

**REPORT**  
**OF THE**  
**SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEY OF AUROVILLE**  
**EMPLOYEES – 2000**

BASED ON A PRESENTATION  
HELD ON  
21 APRIL 2005

BY  
SEWA- SMALL EMPLOYERS WELFARE ADMINISTRATION, AUROVILLE  
AND  
SRC - SOCIAL RESEARCH CENTRE, AUROVILLE

AT  
AUROVILLE COUNCIL FOR URBAN RESEARCH (TOWN HALL),  
AUROVILLE



## **Abstract**

Supported by the Central Government of India and one resolution of the general assembly of UNESCO, Auroville was founded in 1968 as an experiment in “Human Unity”. Although Auroville did not commence with a fixed blueprint for social, economic and political development, it did commence with the implicit mandate to provide employment to the local villagers. In fact, the villagers were considered the “first Aurovilians”. In September 1970, a statement, approved by the Mother (of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry and the founder of Auroville), was circulated among the villages in the neighborhood of Auroville, where it was specifically stated that because of Auroville, there will be better employment opportunities, the standards of living will improve and health, sanitation and educational activities will increase.

In the year 2000, the Auroville resident population approached 1500 while the population of the seven most adjacent villages was approximately 15,000. The overwhelming majority of Auroville employees are from the local villages.

This Socio-Economic Survey done in the year 2000, although primarily a census type of survey concerned with economic and demographic data, also offers a first pan-Auroville assessment of the attitudes of the employees towards Auroville itself. Investigating the relationship between the Auroville practice of generating industrial, commercial and community employment primarily for the local villagers, and employee assessments of the international project of Auroville which is growing in their midst, is Auroville fulfilling its original promise to the local residents?

This presentation on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2005, was to done to present the highlights of the findings of the Socio-Economic Survey of Auroville Employees.

## **Background and History**

The afternoon presentation started with a brief history of SEWA (Small Employers Welfare Administration), in the early 1990s. Linking up the thread of how a long-felt need to find out more about our employees for the past 25 years, resulted in tying up this increasingly important need with that what could be done for the Auroville Economic Research program of SRC (Social Research Centre) as part the research through the database development work, and finding the same need matched by the funding agency SDZ (Stitching de Zaaier), by their willingness to support this enormous exercise, this need could finally manifest itself through a joint effort of SEWA, SRC, SDZ and with the collaboration of Prof Dr. S. Gunasekaran, Head of Dept of Sociology, Pondicherry University.

The detailed planning of this study started as early as 1998 by Meenakshi and Nolly of SEWA and got finalized in 1999; Professor Dr. Gunasekaran, a specialist in research methodologies, was approached by SEWA for professional assistance and became principally responsible for the survey instrument (composed from August to December 1999), the training of the 12 surveyors in January 2000, the training of the four data entry personnel and field supervisor, monitoring the program of data collection (February to July 2000) and data entry (February 2000 to March 2001). The data compilation process was started thereafter by the same team under the guidance of Prof. Dr. Gunasekaran, but had to be returned back to SRC in mid 2003 for making the final report. The report preparation subsequent to data analysis was done by SRC from May 2003 to June 2004, by a 2-member team of Harini and Venkateson from SRC after getting familiar with the entire database program and the survey database itself.

## **The purpose of the Socio-Economic Survey of Auroville Employees**

- To know the quality of life and standard of living of the workforce of Auroville, who are our collaborators in building the city of Auroville, from the perspective of Auroville being an experiment towards working for human unity.
- It is meant to uncover areas of concern in the village context in regards to which Auroville could help. Therefore much of the survey is focused on issues of housing, indebtedness, health, education and nutrition.
- This survey is meant to be redone and hence is a baseline survey for longitudinal measurement of Auroville’s effectiveness in helping the neighbouring villages to develop and prosper over time.

## Who were the people surveyed

<b>Total number of employees surveyed:</b>	<b>3762</b>
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<b>A. Direct Employees of Auroville</b> of Auroville units, communities, households	
Number of employees surveyed:	<b>2971</b>
Number of employees refused:	58
Number of employees missed:	227
Total number of employees:	3256
Percentage surveyed:	91 %
<b>B. Indirect Employees of Auroville (those working for a unit which was contracted to do work for an Auroville unit, community or household)</b>	
Number of employees surveyed:	<b>738</b>
Number of employees refused:	5
Number of employees missed:	180
Total number of employees:	923
Percentage surveyed:	80 %
<b>C. Village units</b>	
Number of employees surveyed:	<b>53</b>

<b>Total Number of Employees of Auroville Surveyed and used for the study, Direct and Indirect (A + B): 3709</b> out of an existing 4179 employees at that time.
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## Where do these employees work?

