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Understanding The Interplay Of Awareness, Participation & Satisfaction Towards Respondent's Perception Of Various Amenities Offered By Shimla Municipal Corporation: Insights From Structural Equation Modeling

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ABSTRACT
A Municipal Corporation is a legal entity created by a state or local government to administer a specific urban area. The governing body delivers essential services, including water supply, waste management, public safety, and urban planning. This study highlights the intricacy of people's participation in different functional areas of Shimla Municipal Corporation by examining the complex linkages between residents' awareness and satisfaction with the various amenities provided by the Shimla Municipal Corporation. A proposed conceptual framework has been developed to highlight the relationship between residents' awareness, participation and satisfaction with the various amenities. We collected data from 388 respondents of Shimla Municipal Corporation. The Smart-PLS 4.0 program evaluated the measurement model's validity and analysed the data. The results of this investigation demonstrate a significant and positive impact of the interaction between residents' Awareness, participation, and Satisfaction regarding various amenities provided by Shimla Municipal Corporation.

Keywords: Municipal Corporation, Amenities, Local Government, Waste Management, Urban Planning.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A municipal corporation is a local government with jurisdiction over smaller population segments than at the state or federal levels. **(Bird, 2001)**. A Municipal Corporation is a political entity comprising residents residing within a designated geographical area. This political sub-divisionary authority governs the selected region or territory and carries out localized government duties. These corporations carry out their varied responsibilities in compliance with the authority granted to them by the state government. Their primary responsibilities are centred on offering services to the general population. **(Doty, 2001)**. A Municipal Corporation must have several essential components. Municipal corporations are distinguished by their distinct public nature and formal institutionalism. Additionally, a unique legal authority is the reason these institutions exist. **(Dirie, 2006)**. A municipal corporation in India is a state-formed

department that serves the people living in a metropolitan area with a population of one million or more. Urbanisation and population growth made it necessary to establish a local government that could administer educational institutions, distribute health services, and regulate housing and property, among other essential community functions. These local governing organizations needed a clear constitution and legal framework to operate correctly. **(Venkatachalam, 2007)**. India's municipal corporations are in charge of various tasks and obligations. According to the relevant municipal legislation, the state governments assign a wide range of objectives to municipal corporations **(Pethe and Godke, 2002)**. The twelfth schedule of the constitution includes a brief list of the responsibilities and functions assigned to all urban local governance entities, including municipal corporations. One of the municipal corporation's primary responsibilities is to prioritise public health. In addition to aiming to eradicate infectious diseases or epidemics, it entails responsibilities for appropriately providing water supply, sanitation, and wastewater management. The public welfare is the primary responsibility of municipal corporations. Developing public facilities for education and recreation is part of working toward public welfare. Other responsibilities relate to regulations and inspection needs **(Sharma, 2020).**
Field survey conducted from January to May 2024. Convenience cum judgement methods were both included in the survey design. The participants filled out a comprehensive survey comprising eight socio-economic questions and a more extensive section with 37 questions covering areas such as awareness, participation and satisfaction regarding various amenities provided by Shimla Municipal Corporation.

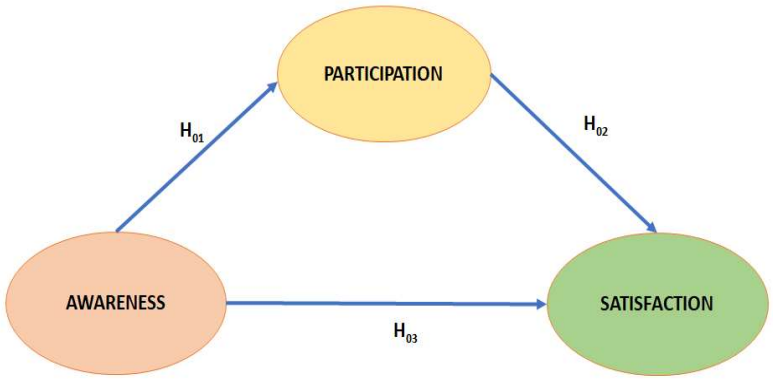

Figure:1 Proposed Conceptual model

Figure 1 depicts this study's conceptual model. Awareness impacts residents by making them aware of the amenities and services the Shimla Municipal Corporation provides, such as waste management, sanitation, public health, environmental protection, and community programs. Higher levels of awareness typically lead to a greater understanding of what services are available and how to access them. The respondents know the various amenities and their participation in utilising these services can increase. This may include attending programs, using public facilities, and engaging in local governance. Participation frequently indicates how much a community appreciates the municipal corporation's responsiveness to its needs and confidence level. Residents used these amenities, and it is possible to determine how satisfied they were. Accessibility to these facilities, the quality of services offered, and the overall effect on the inhabitants' living standards all affect satisfaction. Since involved residents may feel more connected and appreciated by their local government, higher participation rates are frequently associated with higher satisfaction. As per this conceptual model, citizens who are highly aware of the numerous amenities offered by Shimla Municipal Corporation are more likely to participate in civic activities, leading to greater satisfaction regarding these amenities.

