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Transport Connectivity and Accessibility of College Students of Morni hills of Haryana

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Abstract: Transport accessibility is challenging in Morni hills and mountainous terrain create barriers to provide physical access to the students. Proximity and connectivity are major determinant for attending educational institutes. Family income decides purchase of vehicle to provide access to higher education in any hilly area of the country. The research analyses the transport facilities available for students to attend college within time.

Keywords: Morni hills, Transport, Attendance, Accessibility, Education.

Introduction: India with its broader economic base needs all weather roads to overcome hurdles created by terrain, rivers, monsoon and sand dunes. The road connectivity has significance impact on students commuting. District level transport planning provide framework for connecting rural areas with educational institutes. Public transport with low-cost subsidy to students makes accessibility to disadvantaged groups of Shivalik foothills in the piedmont zone of North Haryana. Low attendance is an indicator of poor connectivity of educational institutes. Comprehensive integrated policies are crucial to remove identified physical barriers with allotment of funds to make access to higher education centers in India.

Review of Literature: Mugoro, J. (2014) said that non availability of transport system impact attendance of students and further deteriorate with distance. Socio economic deterrents for underprivileged groups leads to low attendance in the classes, sometimes may lead to exclusion from the study. Choudhary et.al (2017) mentioned in their research that households with regular salary have capacity to purchase two wheelers for their children for academic purposes. Introduction and extension of road infrastructure in hilly areas shows a clear effect on primary education units and other basic amenities, mentioned by Rawat and Sharma (1997).

Area of Study: Morni hills are part of Shivalik foothills of Mighty Himalayas, mainly composed of sandstone, conglomerate, limestone, shale and boulders of tertiary period. There is no identified drainage pattern established except river Ghaggar and its tributaries. The Morni hills comprise seasonal rivulets, open flat land with piggy hogbacks situated on piedmont zone of Himalayas. Morni hills are only hill station of Haryana, receives torrential rainfall during monsoon season. The area is characterized with moist and mild summer while winters are a little cold with sunny south foothills. Although, it is a hilly area but faces acute water problem during summer season. Panchkula, district headquarter is nearest city to Morni hills. Seasonal rivers and chorusreceive water from rainfall and flow in spate during monsoon.

Objectives:
1. To assess the available transport connectivity for college going students of Morni Hills.
2. To establish role of transport facilities and its impact on daily attendance ofstudents.
3. To assess feasibility to provide transport connectivity to improve enrollment at undergraduate level.

Hypothesis: Connectivity to educational institute directly effects enrollment level of students of Morni hills.

Methodology: Primary data is collected through questionnaire-based response from college going students of Morni hills. The sample size consists one hundred college going students from different villages of Morni hills. The questionnaires were filled up with the help of our undergraduate students from Morni hills. Only those students were included in sample size who commute daily from their respective villages to selected colleges of Chandigarh, Panchkula, Kalka and Pinjore. Students of Government PG College sector- 1 Panchkula, Government College for Women sector – 14 Panchkula, Government College, Kalka, Brahmrishi College of Education, Pinjore and all arts, social science, science, commerce and education colleges were included for the research study. There were four nodes were identified to fill up questionnaires from college going students. These nodes were at Kheda Mandhana village towards Morni Panchkula Road via Nada Sahib, Traffic lights of Chandi Mandir, T-point at Morni Badi Sher Road and last one was at Himshikha bus stop in Pinjore. Timing of interview was 7: 30 AM to 9:30 AM for incoming students and for going back students, it was between 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM. The schedule of interview was for fifteen days only during in the month of September 2018. The vehicle owners were also consulted to ask daily student strength who took lift in private vehicles to come and go back to their home after college timings. College teachers from sample size were also discussed about the attendance pattern of students from Morni hills and about students grades for even and odd semester as well as for annual examination system. Secondary data also used to corroborate bus timings and road connectivity. Time table of buses and transit buses was also gathered from bus stand Panchkula, Kalka and Mani Majra town of Chandigarh. College timing and time table for classes were also kept in mind to analyses final outcome of the questionnaire-based information. The questionnaires were prepared on structured, semi structured and open-ended questions to fetch more and more relevant information.

Findings: Connectivity plays a key role to attend the classes in the colleges as per time table of the students. Better connectivity reduces time for commuting. Gross enrollments also affected by transport connectivity to higher educational institutes for students who hail from Morni hills. Connectivity also hampers chances of students to enroll themselves in any other private coaching institute or learning centre after classes. Distance influences daily attendance of the students as they have to took other buses or vehicles to reach in the class at time. Social and economic status of students helps them to purchase a small vehicle to attend the college as well as deprive poor students to purchase any type of vehicle. Poor students solely dependent on government transport facilities. Students coming from Bhoj Jabial, Thandog, Dhamsu, Gawahi, Khoi, Bhoj Kudna, Badi Sher faces big hurdles to reach in the colleges as there are no or poor bus service. These villages are poorly connected, only personal vehicle is a mode of transportation. Land slide, road blockade, over flowing of seasonal rivulets during Monsoon are permanent characteristics during rainy season. Some students avail services of transit buses

to reach in the colleges of Chandigarh. Alternate bus route via Raipur Rani and Kot Billah provide a little bit connectivity facility to students who belongs to Raytan area of Morni hills. Majority of students complains about no transport service to their destination from their homes. There is a correlation with distance with connectivity in the Morni hills. But most of villages located at Himachal Pradesh boundary are connected with roads. These villages also benefited with service of HRTC buses of Himachal Pradesh. But concessional students bus pass is not valid in the HRTC buses and students have to pay for their daily tickets. Girls' students face major problem to get enroll in the colleges of Chandigarh, Panchkula and Kalka due to poor road connectivity and non availability of personal vehicles.

Transport Problem Aspect for College Going Students

Sr. No	Problem Aspect	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Average Distance
1.	No Transport Facilities	42	42%	65 Kms
2.	No Government Vehicle	18	18%	43 Kms
3.	No Own Vehicle	12	12%	50 Kms
4.	Poor Road Connectivity	21	21%	29 Kms
5.	Connectivity during Monsoon	07	7%	All affected
Total		100	100%	

Conclusion: Majority of students misses their classes due to inconsistent transport system and disrupt their academic schedule. The problem is more serious at the time of examination as most of the students depend on public transport. High cost of daily commuting and poor economic condition reduces chances to purchase a motorcycle or scooter for any family of Morni hills. All weather road connectivity should be a priority to provide dedicated academic special buses from major source of origin and their destination.

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