 15.88 per cent respondents of low level of social development are of the opinion that public depot is less than one kilometre away from their homes. For only 5 per cent respondent belonging to the high level of social development and 1.77 per cent respondents of low level stated that depot is more than three kilometres away from their house. Thus, we can say that for quite a large number of respondents belonging to both the levels of social development, the public depot is not very easily accessible. However, for respondents belonging to higher level of social development it is comparatively more easily accessible than to the respondents belonging to lower level. At the same time, it is also worth noting that a few respondents belonging to high level of social development are facing greater hardship in this regard.

UTILITY OF PUBLIC UTILITY SERVICES AND THE LEVEL OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Along with the easy accessibility of public utility services, it is also important that people make full use of these services. If these services do not function as per the requirement of the people, then people will not use them in full measure. To know, as to what extent the respondents, belonging to two levels of social development utilize the various public utility services like drinking water, health care, primary education, road transport and public distribution services, a few questions are asked from the respondents.

Utility of Water and the Level of Social Development Safe water connection is a basic necessity of healthy life. A person's level of social development determines the nature of connection he/she avails. In a government connection water in the public tap is provided free of cost, while in private connection citizens have to pay for the water according to the norms set by the government. It is generally seen that people belonging to low level of social development rely mostly on the fee water connection provided by the government, while those belonging to higher level of social development have private water connection, since they can afford to pay for the water that they use. In order to determine this correlation, respondents were asked questions in this regard. Table 1.8 shows the responses of respondents belonging to the two levels of social development.

TABLE 1.8
Responses of Respondents Belonging to the Two Categories of Social Development on the Nature of Water Connection

Nature of connection	Low level of social development	High level of social development	Total
Government	146(42.94%)	125(36.77%)	271(79.71%)
Private	15(4.41%)	54(15.88%)	69(20.29%)
Total	161(47.35%)	179(52.65%)	340(100.00%)

Note: Figures within brackets represent percentages.

Analysis of data indicates that out of 340 respondents, majority of respondents, 42.94 per cent belonging to low level of social development rely on the government water connection, while 36.77 per cent respondents belonging to high level of social development avail this facility. Regarding the use of private water connection, 15.88 per cent respondents belonging to high social development and only 4.41 per cent respondents of low level of social development have got private water connection. Thus, it can be concluded that majority of respondents belonging to both the levels of social development have government water connection. However, if look at the data about private water connection, we find that larger number of respondents belonging to higher level of social development are relying on private water connection and very few respondents of lower level of social development category are availing private water connection. Overall, it can be said that most of the respondents of the present study are dependent on the source of drinking water provided by the government.

Utility of PHC and the Level of Social Development

For any kind of medical treatment, a person, rich or poor longs for good medical services. To know the relationship between the level of social development and the medical services availed, the respondents of the study were asked to state whether for minor ailment they go to the government health centre or to the private clinic. Table 1.9 shows the correlation between medical facilities availed and the level of social development.

TABLE 1.9***Correlation between Medical Facilities Availed and the Level of Social Development***

Medical facility availed	Low level of social development	High level of social development	Total
Government	109(32.06%)	115(33.82%)	224(65.88%)
Private	52(15.29%)	64(18.83%)	116(34.12%)
Total	161(47.35%)	179(52.65%)	340(100.00%)

Note: Figures within brackets represent percentages.

Detailed analysis of the data shown in the table drawn above indicates that most respondents 33.82 per cent belonging to high level of social development and almost equal number of respondents 32.06 belonging to low level of social development avail the medical facilities of the government health centre. Regarding the medical facilities availed at the private health centre, the data indicates that 18.83 per cent respondents belonging to high level, and 15.29 per cent respondents from the low level of social development category rely on private medical facilities. Thus, it can be concluded that most of respondents belonging to both the levels of social development avail the medical facility at the government health centre. Thus, there is no marked difference in the use of medical facilities by respondents belonging to the two levels of social development.

Utility of School and the Level of Social Development

In today's competitive world people belonging to all sections of society want to give best possible education to their children. Even in rural India along with government run schools there is mushrooming of private schools. These schools in the name of teaching in English medium have started getting attention of literate as well as semi-literate parents. In order to know the viewpoints of the respondents of our study, we asked a question about their preference of school for their children. Do they prefer to send their children to government or to the private school? Table 1.10 shows the responses of respondents belonging to the two levels of social development in this regard.

