

An Assessment & Evaluation of Stakeholder's Awareness, Participation and Satisfaction Levels Towards Shimla Municipal Corporation's Services and Amenities

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study aims to evaluate stakeholders' Awareness, Participation, and Satisfaction levels with various amenities provided by Shimla Municipal Corporation. Moreover, it focuses on understanding residents' perceptions, engagement, and feedback to enhance service delivery and identify areas for improvement in municipal amenities.

Design/Methodology/Approach: We collected Data using well-structured and comprehensive questionnaires to obtain respondents' responses regarding various amenities provided by Shimla Municipal Corporation. We analysed the data using Smart PLS-4 and SPSS-25 software. The researchers categorised the levels of Awareness, Participation, and satisfaction.

Findings: Findings demonstrated the study on respondents' awareness, participation and satisfaction levels regarding various amenities provided by Shimla Municipal Corporation Reveals Significant differences across all three constructs, as indicated by ANOVA tests with $p < 0.05$.

Practical Recommendations/ Implications: Shimla Municipal Corporation policymakers should consider implementing targeted awareness programs, organising educational workshops, engaging youth, enhancing various public amenities, and providing staff training to improve service quality and community participation in Shimla Municipal Corporation-provided multiple amenities.

Originality/Value: This study provides valuable insights into Stakeholders' awareness, participation and satisfaction regarding amenities offered by Shimla Municipal Corporation. By evaluating residents' perceptions and engagements, it aims to identify areas for improvement in service delivery, fostering enhanced municipal management and residents' satisfaction. Its originality lies in addressing municipal service gaps through resident's direct feedback.

Keywords: Municipal Corporation, Awareness, Participation, Satisfaction, Amenities, Swachh Bharat Mission.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most critical concerns in the modern world is protecting human civilisation from the dangerous effects of waste produced by humans. Wastes are, in fact, the portion of raw materials that remain after their first usage and are typically undesirable. Among the various waste products, solid waste is produced in our society through human activities. Waste generation is thus influenced by the population, their degree of education, and their monthly income (Himabindu, 2015). On October 2, 2014, the Prime Minister of India launched the Swachh Bharat Mission to bring attention to sanitation and expedite efforts to attain universal sanitation coverage. The Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) and the

Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) are the two sub-missions that make up the mission coordinator, which was assigned to the secretary of the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MDWS). The goal is to achieve Swachh Bharat by 2019, a fitting tribute to Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birthday. This means making Gram Panchayats clean and sanitised in rural areas and implementing solid and liquid waste management initiatives to improve cleanliness levels (De, 2022). The two main parts of the SBA strategy are funding for restroom construction and behaviour modification. Programmatic in nature, the first is consistent with the government's overall administrative style. However, the latter places a heavy emphasis on community mobilisation in order to address the issue of open defecation instead of relying solely on the government's inadequate institutional processes. Based on Robert Chambers' participatory rural appraisal technique (PRA), there is a section to start triggering in communities to make them aware of the harmful effects of open defecation. The community-led total sanitation (CLTS) strategy is a programmatic approach that incorporates components of social and behavioural change communication (SBCC) (Khan, M.H, 2017). Municipal solid waste (MSW) management that is sustainable has long been a problem for both developed and developing countries. For municipal solid waste management to be sustainable, we must use an integrated strategy, regardless of the conventional way of burying the waste without any systematic process (Visvanathan & Tränkler, 2003).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Municipal corporations play a pivotal role in developing and maintaining urban areas, managing a wide array of services and infrastructure to ensure the well-being of residents. (Rajendra P.'s, 2017) discovered his research, Municipal Corporations contribute significantly to their areas' social and economic development despite their shortcomings. Numerous corporations have several successes to their credit. People's political consciousness has increased, and these institutions have triggered a democratic planning process. The 74th Amendment to the Indian Constitution recommends the establishment of the Municipal Finance Commission to assist with the financial needs of urban local government organizations. Due to the growing population and urbanisation of India's cities, a local governing body was needed that could work toward providing basic community amenities, including housing, transportation, health care, and educational institutions. Local self-governments must be involved in the current situation. The government must provide public goods. Civic amenities must be accessible to the entire public. Therefore, suitable urban local self-government procedures are needed, especially in municipal corporations (Asha, 2020). Privatization of operation and maintenance could improve the quality and reach of services. The infrastructure is beset by old, leaky transmission pipes and a lack of awareness among the people about water conservation (Rao, 2017). According to the study's hypothesis, citizens' sociodemographic traits affected how satisfied they were with specific service categories, and the study results were consistent with previous studies published in the literature (Orselli et al., 2017). The paper highlights the crucial role that corporations and the media play in the SBM. Therefore, the government should plan to actively include them in the SBM and create a more inclusive system. The comprehensive investigation presents empirical evidence of several elements that contribute to the effectiveness and reach of public health efforts (Bhattacharya et. al., 2018). Residents should consider that the government and the general public share equal responsibilities for garbage management. Children should be taught how to maintain the city clean from an early age through a required chapter in the school curriculum. The municipal corporation's decision-making process should always involve employee participation. To prevent confusion, the communication chain should be straightforward (Chouhan, 2021). Even though individuals are generally satisfied with sanitation services, the survey found that they are not. Policymakers are focusing on developing satellite towns due to the growing demand for civic facilities brought on by rural-to-urban migration. Many cities experience overflowing wastewater and clogged drains during rainy seasons, which suggests that urban local bodies need more workers. Even while sanitation has improved, additional work is still required, especially to educate women about hygiene (Talukdar, 2021). Human behaviour must be considered to develop a more efficient method of disposal of solid waste. The study has recognised important areas such as personal behaviours, laws enforced by the government, ecological consciousness, and activities. Important components of these characteristics need more consideration if we want to alter people's behaviour and enhance system performance (Kamboj et al., 2022). In order to execute the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, the PM stated that the government and the populace should cooperate. Everyone is hopeful that the Swachh Bharat Mission won't be another Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, introduced by the previous government in 1999 and had a similar objective but was far less effective (De, L. C., 2022). Ensuring a more equitable distribution of services