RESEARCH QUESTION RAISED

1.To what extent do respondents know about the various amenities the Shimla Municipal Corporation offers?
2.How much of respondents' level of satisfaction depends on their knowledge of the amenities provided by the Shimla Municipal Corporation?
3.What is the relationship between respondents' overall satisfaction with the various amenities of the Shimla Municipal Corporation and their involvement in those areas?

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

H_{01}	There is no significant impact on respondents' Awareness of various amenities and their engagement in different functional areas of the Shimla Municipal Corporation.
H_{02}	The impact of respondents' participation in various functional areas of Shimla Municipal Corporation and their

	satisfaction with it is insignificant.
H_{03}	There is no significant impact on Respondents' awareness and Satisfaction regarding various functional areas of Shimla Municipal Corporation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- This study highlights the intricacy of people's participation in different functional areas of Shimla Municipal Corporation by examining the complex linkages between residents' awareness and satisfaction with the various amenities provided by the Shimla Municipal Corporation.

METHODOLOGY

This section discusses preparing data for final analysis, highlighting the need to address potential inaccuracies in questionnaire responses. Screening and purifying the raw data are crucial to achieving reliable results. The researcher collected 388 questionnaires from households in Shimla Municipal Corporation for data collection. The survey questionnaire consists of two parts: the first part includes a socio-economic profile of the residents, and the second part measures awareness, participation, and satisfaction regarding various amenities, such as individual consciousness, environmental impact, fund contribution, and social impact.

The first step of the questionnaire is gathering socioeconomic profile information, including gender, age, education, annual income, social category, occupation, and residence status. The second part is divided into three sections; the first examines awareness regarding various amenities with seventeen specific items. Using ten items, the second part evaluates participation in various amenities. The last part contains ten distinct items to assess satisfaction with multiple amenities. On a five-point Likert scale, which goes from "strongly disagree (1)" to "strongly agree (5)," responses serve as assessment tools. To indicate a significant contribution to their respective latent constructs, the model elements that displayed outer loadings greater than the recommended cutoff of 0.70 were framed appropriately. Items not satisfying the cut-off condition for factor loading of > 0.708 **(Hair et al., 2016; Henseler et al., 2009)** are removed. Furthermore, some items with values beyond threshold limitations were eliminated due to multicollinearity problems with particular indicators, as seen by Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values above the permitted limit, which is frequently 5 or 10.

Table :1 ***Measurement scale (using final constructs with values over threshold limits) > 0.7)***

Construct	Constructs Items	Outer Loading	References
Awareness	A10	0.714	Ajith, P. S. (2014) Afroj, S. et al. (2021). Almarshad, S. O. (2015), Begum, S., & Ahmed, T. (2023), Chouhan, A. (2021)
	A2	0.798	
	A22	0.805	
	A23	0.767	
	A25	0.722	
	A3	0.826	
Participation	P1	0.804	
	P2	0.833	
	P3	0.745	
	P6	0.641	
	P9	0.702	
Satisfaction	S10	0.765	
	S7	0.741	
	S9	0.651	

Table:2 *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
		ST	10	2.6	100
4	Educational Qualification	Up to Matriculation	109	28.1	28.1
		Secondary	74	19.1	47.2

		Graduation	127	32.7	79.9
		P.G. & above	78	20.1	100
5	Annual Income	0 to 200000	185	47.7	47.7
		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
7	Occupation	Students	37	9.5	9.5
		Business Class	100	25.8	35.3
		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 Collected Through Questionnaire.*

Table 2 shows the demographic profile of the research area. It facilitates comprehension of the respondents' diverse demographic attributes, such as gender, age, social category, education, income, status of residence, and occupation. The table shows that 57.7 per cent of the total respondents are females, and the remaining 42.3 per cent are males. Moreover, on the age-wise classification of respondents, it was found that the majority, 46.1 and 41%, belong to the age category of 18-35 and 36-55 years, respectively. Only 12.9 per cent of respondents are between the ages of 56 and above. For better analysis and interpretation of data, the individual age of the respondents was categorised using the range into young (18-35), mature (36-55), and old (56 and above). It is evident from the table that the majority of the respondents were from young and mature age groups.