<b><u>A. Direct Employees: 2971 belong to: Units, Communities, Households</u></b>	
<b>Number of units surveyed: 150 (total number of units = 151)</b>	
» Commercial :	76
» Commercial / Service:	3
» Productive Informal:	6
» Service :	41
» Research :	7
» Trusts :	2
» Schools :	15
» Number of units missed:	1
<b>Number of communities surveyed: 103 (total number of communities = 104)</b>	
Number missed:	1
<b>Number of households surveyed: 378 (total number of households = 384)</b>	
Number missed:	6
<b>Number of household employees surveyed: 472 (total number of household employees = 479)</b>	
Number missed:	7

<b><u>B. Indirect Employees: 738 belong to: Contracting units</u></b>	
<b>Number of contracting units surveyed: 20 (total number of contracting units=20)</b>	
Number of contracting units missed:	0

## Survey Instrument

- The survey instrument of 33 pages (137 questions) was written in Tamil. Surveys were conducted in English or Hindi when appropriate. The duration of the individual interviews ranged from 25 to 50 minutes. The major categories of the survey instrument were **demographics, family composition, education, housing, land holdings, livestock, ownership of electronic media, patterns of household consumption, finance, nutritional patterns, health status and health services utilization, patterns of expenditure, assessment of working conditions, and assessment of Auroville.**
- this data collected got coded into approx 750 variables
- **This survey could not have been undertaken without the goodwill, openness and cooperation of Auroville unit-holders and householders. It is our hope that the survey report will become a useful resource for those in Auroville whose efforts include the training, growth, welfare and employment of the local population. We are grateful to all the unit-holders, householders and employees of Auroville who chose to participate in the survey.**

## Scope of this report

While the scope of the study was a very wide cross-sectional range of findings and the conclusions report only used part of these findings categorized into 13 chapters with 7 appendices listed below, this current report will highlight some important findings from each of the chapters; chapters highlighted in grey shade will not be addressed in this report, but their information is available with SEWA / SRC.

From the results of the survey, the issues of income, housing infrastructure (toilet), health expenses, indebtedness, and satisfaction with work in Auroville, became more significant than the others and hence this paper will reflect more on these issues.

### Table of Contents of Conclusions Report

#### Chapter 1:

Demographics – place of domicile, nationality, nativity, religion, caste, sex, age, marital status, education, children, place of work/occupation, income, years of experience

#### Chapter 2:

Family size, father/mother's education, education of children, employment of other HH members

#### Chapter 3:

Housing infrastructure –type, owned, toilet, water, waste water disposal, electricity

#### Chapter 4:

Land Holdings - plots (residential), agricultural land – own/lease, crop, land under cultivation, yield

#### Chapter 5:

Livestock – type, monthly yield, market value

#### Chapter 6:

Consumables / movable assets – type, price paid, income from assets

#### Chapter 7:

Monies –loans taken, reasons, repayment details

#### Chapter 8:

Loans given, interest earned, savings in bank

#### Chapter 9:

Fuel & expenses

#### Chapter 10:

Health & related expenses

#### Chapter 11:

Expenses from socio-cultural obligations (marriages, temples, festivals, pilgrimages...)

#### Chapter 12:

Personal habits – alcohol, cigarette, tobacco

#### Chapter 13:

Job Satisfaction scores & Perceptions of Auroville

Appendix –1 (caste, occupation, income)

Appendix –2 (father/mother details)

Appendix –3 (kitchen gardens)

Appendix – 4 (list of illnesses)

Appendix – 5 (food consumption pattern)

Appendix – 6 (Aggregates)

Appendix – 7 (Below Poverty Line)

Census Summary 2001

## Limitations

**This is a survey of Auroville employees. And it is possible that more than 1 employee per family is employed in Auroville. But in this study there is no indication whether each**

**(1) - employee belongs to a unique household or**

**(2) - whether 2 or more employees belong to the same household.**

**We have assumed (1) above and hence all our conclusions on family/households parameters are based on this. When we use assumption (1), we know there would definitely be replication of information Eg. – this would not affect the employee's individual information size, but it will not give the correct information on household details (type of dwelling, water, toilet, assets, etc).**

**In reality, knowing the profile and trend of this area, the second (2) is a high probability; but we cannot quantify this reality without figures. There has been no tool in the survey instrument to filter this (the survey did collect information about where each family member worked, but did not cross-reference employees from the same household/family).**

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Income	11
Years of experience	12
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## Findings

### A. Based on the individual:

#### 1. where do the employees come from? Village/Town of Employee

- Spread over 58 specific places (Towns, villages or habitations), from where the employees come for work, we see more than 60% of them coming from 8 villages of – *Kuilapalayam, Edayanchavady, Kottaikarai, Alankuppam, Rayapudupakkam, Bommaiypalayam, Sanjeevinagar, Periyamudaliarchavadi*. If Pondicherry town is included it becomes more than 70%.
- The employees living in Pondicherry-jurisdiction villages/towns account for 25%, 73% are from Tamil Nadu-jurisdiction villages/towns.