and balancing the performance of municipalities nationwide also requires improved service delivery in rural areas (Shahzada et al., 2024). The poll was conducted during the pandemic, limiting the amount of data that could be gathered from sufficient participants. Still, there is room for more research using a big sample size and a hybrid strategy (Sharmin & Tanjil, 2023). According to Siddiqui, (2024) their research paper the eastern and western sections of the city have better latrine facilities than the central areas. the PMC's eastern regions. The northeastern region of the city is seeing a decline in the number of families with kitchens on their premises. The central and northwestern regions of the city have a higher pattern of restroom facility availability, whilst the eastern and western regions show a lesser pattern. The results also demonstrated the joint effects of sociodemographic traits, service quality, and institutional effectiveness on citizen happiness. Better service quality can meet the expectations of the public. Better service delivery in rural areas is also necessary to ensure a more equitable allocation of services and balance the performance of municipalities nationwide (Shahzada et al., 2024). There is a need for improvement in the way that public services, including address information, parking services, veterinary care, and municipal police and firefighters, are provided. The results would enable local public administration to enhance the services offered in rural areas to keep the populace's trust (Romero-Subia et al., 2022). The contributions made by scrap workers, essential to managing inorganic waste, are still overlooked. Local political systems—especially Ward Councilors—require more dedication to promote grassroots change. Given the region's growing population and waste production, stakeholder cooperation is crucial for sustainable MSWM in TMC. Furthermore, waste reduction measures must be implemented quickly, calling for a decentralised, coordinated, and stakeholder-oriented strategy (Menon & Palackal, 2021). According to (Ajith 2014) study, the financial management of municipalities is appalling. The available resources are not being used effectively. Grants and subsidies from the government are not properly utilized or acquired. The revenue provided by garbage treatment is insufficient. One important untapped source of wealth is waste. Over three-quarters of the municipalities are at fault for underutilizing money. There is no organized accounting system in place in municipalities. For SWM, no municipality uses the same accounting technique as another. The complaint-handling procedures of most municipalities are found to be ineffective. Out of all the SWM components (Collection, Transfer, Treatment, and Disposal), Waste Collection receives the highest complaints.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The Following research questions have been raised based on the literature review:

1. What are the levels of awareness of residents regarding various amenities provided by the Municipal corporations?
2. What are the levels of Participation and satisfaction regarding various amenities provided by the Municipal corporations?

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

In the present study, we have the following objective.

1. To assess & evaluate the stakeholders' awareness, participation, and satisfaction levels with various amenities provided by Shimla Municipal Corporation.

HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis for the study was formulated based on a review of the literature and the stated objective.

1. There is no significant mean difference in awareness, participation, and satisfaction levels regarding various amenities provided by Shimla Municipal Corporation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Respondents' awareness, participation, and satisfaction levels were considered in attaining the objective. With the help of a pre-tested questionnaire, data was collected from the respondents from Shimla Municipal Corporation. Awareness, participation and satisfaction levels were assessed regarding the amenities the Shimla Municipal Corporation provided. The researcher categorised the levels of awareness, participation and satisfaction as follows:

TABLE-1 *Determination of Awareness, Participation and Satisfaction Levels*

Construct Category	Levels	Levels Range	Frequency
Awareness Levels Range (6-30)	Low Awareness	6-12	26
	Medium Awareness	13-24	291
	High Awareness	24-30	71
Participation level Range (5-25)	Low Participation	5-10	3
	Medium Participation	11-20	343
	High Participation	21-25	42
Satisfaction level Range (3-15)	Low Satisfaction	3-6	1
	Medium Satisfaction	7-12	307
	High Satisfaction	13-15	80

SAMPLE UNIT

The residents of Shimla Municipal Corporation are considered a sample unit for measuring the level of awareness, participation, and satisfaction regarding the Various Amenities provided. The residents covered under the Shimla Municipal Corporation constitute the sample unit of the study.

SAMPLE SIZE

Krejcie and Morgan's Formula helped identify the minimum sample size is 383 stakeholders of Shimla Municipal Corporation. A sample of 388 respondents was taken from Shimla Municipal Corporation. The functional responses of respondents were considered to make the study more effective.

DATA COLLECTION

For the present study, data was collected from primary sources. Primary data was collected using well-structured and comprehensive questionnaires to obtain respondents' responses regarding various amenities provided by Shimla Municipal Corporation. The questionnaire was divided into four sections: Socio-economic Profile, Awareness, Participation, and Satisfaction with multiple amenities and the functional regions of Shimla Municipal Corporation.

TOOLS USED FOR DATA ANALYSIS

This study uses various statistical tools and methodologies to achieve the intended results. These tools were thoroughly examined before being used. The software applications Smart PLS-4 and SPSS software (version 25) were used for Data analysis.

RELIABILITY STATISTICS

Reliability measures an instrument's consistency and stability over time. Put another way, a measurement tool's ability to yield comparable results over time is known as its reliability. The dependability of the measurement tool is essential for the study's conclusions to be accepted.

TABLE-2 *Reliability Statistics About Overall Awareness*

N	Mean	S.D.	Scale Range	No. of Items	Range of Score	of Cronbach's Alpha	Results
388	20.46	4.932	1-5	6	6-30	0.865	Reliable

Source: Data compiled by authors based on Field survey

It is evident from Table 2 that there are six variables related to overall awareness of various amenities provided by Shimla Municipal Corporation. The variables were on a five-point Likert scale where 5 denotes the highest awareness, and 1 represents the least about the respected variable. It has been noticed that the overall mean is 20.46, with a standard deviation of 4.932. It shows the excellent consistency of data. The number of items is 6. Therefore, the range of scores is

6-30. The Cronbach Alpha Value is 0.865, indicating that the data is reliable. The high Value of Cronbach Alpha shows high internal consistency in the collected data.

TABLE-3 Reliability Statistics about Overall Participation

N	Mean	S.D.	Scale Range	No. of Items	Range of Score	Cronbach's Alpha	Results
388	17.88	2.891	1-5	5	5-25	0.788	Reliable

Source: Data compiled by authors based on Field survey

Table 3 reveals five variables related to overall participation in various amenities provided by Shimla Municipal Corporation. The variables were rated on a five-point Likert scale, where 5 denotes high participation, and 1 denotes low involvement in the respected variable. It has been noticed that the overall mean is 17.88, with a standard deviation of 2.891. It shows that the data is reliable. The number of items is 5. Therefore, the range of scores is 5-25. The Cronbach Alpha Value is 0.788, which signifies that the data is reliable. The Value of Cronbach Alpha shows good internal consistency in the collected data.