TABLE 1.10***Responses of Respondents Belonging to Two Levels of Social Development on Preference of School for the Children***

Which school	Low level of social development	High level of social development	Total
Government	105(42.68%)	99(40.25%)	204(82.93%)
Private	9(3.66%)	33(13.41%)	42(17.07%)
Total	114(46.34%)	132(53.66%)	246(100.00%)

Note: Figures within brackets represent percentages.

Analysis of data indicates that out of 246 respondents whose children go to school, majority of respondents, 42.68 per cent (105) belonging to the low level of social development and 40.25 per cent (99) belong to high level of social development send their children to government primary schools. It is also worth mentioning that only 3.66 per cent (9) respondents of the low level of social development category and 13.41 per cent (33) belonging to the high level send their children to the private school. Thus, it is clear from the table that most of respondents belonging to both the

levels of social development send their children to the government school. However, a larger percentage of respondents belonging to higher level of social development send their children to private school as compared to the respondents belonging to lower level of social development. In fact, the difference is quite significant.

Utility of Roads and the Level of Social Development

To find out whether people belonging to different levels of social development prefer same type of bus service or do they prefer different type of bus service. we asked our respondents to indicate as to which type of busses do they prefer as means of transport. Table 1.11 shows the responses of respondents belonging to the two levels of social development regarding the mode of transport preferred by them.

TABLE 1.11

Responses of Respondents Belonging to the Two Levels of Social Development on the Mode of Transport Preferred by them

Preference for Bus service	Low level of social development	High level of social development	Total
Government	49(14.41%)	26(7.65%)	75(22.06%)
Private	69(20.29%)	109(32.06)	178(52.35%)
No preference	43(12.65%)	44(12.94%)	87(25.59%)
Total	161(47.35%)	179(52.65%)	340(100.00%)

Note: Figures within brackets represent percentages.

The analysis of data indicates that majority of the respondent's 32.06 percent belonging to high level of social development prefer private busses as a mode of transport while, 20.29 percent respondents of low level of social development prefer the same. The data further indicates that 14.41 percent respondents belonging to low level and 7.65 percent of high level of social development prefer government bus service. Further, it is also worth highlighting that 12.94 percent belonging to high level of social development and 12.65 percent respondents belonging to low level have shown no special preference for any. Thus, we can conclude by saying that majority of respondents belonging to both the levels of social development prefer private bus service. While nearly 13 percent respondents belonging to each of the two categories of social development have no special preference for the bus service, yet the percentage of those belonging to the low level of social development category is almost twice as large as those belonging to the high level of social development with regard to the use of government bus service.

Utility of PDS and the Level of Social Development

Respondents belonging to both the levels of development were further asked to state as to their number of visits to the public distribution depot. Responses of respondents are shown in the table 1.12.

TABLE 1.12***Responses of Respondents Belonging to two Levels of Social Development on the Frequency of their Visit to the Public Depot***

Frequency of visit	Low level of social development	High level of social development	Total
Every month	151(44.41%)	179(52.65%)	330(97.06%)
Once in three months	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)
Once in six months	10(2.94%)	0(0.00%)	10(2.94%)
Never	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)
Total	161(47.35%)	179(52.65%)	340(100.00%)

Note: Figures within brackets represent percentages.

The table clearly indicates that majority of respondents 52.65 percent belonging to high level of social development stated that they visit the public distribution depot every month as compared to 44.41 percent respondents belonging to low level of social development answered the same. Only 2.94 percent respondents belonging to low level of social development stated that they visit the depot once in six months. None of the respondents stated to have never visited the depot or visited it once in three months. It can be concluded that most of the respondents of both the categories visit to the depot every month i.e., they are utilizing the facility of public distribution system. Thus, there is no marked difference among them in the matter of visit to public distribution depot.

SATISFACTION WITH THE PUBLIC UTILITY SERVICES AND THE LEVEL OF SOCIALDEVELOPMENT

Along with information collected from respondents, belonging to both the levels of social development, on the accessibility, utility of public utility services, a few questions relating to their satisfaction level were also asked. This was done with a view to determine if people belonging to different levels of social development are satisfied with the services or not and to further see the extent to which the two are satisfied or dissatisfied with these services.