*From the Master Plan of Auroville, the villages and habitations that fall within city area and in the greenbelt are:*

- *Within the Masterplan (radius 2.5 km) - Kottaikarai & Ambedkar Nagar; Alankuppam & Annai Nagar; Sanjeevinagar & Pudu Nagar; Thuruvai; Edayanchavadi; Irumbai & Chitoor; Raya Pettai – 38% of employees come from these villages;*
- *Outside the Masterplan (radius 3.5 km) - Koot Road (Thiruchitrambalam), Acharampet, Ravutankuppam, Kuilapalayam, Rayapudupakkam – 20% of employees come from these villages.*

#### 2. nationality, nativity, place of birth

<b>EMPLOYEES NATIONALITY</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>Percent</b>
INDIAN	3650	98.41
NRI(non-resident Indian)	8	0.22
NEPAL	51	1.38
<b>Total</b>	<b>3709</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>EMPLOYEES NATIVE PLACE</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>Percent</b>
PONDICHERRY	891	24.02
TAMIL NADU	2730	73.6
<b>OTHERS</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>2.37</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3709</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>PLACE OF BIRTH OF EMPLOYEE</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>Percent</b>
TAMIL NADU	2630	70.91
PONDICHERRY	980	26.42
NEPAL	59	1.59
OTHERS	40	1.08
<b>Total</b>	<b>3709</b>	<b>100</b>

From the above tables (left) we note that employees born outside Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry, include people from Nepal (1.38%) and from other states of India (around 1%).

The table (right) shows that while 2630 employees were born in Tamil Nadu, 2730 are native to Tamil Nadu, and this 100 extra was born in Pondicherry.



### 3. religion, caste, sex distributions

Predominantly Hindu employees which reflects the profile of the bio-regional villages and the reason why Auroville follows Hindu festivals and holidays.

<b>RELIGION OF THE EMPLOYEES</b>		
	Numbers	Percent
<b>HINDU</b>	<b>3616</b>	<b>97.49</b>
CHRISTIAN	55	1.48
MUSLIM	28	0.75
OTHERS	10	0.27
Total	3709	100.00
<b>Major categories of Caste</b>		
	Numbers	Percent
VANNIAR	2446	65.95
Scheduled Castes & Tribes (Dalit)	612	16.50
Others	651	17.55
TOTAL	3709	100.00
<b>Distribution by SEX</b>		
	Numbers	Percent
Men	1955	52.71
Women	1754	47.29
Total	3709	100.00

From socio-economic surveys done of the villages in the Auroville bioregion done in the mid 1990s, 11 villages in the immediate periphery were:

Kuilapalayam, Edayanchavadi, Kottakarai, Alankuppam, Sanjeevinagar, Bommaiarpalayam, Irumbai, Ambedkar nagar, Annainagar, Irumbai-chittoor, Rayapettai – **55% of the work-force for Auroville come from here** and these villages have a caste distribution of:

**Vanniyars: 82**

**SC-ST: 11**

**Others: 7**

21 villages in the next periphery were: (Morattandi 2, Nesal 2, Koluvari 2, Rayapudupakkam PMC 2, China Kalapet, Kaluperumbakkam 3, Kodur 2, Thiruchitrambalam, MGR Nagar, Apperampet 2, Thuruvai, Mathur) – **18% of the work-force for Auroville come from here** and these villages have a distribution of:

**Vanniyars: 35**

**SC-ST: 52**

**Others: 13**

**Employment-wise, Auroville is maintaining a fairly equitable ratio of the demography of its closest bio-region in relation to major caste-groups - Vanur block is a reserved constituency, which means there is a sizeable proportion of Dalits in this block (around 32%); the other major caste-group are Vanniars who also have a similar proportion.** It should be mentioned here that Auroville has never paid attention to the innumerable class/caste ramifications of the local Indian society (largely because of what is its intention – ie to go beyond race, class and creed), which is a big positive step, in making sure that any person has equal opportunity to work, regardless of which social identity one conforms to. This has led to positive results in the prevailing local society by much economic progress for the socially excluded castes who were earlier subjected to forms of bonded and exploitative relations.