Table 2 also demonstrates that out of the total respondents, the majority, 79.9 per cent, belongs to the general category, and 5.9 per cent and 11.6 per cent of respondents adhere to the OBC and SC categories, respectively. Only 2.6 per cent belong to the ST category. On the classification of respondents based on their educational qualifications, it is assessed that the majority, 32.7 per cent, are graduates, 28.1 per cent and 20.1 per cent of respondents have their qualifications up to matriculation and P.G & above, respectively. Only 19.1 per cent of respondents stated that their educational qualification was plus two. Regarding income, the majority of the respondents, 47.7 per cent, have an annual income of up to ₹ two lakhs, followed by ₹2 to ₹ five lakhs annual income with 31.4 per cent. Only 20.9 per cent of respondents have income above five lakhs. The table further illustrates the respondents' classification based on their residence status. It is revealed that the proportion of owners and tenants is the same, that is 50 per cent. Furthermore, on the classification of respondents based on their occupation, it is found that the majority, i.e., 26 per cent, 25.8 per cent and 19.1 per cent of respondents, perceived households, business class, and other occupations, respectively. Only 15.2 per cent, 9.5 per cent, and 4.4 per cent of respondents observed service class, students, and professionals as their occupation separately.

Table:3 *Descriptive Statistics (Normality Test) Of the Final Construct's Items*

Name	Mean	Min	Max	Standard deviation	Excess kurtosis	Skewness
A2	3.21	1	5	1.079	-0.783	-0.106
A3	3.2	1	5	1.129	-0.785	-0.099
A10	3.94	1	5	1.104	-0.551	-0.682
A22	3.13	1	5	0.968	-0.474	0.044
A23	3.14	1	5	1.031	-0.526	0.012
A25	3.84	1	5	1.067	-0.645	-0.544
S7	3.75	2	5	0.824	-0.672	-0.064
S9	3.47	1	5	0.858	-0.299	-0.093
S10	3.8	2	5	0.846	-0.751	-0.13

Table 3 comprises necessary statistical measures such as Skewness, Excess Kurtosis, Standard Deviation, Minimum, Maximum, Mean, and Median. The range of the means is 3.13 to 3.94. With most means above 3, this suggests a tendency towards higher responses and shows that respondents view these items somewhat favourably. Every item has a minimum value of 1, indicating that at least one respondent gave the lowest possible rating. This implies that

respondents had various ways to voice their thoughts. Response variability is indicated by the standard deviations, which range from 0.824 to 1.129. While higher values (such as A3) imply broader variation in responses, lower standard deviations (like S7) show that responses are more concentrated around the mean. The distribution's "tailedness" is gauged by kurtosis. The values vary from -0.299 to -0.785. In contrast to a normal distribution, a distribution with negative kurtosis is flatter and shows fewer extreme values, both high and low. The distributions of these items are reasonably symmetrical, as indicated by the skewness values, which are primarily near zero. A10 (skewness = -0.682), for example, shows a slight leftward skew, suggesting a propensity for respondents to assess this item more favourably. Despite response variety, the data indicates respondents typically gave the items positive ratings. Extreme ratings are less common, as evidenced by most items' generally flat and symmetrical distributions. Decisions regarding how these items are viewed can be informed by this analysis, which may also point to areas that require more research or modification.

Table:4 *Analysis of the Measurement Model*

Construct Items	Outer Loadings	VIF	CA	CR	AVE
A10	0.714	2.020			
A2	0.798	2.504			
A22	0.805	2.536	0.866	0.899	0.598
A23	0.767	2.319			
A25	0.722	2.017			
A3	0.826	2.755			
P1	0.804	2.594			
P2	0.833	2.766		0.863	0.560
P3	0.745	1.501	0.804		
P6	0.641	1.364			
P9	0.702	1.250			
S10	0.765	1.230			
S7	0.741	1.171	0.534	0.764	0.520
S9	0.651	1.092			

Table 4 shows the statistical measures for assessing Awareness (A), Participation(P) and Satisfaction(S). The value of outer loadings is used to evaluate item-level reliability. The outer loading in the table ranges from 0.641 to 0.833. **Heseler et al. (2009)** advocate a threshold outer loading value 0.7. However, according to **Hair et al. (2011)**, a variable can either be kept or deleted if its outer loading value falls between 0.40 and 0.70; if it falls below 0.40, it should permanently be eliminated. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values, which range from 1.092 to 2.766, suggest a moderate correlation. While it might not be a severe issue, it's worth monitoring. Cronbach's alpha is used to evaluate questionnaires' internal consistency or reliability. The current study demonstrates good reliability with CA values greater than 0.7**(Nunnally, 1967; Hair et al., 2016)**. Composite Reliability is used to measure the internal consistency. The composite reliability (CR) cut-off criterion is < 0.60 to 0.70. In this model, the values of Composite reliability are higher than 0.8, indicating that all of the constructs have good internal consistency. The amount of variance caught by the construct in relation to measurement error is shown by the average variance extracted, or AVE. Table 4 indicates that all constructs' AVE values were more significant than 0.5 **(Fornell and Larcker, chin, Hair et al.),** indicating acceptable convergent validity.