Satisfaction with the Quality of Water and the Level of Social Development

To be fully satisfied with the water supply, it is important that along with the *quantity*, the respondents are also satisfied with the *quality* of water available to them. Contaminated water not only leads to many stomach related diseases, it may result in people's dissatisfaction with the quality of water. Table 1.18 shows the data regarding the level of satisfaction with the quality of water among the respondents belonging to the two levels of social development.

TABLE 1.18

Responses of Respondents Belonging to the Two Levels of Social Development on their Extent of Satisfaction with the Quality of Water Available to them

Level of satisfaction on quality of water	Low level of social development	High level of social development	Total
Most Satisfied	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Satisfied	34 (10.00%)	53(15.59%)	87(25.59%)
Less Satisfied	127(37.35%)	126(37.06%)	253(74.41%)
Least Satisfied	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Total	161(47.35%)	179(52.65%)	340(100.00%)

Note: Figures within brackets represent percentages.

Analysis of data indicates that out of 340 respondents, almost equal number of respondents 37.35 per cent belonging to low level of social development and 37.06 percent respondents of high level are less satisfied with the quality of water. Thus, the level of social development does not seem to impact the level of satisfaction with the quality of water. Only 15.59 percent respondents of high and 10 per cent of low level of social development are satisfied with the quality of water supplied through to taps. It is also worth highlighting that not a single respondent belonging to the two levels of social development is *fully satisfied* and *least satisfied*. Thus, it is clear from the table that in fact majority of respondents belonging to both the levels of social development are less satisfied in equal measure with the quality of water supplied through taps. Of course, among those who are satisfied, the percentage of those belonging to high level of social development is slightly higher than those belonging to the low level of social development.

Satisfaction with PHC and the Level of Social Development Another very important question relating to the health facilities concerns to the overall satisfaction of the respondents with the treatment received by them. Are respondents belonging to the two levels of social development equally satisfied with the quality of treatment or not. It is with this objective that respondents were asked about their level of satisfaction. Table 1.19 shows the responses of respondents belonging to the two levels of social development on the overall satisfaction with the quality of medical treatment.

TABLE 1.19

Responses of Respondents Belonging to the Two Levels of Social Development on their Overall Satisfaction with the Quality of Medical Treatment

Level of Satisfaction	Low level of social development	High level of social development	Total
Most Satisfied	(0.00%)	2(0.59%)	2(0.59%)
Satisfied	135(39.71%)	141(41.47%)	276(81.18%)
Less Satisfied	19(5.58%)	33(9.71%)	52(15.29%)
Least Satisfied	7(2.06%)	3(.88%)	10(2.94%)
Total	161(47.35%)	179(52.65%)	340(100.00%)

Note: Figures within brackets represent percentages.

The above stated table shows that most of the respondents belonging to the category of high level of social development 41.47 per cent and 39.71 percent respondents of low level of social development said that they were *satisfied* with the overall quality of medical treatment received by them. Further 9.71 percent respondents of high-level category and 5.58 percent respondents of low level of social development stated that they are *less satisfied* with the overall medical treatment. Here the percentage of those belonging to high level of social development is somewhat higher than those belonging to the other category. Of course, this trend is reserved when we look those who are *least satisfied*. Only 2.06 percent respondents belonging to the low-level category of social development and 0.88 per cent respondents of high level stated to be *least satisfied* with the overall treatment. Thus, we can conclude by saying that most of the respondents belonging to both levels of social development are satisfied with the overall medical treatment.

Satisfaction with the Primary School and the Level of Social Development

Along with studies and other co-curricular activities it is important that a school has facilities like separate hygienic toilets for boys and girls of the school. It is also important that these toilets are maintained properly. Respondents belonging to two levels of development were asked to mention the extent to which toilets in their children's school are maintained. Table 1.20 shows the responses of the respondents in this regard.

TABLE 1.20

Responses of Respondents Belonging to the Two Levels of Social Development on their Overall Satisfaction with the Maintenance of Toilets in the School

Level of Satisfaction regarding maintenance of toilets	Low level of social development	High level of social development	Total
Most Satisfied	11(4.47%)	3(1.22%)	14(5.69%)
Satisfied	39(15.85%)	69(28.05%)	108(43.90%)
Less Satisfied	24(9.76%)	14(5.69%)	38(15.45%)
Least Satisfied	40(16.26%)	46(18.70%)	86(34.96%)
Total	114(46.34%)	132(53.66%)	246(100.00%)

Note: Figures within brackets represent percentages.