From the distribution of gender we see that there are 53% men and 47% women – while Auroville does provide an equal opportunity to both men and women and has broken existing patterns of disparities in the local Indian society (where women did not step out of their villages for work), there has not been a major need to enforce affirmative action towards a deliberate employment of more women. This has

been due to several factors – women have automatically turned up for work due to very harsh conditions in the homes for food and hence didn't necessitate any affirmative action measures; women who earlier used to spend eight hours in a day gathering and collecting firewood, could do it within an hour, because of the afforestation efforts of Auroville, where their men-folk were employed. This 'time-wise free' women work-force became a resource for the handcraft industries of Auroville and as per the experience of every entrepreneur, women were found to be more attuned for finer works like embroidery, design, knitting, painting etc. than men. They were found to have ample patience and perseverance to learn, easier to work with, sincere in their work and they constitute a major part of work-force in most of the industries except where there is intensive physical /manual labour (especially in construction work for the physical construction of the township). Thus in the context of establishment of handicraft industries in Auroville, a linkage is established with the local geography, people and resources.

## 5. marital status

MARITAL STATUS OF EMPLOYEE & SEX				
		MEN	WOMEN	Total
<b>MARRIED</b>	%	<b>56.93</b>	<b>61.74</b>	<b>59.21</b>
UNMARRIED	%	<b>42.05</b>	<b>29.65</b>	36.18
WIDOWED/DIVORCED/SEPARATED	%	<b>1.02</b>	<b>8.61</b>	4.61
TOTAL	%	100.00	100.00	100.00

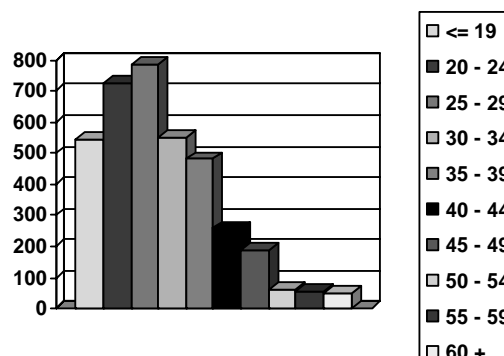
There are more married employees than unmarried employees.

While there are almost equal numbers of married men and women (1:1), the ratio of unmarried men to women is almost **3:2**.

However, widowed/separated/divorced employees represent around **9%** of the women work force, while that corresponds to **1%** for men; this might be because widower remarriage is prevalent and hence single men (widowed, separated, divorced) are fewer in general while single women heading households have more need for work. For an institution like Auroville, where almost 10 % of the women employees are single women, this is a large number and one could either say that they have the freedom and the scope for getting jobs and hence 150 families are getting supported because of Auroville; or one could ask how much extra care and attention is being paid to these employees and their families.

## 4. age classifications

AGE CLASSIFICATIONS				
	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL	Percent
<b>&lt;= 19</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>314 (58)</b>	545	14.72
20 - 24	401	324	725	19.55
25 - 29	434	353	787	21.22
30 - 34	264	288	552	14.86
35 - 39	234	247	481	12.97
<b>40 - 44</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>97</b>	258	6.96
<b>45 - 49</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>79</b>	191	5.15
<b>50 - 54</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>25</b>	64	1.73
<b>55 - 59</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>14</b>	57	1.54
<b>60 +</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>13</b>	49	1.32
Total	1955	1754	3709	100.00



Most of the employees are less than 39 years; and in the first age group of <19 years we have more women than men – mostly unmarried girls working in handicraft workshops; in this age group the men are helpers to carpenters, painters, masons, apprentices. While on payment rolls, we may not have child labour (ie below 14 years), but we should be aware that between 16-18, these helpers need training and education and they should be treated as apprentices and trainees and not as full-time employees, with specific emphasis on evening schools, sports and recreational facilities or there is the risk of the sociological aspects of premature ageing!

Between the ages of 40-60, there are more male employees than female – because men will become more and more skilled or they will be manual laborers and can keep working till an older age than women; for women who are almost equally distributed as men till 40 years, they start reducing in numbers after 40 years, because types of jobs available in plenty for women are either handicrafts or construction related, where younger women are preferred and as older women they can only stay as housekeepers.