TABLE-4 Reliability Statistics About Overall Satisfaction

N	Mean	S.D.	Scale Range	No. of Items	Range of Score	Cronbach's Alpha	Results
388	11.02	1.819	1-5	3	3-15	0.534	Quite Reliable

Source: Data compiled by authors based on Field survey

Furthermore, Table 4 shows three variables related to overall satisfaction with various amenities provided by Shimla Municipal Corporation. The variables were on a five-point Likert scale where five denotes highly satisfied, and 1 denotes the least satisfaction about the respected variables. The overall mean is 11.02, with a standard deviation of 1.819. This shows that the data needs better consistency. The number of items is 3. Therefore, the range of scores is 3-15. The Cronbach Alpha Value is 0.534, which signifies the data is reliable. The Value of Cronbach Alpha shows good internal consistency in the collected data.

INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

The table 5 depicts that the majority of respondents fall within the age groups of 18-35 years (46.1 per cent) and 36-55 years (41 per cent), with only 12.9 per cent aged 56 and above. Regarding Social-categories, 79.9 per cent of respondents belongs to general category, 5.9 per cent to OBC, 11.6 per cent to SC and 2.6 per cent to ST category. Education qualification of the respondents was 32.7 per cent are graduates, 28.1 per cent have up to matriculation and 20.1 percent hold post graduate degree and 19.1 per cent complete secondary education.

TABLE-5 Socio-Economic Profile of Respondents

Sr. No.	Demographic Profile	Category	Frequency	Per centage	Cumulative Percentage
1	Gender	Male	164	42.3	42.3
		Female	224	57.7	100
2	Age	18-35 Year	179	46.1	46.1
		36-55 Year	159	41	87.1
		56 Years and above	50	12.9	100
3	Social Category	General	310	79.9	79.9
		OBC	23	5.9	85.8
		SC	45	11.6	97.4
4	Educational	ST	10	2.6	100
		Up to Matriculation	109	28.1	28.1

	Qualification	Secondary	74	19.1	47.2
		Graduation	127	32.7	79.9
		P.G. & above	78	20.1	100
		0 to 200000	185	47.7	47.7
5	Annual Income	200001 to 500000	122	31.4	79.1
		500001 and above	81	20.9	100
6	Status of Residence	Owner	194	50	50
		Tenant	194	50	100
		Students	37	9.5	9.5
		Business Class	100	25.8	35.3
7	Occupation	Service Class	59	15.2	50.5
		Professionals	17	4.4	54.9
		Households	101	26	80.9
		Others	74	19.1	100

Source: Data compiled by authors based on Field survey

Income-wise 47.7 per cent respondents earn up to ₹2 lakhs annually, 31.4 per cent respondents earn ₹2-5 lakhs and 20.9 per cent earn above ₹5 lakhs. In terms of residence, 50 per cent own their homes, while 50 per cent are tenants. Occupation-wise, 26 per cent are housewives, 25.8 per cent are business owners and 19.1 per cent hold other occupations, smaller proportions are in service (15.2 per cent), students (9.5 per cent) or professionals (4.4 per cent).

Inference: The majority of the respondents are young and middle aged, with most belonging to the general category and holding graduate qualifications. A large proportion earn up to 2 lakhs annually, and home ownership is evenly split with tenancy. A significant portion is engaged in household duties small business, and other occupation. The data reflects a predominantly young, educated and economically modest demographic with diverse occupations.

TABLE-6 Awareness Levels of Respondents in Various Amenities Offered by Shimla Municipal Corporation -Mean Difference Analysis (ANOVA)

S. No.	Characteristics	Levels	No. of Respondents	Mean	S. D	f-value	ρ -Value	Significance
1	Awareness	Low	26	10.00	1.74	308.51	0.000<0.05	Significant
		Medium	291	19.84	3.43			
		High	71	26.78	1.33			
		Total	388					

Source: Data compiled by authors based on Field survey

Table 6 depicts the mean value of the several amenities offered by Shimla Municipal Corporation for low awareness, or 10.00; medium awareness, or 19.84; and high awareness, or 26.78. The respondents' understanding of the several services provided by Shimla Municipal Corporation has been analyzed using the ANOVA test. The Shimla Municipal Corporation also offers several amenities, and the considerable mean difference in awareness levels is examined. The result was a significant value ($\rho<0.05$). With the conclusion that there is a substantial variation in the respondents' awareness levels of the several amenities provided by Shimla Municipal Corporation, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Inference: Respondents' awareness levels regarding Shimla Municipal Corporation Amenities Vary Significantly. Higher levels of awareness correlate with a better understanding of the various amenities. The study revealed that the awareness initiative may have contributed to differences in the residents' knowledge of these amenities.