Analysis of data indicates that out of 246 respondents whose children go to school, 28.05 per cent respondents belonging to high level of social development and 15.85 per cent of low level of social development are *satisfied* with the maintenance of toilets in the schools. Data further indicates that 18.70 per cent respondents, belonging to high level and 16.26 per cent respondents of low level of social development are *least satisfied* with the maintenance of toilets in the schools. Further, 9.76 percent respondents of low level of social development and 5.69 percent respondents of high level of social development stated to be *less satisfied* with the maintenance of toilets in the schools. Only a few respondents 4.47 percent of low level and 1.22 per cent of high level of social development stated to be *most satisfied* with the maintenance of toilets in schools. Thus, we can say that broadly speaking most of the respondents belonging to both the levels of social development seem to be

either *satisfied* or *least satisfied* with the maintenance of toilets in schools. The data further indicates that the percentage of respondents who are least satisfied is higher among those belonging to high level of social development as compared to the those belonging to low level of social development. However, this pattern is reversed in the categories of *less satisfied* and *most satisfied*.

Satisfaction with the Transport and the Level of Social Development

Further, the respondents belonging to the two levels of social development of the study were asked to state whether they are satisfied with the government operated bus service or not. Table 1.21 shows the responses of respondents belonging to two levels of social development.

TABLE 1.21

Responses of the Respondents Belonging to the Two Levels of Social Development on Satisfaction with the Government Operated Bus Service.

Satisfaction with bus service	Low level of social development	High level of social development	Total
Yes	129(37.94%)	137(40.30%)	266(78.23%)
No	32(9.41%)	42(12.35%)	74(21.76%)
Total	161(47.35%)	179(52.65%)	340(100.00%)

Note: Figures within brackets represent percentages.

Analysis of data shows that out of 340 respondents, majority of respondents 40.30 per cent belonging to the high level of social development and 37.94 percent respondents of low level of social development are *satisfied* with the government bus service. Further, 12.35 percent respondents belonging to high level of social development and 9.41 percent respondents of low level of social development are not *satisfied* with the government operative bus service. From this table it can be concluded that there is no major difference in the responses of the respondents belonging to the two levels of social development. Variation if any is only marginal.

Satisfaction with the Working of PDS and Level of Social Development

To ascertain the views of the respondents belonging to the two levels of social development with regard to the extent of satisfaction with the working of PDS a question was asked from the respondents. Table 1.22 shows the responses of respondents belonging to the two levels of social development.

TABLE 1.22

Responses of Respondents Belonging to Two Levels of Social Development on Satisfaction with the Working of PDS in their Area

Satisfaction with the PDS	Low level of social development	High level of social development	Total
Most Satisfaction	27(7.94%)	51(15.00%)	78(22.94%)
Satisfied	97(28.53%)	90(26.47%)	187(55.00%)
Less Satisfied	32(9.41%)	32(9.41%)	64(18.82%)
Least Satisfied	5(1.47%)	6(1.77%)	11(3.24%)
Total	161(47.35%)	179(52.65%)	340(100.00%)

Note: Figures within brackets represent percentages.

In response to this question, out of 340 respondents, majority of respondents 28.53 per cent belonging to low level of social development and 26.47 per cent respondents of high level of social development are *satisfied* with the working of public depot in their area. Here the percentage of those belonging to the low level of social development is slightly higher than those belonging to high level of social development. Interestingly, in the category of *most satisfied*, the percentage of those belonging to high level of social development is significantly higher than those belonging to low level of social development. This appears somewhat unusual. In the category of *less satisfied* and *least satisfied* there is no notable difference among those belonging to the two levels of social development.