## 6. distribution by educational levels

EDUCATION STATUS OF THE EMPLOYEE			
	Percent	M	F
<b>PRIMARY SCHOOL-1-5</b>	<b>20.65</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>MIDDLE SCHOOL- 6-8</b>	<b>23.27</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>MIDDLE TO 10TH - 9-10</b>	<b>20.03</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>35</b>
HIGHER SECONDARY- 11-12	5.31	60	40
DEGREE	6.34	75	25
<b>ILLITERATE</b>	<b>24.40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>71</b>
Total	100.00		
TECHNICAL QUALIFICATION OF THE EMPLOYEES			
	Number	Percent	
<b>POLYTECHNIC</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>41.45</b>	
<b>TYPING</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>32.12</b>	
COMPUTER	18	9.33	
I.T.I.	14	7.25	
TYPING AND COMPUTER	5	2.59	
OTHERS	14	7.25	
<b>Total</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>100.00</b>	

**24 % illiteracy** means

- **76% literacy for the employees and amongst this most of them are 1-10<sup>th</sup> standard;**

However the above figures are for the year 2000; we might have reasons to believe that by 2005, the illiteracy levels have dropped because education is being given a bigger thrust. Nevertheless it is still a matter of concern **that a fourth of the work-force is illiterate** – and those who have done 1-8<sup>th</sup> std, their functional literacy levels are quite poor; they have the basic education and they don't qualify seeking knowledge and learning further to take up any training – this is disheartening in Auroville and we need to put a real target of **100% literacy for all employees by 2010**. This is possible when each and every Aurovilian takes the initiative to see that their employees make maximum use of the facilities of education available and increasing these outreach facilities.

Now comparing how this figure of 76% fares with that of **this district 65%, Tamil Nadu state 73%, Pondicherry 81% and India 65%**, we don't find the figure alarming low or much higher than the standards around.

## 7. occupations

There were 131 jobs listed in the whole study; this was reclassified into broad categories below and we are a predominantly production-based economy as far as our work-force is concerned. After this stage we took a schedule of the Govt. of India and we classified these 3709 employees into skilled, highly skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled.

# of jobs types in each category	Categories	Percent
32	production related	27.93
12	construction related	23.11
23	service related	20.44
8	land related	12.19
26	technical related	7.28
3	Accounts/teaching related	3.05
7	field/research work related	2.00
4	health related	1.32
7	office related	1.16
4	food production	0.89
5	computer related	0.62
1	Don't know	0.03
132	Total	100.00

Categories of employees as*	Men	Women	Total	Percent
Highly Skilled	116 (6%)	62 (3.5%)	178	4%
Skilled	935 (48%)	206 (12%)	1141	31%
Semi Skilled	622 (32%)	1219 (69%)	1841	50%
Unskilled	281(14%)	267 (15%)	548	15%
	1954	1754	3708	

\*Source: Schedules from the Labour Enforcement Directorate, Ministry of Labour, Govt. of India

If broad classifications of the 131 occupations can be made from the above tables, we can put all employees into **2 main heads**: as **skilled** (to highly skilled) or **semi-skilled** (to unskilled) – this ratio approximates to **1:2**.

Also classifying them as men and women, the above ratio for men is almost 1:1, while for women it is almost 1:6. (ie amongst male employees, for every 1 skilled there is 1 unskilled, while amongst female employees, for every 1 skilled, there are 6 unskilled).

From the above table **male employees are 4 times as skilled as female (1051:268)**; while **female employees are more than twice as semi-skilled as males (650:1486)**. This is obvious because education levels also match with that – women having a lower level of education than men of the same age-groups.

Looking at the age profile of men and women who work, and also looking at the occupations in which women are employed most as in handwork like knitting, and housework (domestic maids, cooks, sweepers), these jobs are unskilled or semi-skilled. Hence these women are the first to leave employment when family demands require their presence at home – either looking after grandchildren, or tending to cattle, and for handicraft jobs which require dexterity in hands and eye-sight, younger women will perform better and more efficiently and hence the unit will prefer hiring them. Hence higher impermanency of jobs when you are unskilled or at most semi-skilled and are above 40 years and when they loose their other jobs, creates worry and fear. This has been reflected by employees 51% who do not like Auroville because of its job impermanency (see last section of this report).

