

Modified BG Prasad Socioeconomic Status Scale: Updated for the Year 2022

Socioeconomic status (SES) can be defined as “a position attained by an individual within a system of hierarchical social structure [1]. The concept of socioeconomic status is being widely used in medical sociology. It is one of the key factors that have an influence on the health of an individual and family, social security system, as well as family health statistics [2]. Individual usually inherit the social status from his family, but in modern society it is determined on the basis of occupation, income, type of housing and neighbourhood, membership of the certain associations and organizations, material possessions, etc. [3].

To measure the socioeconomic status, different scales are used, of which, BG Prasad scale and Kuppuswamy scale are used widely. Whereas Kuppuswamy scale is applicable only for urban areas, BG Prasad scale is applicable for both rural as well as urban population [4, 5].

BG Prasad scale was first formulated in 1961, which was modified later in 1968 and 1970 by the developer of the scale himself [5,6]. The scale is based on the per capita monthly income (per capita monthly income = total monthly family income/total family members) and therefore it is applicable to individuals. The benefit of using the scale is that, as it depends only on the income variable, therefore simple and easy to calculate. However, as the value of rupee changes due to inflation, income is required to be updated from time to time to keep the scale relevant with time. Therefore, it is very important to continuously update the income categories of the scale.

The income categories of the scale can be updated considering the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the widely used indicator of inflation. The most appropriate CPI for revision of socioeconomic classifications is CPI (industrial workers), which is likely to reflect the expenditure of a workingclass family.

The BG Prasad scale developed initially, considered the base of CPI for 1960 as 100 [5]. There was an amendment in the base year by the Ministry of Labour in October, 2020 and the base year has been changed from 2001 to 2016 by introducing a linking factor of

2.88 [7]. Considering the new base year as 2016, there have been some updates of the scale in the recent past [8, 9], and an online tool was also developed previously to update the scale in real time [10]. However, as this calculator considers the base year as 2001 (the older base year), the values given by the calculator are no longer valid.

To update the scale for 2022, we took the latest CPI (IW) available from the website of Labour Bureau which is 125.1 for January, 2022.

Multiplication factor = current CPI (125.1)/Base index value in 2016 (100) = 1.251.

The new income ranges can now be calculated using the following equation:

New income value = Multiplication factor × Old income value × 4.63 × 4.93 × 2.88. Where 4.63, 4.93, and 2.88 are the linking factors given by the Labour Bureau. Using the above equation, the updated ranges for the scale for January, 2022 were calculated, as shown in **Table I**.

To conclude, there is a need to periodically update the income-based socioeconomic scales due to continuous changes in the price of the goods and services as a consequence of inflation.

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Table I Revised BG Prasad Socioeconomic Status Classification, January, 2022

<i>Socioeconomic classes</i>	<i>Original classification (1961) of the per capita income</i>	<i>Revision for January, 2022^a</i>
I (Upper)	100 and above	8220 and above
II (Upper middle)	50-99	4110-8219
III (Middle)	30-49	2465-4109
IV (Lower middle)	15-29	1230-2464
V (Lower)	<15	<1230

Values in INR/month. ^aRounded off to nearest 10/-.