Accessibility and Level of Social Development

On having a through look at the analysis of data regarding the correlation between the level of social development and the accessibility of all the five public utility services, it can be concluded that with regard to accessibility of water, the findings of our study show that respondents belonging to high level of social development have the easier access to drinking water, while majority of respondents belonging to low level of social development have drinking water facility at some distance. The findings prove the hypothesis that higher the level of social development greater will be their accessibility. Our findings regarding public health services indicate that respondents belonging to higher social development have better access to PHC than the respondents belonging to lower segment. The difficult approach to PHC is to more respondents belonging to lower level than to those belonging to higher level. The findings prove the hypothesis. If we look at the responses of the respondents on education, a larger number of respondents belonging to higher level have better access to primary school, while for larger number of respondents belonging to lower level this access is difficult. The Findings prove the hypothesis. The findings on accessibility of roads indicate that for majority of respondents belonging to high as well as low level of social development, road is easily accessible. For almost equal number of respondents belonging to low level and high level of social development are of the opinion that road is between one to three kilometres from their home. In fact, for larger number of respondents of high social development the road is more than three kilometres away from homes. These findings indicate that public services are not necessarily at a more convenient place for the respondents belonging to section of people who are at a higher level in the social development index. If we look at the findings of road transport, these findings disprove the hypothesis. Findings on accessibility of PDS show that for quite many respondents belonging to both the levels of social development, public depot is not very easily accessible. However, for respondents belonging to higher level of social development it is comparatively more easily accessible than the respondents belonging to lower level of social development. At the same time, it is also worth highlighting that a small number of respondents belonging to high social development level are facing greater hardship in this regard. These findings disprove the hypothesis.

Hence, we can conclude by saying that on account of accessibility of public utility services, regarding drinking water, public health and primary education our study substantiates the hypothesis, which says that higher the socio-economic status of the respondents greater will be their access to basic public utility services.

However, about accessibility of roads and public distribution system it is found that our study disproves the hypothesis.

Utility and Level of Social Development

With regard to the utility of water, on the basis of findings of our study, it can be concluded that not just the respondents belonging to lower social development category are using public water supply provided by the government but even majority of respondents belonging to high level of social development have government water connection. The findings disprove the hypothesis formulated at the beginning of the present study i.e., higher the socio-economic status of the respondents greater will be their utilization of basic public utility services. Our finding on utility of PHC show that majority of respondents belonging to both the levels of social development availed the medical facility at the government health centre. Again, the findings disprove the hypothesis. Regarding utility of public school, it is clear from the analysis that majority of respondents belonging to both the levels of social development send their children to the government school. Hence, our findings disprove the hypothesis. On the use of public transport findings of our study show that majority of respondents belonging to high as well as low level of social development prefer private bus service. Thus, the findings disprove the hypothesis similarly, regarding the utility of PDS, our findings show that most of the respondents of both the categories visit to the depot every month i.e., they are utilizing the facility of public distribution system. These findings also disprove the hypothesis. This goes on to show that the people belonging to higher level of social development do not necessarily utilize the public utility services to a greater extent as compared to the people belonging to lower level of social development. Hence, it is clear from the analysis that about the utility of all the five services our study disproves the hypothesis that higher the socio-economic status of the respondents greater will be their utilization of basic public utility services. It is also worth highlighting that if, we look at the data regarding private services, and we find that respondents belonging to higher social development category are more inclined towards these services in comparison to the respondents belonging to lower level.

Satisfaction and Level of Social Development

Analysis of data about correlation between the level of social development and satisfaction shows that majority of respondents belonging to both the levels of social development are less satisfied with the quality of water supplied by the government. The findings disprove the hypothesis of our study, which is higher the level of socio-economic status of the respondents lower will be their level of satisfaction from these services. Here it is clear that not only the respondents belonging to higher level are dissatisfied with the water supplied through public tap but even respondents belonging to low level are also dissatisfied with the supply.

Analysis of data regarding correlation between satisfaction with the other basic public utility services (health, education, road transport and public distribution system) and the level of social development shows that most of the respondents belonging to both the levels of social development are satisfied with these services. Our findings disprove the hypothesis formulated regarding all these services, because it is not only the respondents belonging to lower level who are satisfied with the services but even those who belong to higher level of social development are also

satisfied with these services. Thus, on the basis of analysis of data it can be concluded that with regard to all the five public utility services namely, drinking water, PHC, primary education, road transport and PDS, our study disproves the hypothesis of the study that higher the socio-economic status of the respondents the lower will be their level of satisfaction.

To sum up, we can say that with reference to our first hypothesis, access to the public utility services, our study substantiates the hypothesis, which says that higher the socio-economic status of the respondents greater will be their access to basic public utility services. However, about accessibility of roads and public distribution system it is found that our study disproves the hypothesis. Our study disproves the hypothesis that higher the socio-economic status of the respondents in terms of caste hierarchy, family income, occupational status, education and age, the greater will be their utilization of the basic public utility services. Our findings have disproved the second hypothesis i.e., higher the socio-economic status of the respondents the lower will be their level of satisfaction from these services. One wonders whether this may be because the hill people, as a rule of thumb, are a contented people.

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