## 8. incomes

Monthly Income Slabs Of Employees In Rs.				
		MEN	WOMEN	Total
< 500	%	1.13	<b>16.36</b>	8.33
<b>500 TO 999</b>	%	5.58	<b>40.08</b>	21.89
<b>1000 TO 1499</b>	%	<b>22.05</b>	<b>31.24</b>	<b>26.40</b>
<b>1500 TO 1999</b>	%	<b>28.34</b>	5.87	17.71
2000 TO 2499	%	19.59	1.94	11.24
2500 TO 2999	%	12.99	2.17	7.87
3000 TO 3499	%	4.19	0.74	2.56
3500 TO 3999	%	1.64	0.40	1.05
4000 TO 4499	%	2.10	0.63	1.40
5000 TO 5999	%	1.28	0.29	0.81
6000 +	%	1.13	0.29	0.73
<b>TOTAL</b>	%	100	100	100

The largest income slab is represented by **26% employees and is Rs.1000-Rs.1500**; this slab is also the one after which the men:women ratio changes trend; this means that for all the lower income-slabs upto Rs. 1500, the percentage of females is more than males; after Rs1500, this becomes reverse, implying more male employees at higher income slabs. This is in keeping with educational levels of men and women and also types of occupations of men and women (more skilled for men and more unskilled for women).

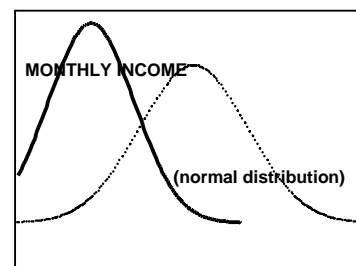
The next largest income-slab is represented by 22% of employees falling under the slab of Rs. 500- Rs. 1000, followed by the slab Rs.1500- Rs.2000.

From the table, taking the income slabs for men only, the largest slab is **Rs.2000-Rs.2500**, while for women it is **Rs.1000-Rs.1500**.

	men	women	total
Valid	1947	1731	3678
Missing	8	23	31
<b>Mean Rs.</b>	<b>2030.58</b>	<b>1003.48</b>	<b>1547.19</b>
Std. Deviation	1041.11	724.78	<b>1041.01</b>

**The mean/average monthly income is around Rs. 1547 for men and women together, Rs. 2030 for men only and Rs 1003 for women only.**

Care should be taken in using these average figures because they will not be representative of the entire range of incomes. The graph indicates that a perfectly normal distribution of incomes will be as shown in a dotted line, while **the actual distribution of the employees incomes is shown in black, which is asymmetrical, skewed** (with a high std deviation). **This indicates a wide disparity of incomes – too few incomes in the upper ranges.**



**The incomes quoted are the net incomes (take-home incomes) and do not include the savings/provident fund components especially for those working in the commercial units.**

However this figure of Rs. 1547 is not completely ‘off’ the mark, because when we calculate at a later stage the average income of 7709 people (who are the 3709 employees and their family members who are working), we also have this average close to Rs. 1560. This could also be interpreted that Auroville’s incomes are not much different from incomes earned elsewhere (if we assume that the remaining family members are working outside Auroville).

If 3709 people earn an average of Rs. 1500 per month, then Auroville is paying Rs. 58 lakhs per month as income; in later sections we will see that 7709 people who include the 3709 employees and other working members of their families are earning Rs. 120 lakhs per month as income.

If we classify the employees as those working in different sectors, we have the following average incomes:

- *the formal commercial sector (production units)- Rs.1695*
- *the formal service sector (non-production units like schools, offices, etc)- Rs. 1889*
- *informal service sector (domestic help, community or farm workers ,etc)- Rs. 1312*
- *informal commercial (village contracts for construction)- Rs. 1900*
- *informal commercial (cooperatives/piece-work) – Rs. 733 (not full-time)*

Looking at the income distributions of the employees, we find a positive significant (though weak) correlation between their satisfaction from wages with their wages itself.

There is an overall feeling that Auroville’s income scales are lower compared to the central/state govt scales and is often a subject of criticism from the outside, but Auroville is not like a regular formal productive or service enterprise – money would have to be balanced with work environment, leave, bonus, concern over welfare of employee’s children, health and other intangibles. When looking at these issues of work environment in Auroville, whether they are physical conditions of cleanliness, hygiene, non-polluting, or psychological conditions of good relationships between co-employees or with the management, Auroville does rate much higher on the job satisfaction scores (more than 70%), over the conditions of leave, benefits, rewards (see last section).