MEASUREMENT OF DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY

A concept that complements convergent validity is discriminant validity. Discriminant validity quantifies the non-one-dimensionality of items about two distinct constructs, meaning that two conceptually dissimilar constructs ought to manifest differently; in other words, the collection of measuring items pertaining to two distinct constructs ought not to be un-dimensional **(Henseler et al., 2015)**. It refers to how much the constructs genuinely differ regarding empirical data. Additionally, it assesses how much one overlapping concept differs from the other **(Hair et al., 2014).**

Table:5 *Fornell Larcker Criterion*

	Awareness	Participation	Satisfaction
Awareness	0.773		
Participation	0.513	0.748	
Satisfaction	0.423	0.306	0.721

According to **Hair et al. (2006),** it is the extent to which two conceptually identical conceptions are different. It assures that the variance of each latent variable is more significant for its block of indicators than for another latent variable. All of the constructs met the requirements for discriminant validity since none of the inter-construct correlation values were higher than the square root of the AVE, according to the measurement model results shown in Table 5.

Table:6 *Heterotrait Monotrait HTMT*

	Awareness	Participation	Satisfaction
Awareness			

Participation	0.571	
Satisfaction	0.623	0.458

Utilizing the Heterotrait Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) was an additional technique for determining discriminant validity. According to **Nunnally (1978)** and **Wong (2013)**, the HTMT approach computes the correlation between the constructs. Higher specificity and sensitivity rates were reportedly attained using HTMT, according to **Henseler et al. (2015)**. Values closer to 1 denote a lack of discriminant validity. The HTMT values as a criterion should be at least 0.80 **(Kline, 2011; Henseler et al., 2015)**. The HTMT for the present study indicates that all the value loadings on the associated construct are less than the threshold limit.

PATH ESTIMATIONS OF THE STRUCTURAL MODEL

Path estimation—nomological validity or hypothetical relations- was conducted to investigate the relevance of path relations in the inner model **(Chin, 1998)**. It was among SEM's most crucial elements. The regression coefficient β's significance is determined by the t value, which was acquired by the PLS Bootstrap procedure.