TABLE-7 Participation Levels of Respondents in Various Amenities Offered by Shimla Municipal Corporation -Mean Difference Analysis (ANOVA)

S. No.	Characteristics	Levels	No. of Respondents	Mean	S. D	f-value	P Value	Significance
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2	Participation	Low	3	9.00	1.73	129.33	0.000<0.05	Significant
		Medium	343	17.36	2.32			
		High	42	22.69	1.42			
		Total	388					

Source: Data compiled by authors based on Field survey

Table 7 depicts the respondents' levels of engagement in the several Shimla Municipal Corporation amenities. When participation is low, the mean value of the amenities offered by Shimla Municipal Corporation is 9.00; when participation is medium, it is 17.36; and when participation is high, it is 22.69. The ANOVA test has been employed to analyze the respondents' levels of involvement in the different amenities that Shimla Municipal Corporation offers. Examine the notable average variation in the levels of participation in the various facilities provided by the Shimla Municipal Corporation. The result was a significant value ($\rho < 0.05$). With the conclusion that there is a substantial variation in the respondents' levels of engagement in the several amenities provided by Shimla Municipal Corporation, the null hypothesis is thus rejected.

Inference: There are significant differences in the participation levels across different groups of respondents. The higher the participation levels, the greater the involvement or understanding of the amenities provided by Shimla Municipal Corporations. Shimla Municipal Corporation considers the factors influencing these participation levels and develops strategies to boost participation, particularly in low-engagement areas.

TABLE-8 Satisfaction Levels of Respondents in Various Amenities Offered by Shimla Municipal Corporation -Mean Difference Analysis (ANOVA)

S. No.	Characteristics	Levels	No. of Respondents	Mean	S. D	f-value	P Value	Significance
3	Satisfaction	Low	1	6.00	.00	260.15	0.000<0.05	Significant
		Medium	307	10.34	1.27			
		High	80	13.68	0.78			
		Total	388					

Source: Data compiled by authors based on Field survey

According to Table 8, the average value of the amenities offered by Shimla Municipal Corporation is 6.00 for low-level satisfaction, 10.34 for medium-level satisfaction, and 13.68 for high-level satisfaction. The satisfaction ratings of respondents with the various amenities provided by Shimla Municipal Corporation have been analyzed using the ANOVA test. Additionally, the Shimla Municipal Corporation's numerous amenities have a considerable mean variation in satisfaction levels. A significant value ($\rho < 0.05$) was obtained. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected, and it is determined that respondents' satisfaction levels with the different amenities provided by Shimla Municipal Corporation varied significantly.

Inference: There is a significant difference in satisfaction levels across the three levels, i.e., Low, Medium, and High. The paper highlights a potential area for improvement, especially among those with low satisfaction, and provides insights into how satisfaction can be increased for other segments as well. Shimla Municipal Corporation can use these findings to design targeted interventions to improve its residents' overall satisfaction with the services and amenities it provides.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that the respondents' awareness, participation, and satisfaction levels regarding the amenities offered by Shimla Municipal Corporation show significant differences across all three constructs. According to the findings, there is a range of awareness levels from low (10.00) to high (26.78), participation level differs from low (9.00) to High (22.69) and satisfaction levels range from low (6.00) to high (13.68). Therefore, the Shimla Municipal Corporation should communicate, encourage involvement through incentives and easily accessible information, and

improve service quality to address lower satisfaction. These steps will help close the gaps, and guarantee enhanced public participation and service delivery.

The following recommendations are suggested to Shimla Municipal Corporation:

- Develop and implement targeted awareness campaigns aimed at low-awareness groups. Use various channels, such as radio, social media, and community outreach programs, to spread information about the various amenities.
- Organize educational workshops or seminars for residents for the purpose and benefits of municipal services, such as waste management, sanitation, and public health initiatives.
- Organize community events where residents can actively participate and engage with the municipal services.
- Engage schools and local youth organisations to increase participation through educational programs and volunteer opportunities.
- Improve the quality of the amenities and services the Shimla Municipal Corporation offers. This could involve improving the cleanliness, maintenance, and availability of public amenities such as parks and sanitation facilities.
- Provide training for municipal staff to improve customer service skills.

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