## 9. years of experience

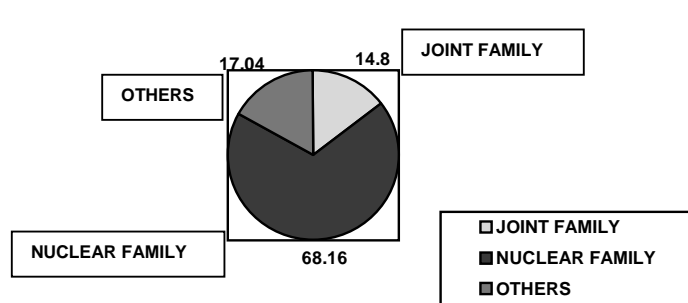
Year	MEN %	WOMEN %	TOTAL %
1966-70	0.26	0.17	0.22
1971-75	1.08	0.80	0.95
1976-80	1.59	1.72	1.65
1981-85	3.95	3.55	3.76
1986-90	9.18	7.21	8.25
<b>1991-95</b>	<b>17.96</b>	<b>22.94</b>	<b>20.31</b>
<b>1996-2000</b>	<b>65.98</b>	<b>63.62</b>	<b>64.86</b>
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00

**65%** of the employees have been employed **less than 5 years at the time of this Survey** in the year 2000 (and the majority of them employed at the Rs. 1000-Rs1500 slab- see Appendix); and another **20%** in the previous 5 years. This is the period 1996-2000 when we got a lot of cash inflows to Auroville through grants, donations, projects and this meant a big boost to building activities.

While the % of male and % of female employees joining in any 5-year period is almost the same, only in the period 1991-1995, the latter is more than the former (23, 18).

## B. Based on the household/family:

### 1. family type, size



Family Size ranges (no: of members)	Percent
1-2	7.07
3-4	38.45
<b>5-6</b>	<b>42.03</b>
7-8	9.95
9-10	1.75
>10	0.70

**Others:** eg: sister/brother who comes to live with their married sister/brother.

Family members are predominantly 5-6 people in a family (man, wife, 2 children and one old person)

AVERAGE FAMILY SIZE OF THE EMPLOYEE	Tamil Nadu avg	Pondy avg
Mean	<b>4.76</b>	<b>4.3</b>

### 2. family structure

HEAD OF THE FAMILY	MEN	WOMEN	total	%
SELF (EMPLOYEE)	<b>903 (46%)</b>	<b>440 (25%)</b>	1343	36
HUSBAND	<b>46 (2.5%)</b>	<b>735 (42%)</b>	781	21
WIFE	<b>172 (9%)</b>	<b>7</b>	179	5
FATHER	<b>553 (28%)</b>	<b>314 (18%)</b>	867	23
MOTHER	<b>212 (11%)</b>	<b>171 (10%)</b>	383	10
OTHERS	69 (3.5%)	87 (5%)	156	4
Total	1955	1754	3709	100

Around **69%** ( $903+46+735+553+314$ ) of the employees families are headed by men and around **27%** ( $440+7+172+212+171$ ) of them are headed by women.

HEAD OF THE FAMILY * MARITAL STATUS, for female employees				
	MARRIED	UNMARRIED	WIDOWED/DIVORCED/ SEPARATED	Total
SELF (Employee)	<b>278</b>	32	<b>130</b>	440
WIFE	5	2		7
MOTHER	24	<b>140</b>	7	171
Total	307 (50%)	174 (22%)	137 (28%)	618

Looking at the **female** employees who are coming from woman-headed families, we see that **50%** of them are married, **28%** unmarried, **22%** widowed/separated. Most of the married female employees are themselves head of families ( $278/307$ ); mostly the mothers of unmarried women are head of families ( $140/174$ ); and widowed/separated women are mostly head of families ( $130/137$ ).

### 3. children of employees

EMPLOYEES HAVE CHILDREN IN THEIR FAMILY		
	numbers	Percent
YES	2264	61.04
NO	1445	38.96
Total	3709	100.00

These children need not be their own children, but also children in the family where they live/dwell (children of sister, brother, etc)

- **In all those families where there are children, for every employee who doesn't send a child to school, there are almost 3 employees who send a child to school (681:1865).**
- In numbers, the **total non-school going children are 850.**
- In numbers, the **total school going children are 3387.**
- **For every child which doesn't go to school there are 4 that go to school.**
- **Average number of children per family: 1-2**

REASONS FOR NOT GOING TO SCHOOL	nos	%
HANDICAPPED	28	0.75
DUE TO POVERTY	86	2.32
LACK OF INTEREST	67	1.81
GOING TO WORK	28	0.75
DOING HOUSE-HOLD WORK	4	0.11
<b>OTHERS</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>7.23</b>
<b>BABIES</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>3.29</b>
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>16.26</b>

Out of the 681 employees who have non-school going children, **603** employees state reasons for not sending the child to school – apart from 122 of them having babies (too young to go to school), the main reason for not going to school falls under the category of **“others”** that mean - **puberty, child takes care of disabled elders, child takes cares of other children in the house – so girls will be the main victims and are kept at home.**