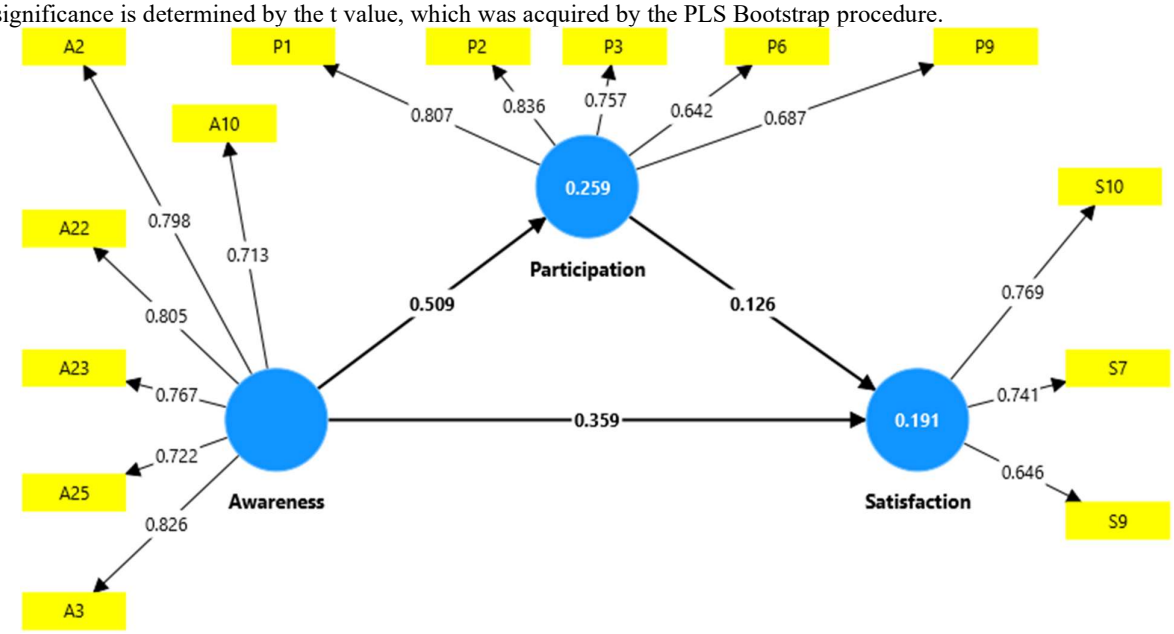

Figure:2 Measurement Model

Table: *7 Path Coefficients*

	Original (O)	Sample (M)	Mean	Standard (STDEV)	Deviation	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
Awareness -> Participation	0.467	0.467		0.042		11.114	0.000
Awareness -> Satisfaction	0.423	0.427		0.040		10.538	0.000
Satisfaction -> Participation	0.108	0.111		0.048		2.245	0.025

Total Indirect

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard (STDEV)	Deviation	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
awareness -> satisfaction -> participation	0.046	0.048	0.022		2.086	0.037

Table: 8 *Total Effect*

	Original (O)	Sample (M)	Mean	Standard (STDEV)	Deviation	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
AWARENESS -> PARTICIPATION	0.513	0.515		0.035		14.826	0.000
AWARENESS -> SATISFACTION	0.423	0.427		0.040		10.538	0.000
SATISFACTION -> PARTICIPATION	0.108	0.111		0.048		2.245	0.025

The direct and indirect effects between variables were analysed using a bootstrapping method with 5000 resamples, as shown in the table. The direct impact describes the relationships between the elements under study. In contrast, the indirect effects explain how awareness (A)regarding various amenities of municipal corporations affects satisfaction (S)level among the respondents through respondents' participation(P) in different functional schemes. Based on the survey responses, these statistical coefficients illustrate the connection between changes in one variable and the ensuing changes in another. They were computed using the original dataset. A $\boldsymbol{\rho}$ -value of 0.000 and β = 0.467 show a strong

correlation between **AWARENESS** and **PARTICIPATION,** indicating that greater awareness is substantially linked to greater participation. Better understanding is also strongly linked to better contentment, as evidenced by the significant relationship between **AWARENESS** and **SATISFACTION** (β =0.423 ***ρ*** -0.000). The correlation between **PARTICIPATION** and **SATISFACTION** is weaker, with a ***ρ*** -value of 0.025 and β = 0.108. It shows a lesser correlation than the prior relationships but is still statistically significant. Overall, the data shows a positive relationship between raising awareness and participation and satisfaction, with satisfaction having a minor beneficial impact on involvement. The table shows the total effect of endogenous variables on exogenous variables.

SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESIS TESTING RESULTS

	Testing of Hypothesis	Results
H_{01}	There is no significant impact on respondents' Awareness of various amenities and their engagement in different functional areas of the Shimla Municipal Corporation.	**Rejected**
H_{02}	The impact of respondents' participation in various functional areas of Shimla Municipal Corporation and their satisfaction with it is insignificant.	**Rejected**
H_{03}	There is no significant impact on Respondents' awareness and Satisfaction regarding various functional areas of Shimla Municipal Corporation.	**Rejected**

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

In this investigation, the Smart-PLS 4.0 program was used to examine the data and assess the validity of the measurement model. A thorough and exacting statistical technique was applied throughout the data analysis procedure to ensure the validity and robustness of the survey constructs. To evaluate internal consistency and reliability, Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR) were computed for every component. The outer loadings demonstrate the degree of correlation between each item and its appropriate construct, which is crucial for verifying each item's representational validity. Modest correlations between predictors within constructs are shown by the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) in this study. Reliability is demonstrated by Cronbach's alpha values larger than 0.7 **(Nunnally, 1967; Haie et al., 2016).** Furthermore, all constructs exhibit good internal consistency, as indicated by composite reliability (CR) values greater than 0.8. Regarding measurement error, each construct's AVE extraction was more significant than 0.5 **(Fornell and Larcker, chin, Hair et al.)**. This means that each construct can, on average, account for over half of the variation in its measuring items, demonstrating strong convergent validity. This study uses the HTMT ratio and the Fornell-Larcker criterion to assess discriminant validity. According to Fornell-Larcker, each construct's square root of AVE should be higher than the correlation between any other constructs. Our results demonstrate discriminant validity by showing that the former is greater than the latter. For all construct pairs, the HTMT value should be less than 0.90 (Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt).

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