Other important reasons are poverty and hence non-affordability of time and money to go to school, lack of interest in education due to school rigidity/difficulty in learning (failed). **It is also ironical that inspite of these people being employees of Auroville, they are unable to send their child to school because of ‘poverty’, where there are many educational initiatives for school drop-out children.**

EMPLOYEES whose CHILDREN ATTEND AUROVILLE SCHOOL	Numbers	Percent
<b>YES</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>7.31</b>
NO	3438	92.69
Total	3709	100.00

**7% (271)** of the total employees send at least one child to an Auroville school; this becomes **15%** of employees having school-going children (**1865**); amongst them, the maximum amongst them go to New Creation School (46%).



**85%** of employees having school-going children send them to non-Auroville schools (private or govt), in the ratio of **1:5**.

When this survey was done in 2000, it did not include the Kuilapalayam Trust School and Udavi school, because they didn't come under the Auroville-supported schools at that time. Today (2005) figures might show not 271, but at least 1200 children of employees going to Auroville schools, if we include these 2 schools also.

#### 4. employees household members

- 45% of total population (ie employees and their families = 17628), is employed ie 7908,
- the remaining 55% is unemployed ie **9720**.
- Of this unemployed population of 9720, **93% ie 9023**, are not looking for jobs (**this includes 4200 children and 5520 adults**) and only **4 % are looking for jobs (397)**

- Unemployment statistically (**5520/13428**) is **41%** - these **5520 adults** maybe older women/men who are cowherds, goatherds, picking up firewood, looking after small children (who are not yet going to school), doing coolie/seasonal jobs from time to time – they will be contributing to the household economy, but the household would not be able quantify it.
- But people actually searching for jobs (**397/13428**) is only **3%**

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS EMPLOYED		
Members	Numbers	Percent
<b>1</b>	<b>1038</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>1607</b>	<b>43</b>
3	663	18
4-5	370	10
>5	15	1
Total	3693	100

We see that **2-working member families** form the highest group (**43%**), followed by **1-working member families**, and then 3-working member families. Patterns of lifestyle are changing from an agrarian to a semi-urban life style – nuclear families, 2 working members, 2 children.

**A separate database was created for information regarding the members of the employees family/household – this database had information on age, marital status, education, employment status and income. It did not have information on sex. This database was made up of 17516 records (not 17628) and had the following picture:**

**Average employed person's monthly income for 7709 employed persons – Rs.1561.25;**

The average employed person's monthly income of Rs. 1561 is not much different from that of the average employee's monthly income of Rs. 1547. This 1561 is for 7710 employed persons while 1547 is for 3709 employees. ie for more than twice the number of employed people in the total population, the average remains the same.

**Average monthly family income for 3709 families - Rs. 3258.00** (This has been calculated by finding the total income in every family and averaging this for 3709 families)

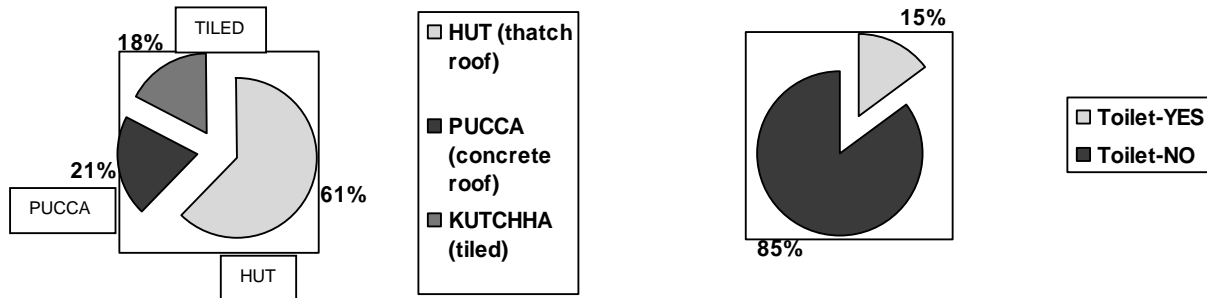
**A 30% Adult illiteracy rate** for the population, implies a **70% literacy rate**, while that of this **district is 65%**, of **Tamil Nadu state is 73%**, **Pondicherry is 81%** and **India is 65%**.

### Age Dependency ratio

A measure of the portion of a population which is composed of dependents (people who are too young or too old to work). The dependency ratio is equal to the number of individuals aged below 15 or above 64 divided by the number of individuals aged 15 to 64, expressed as a percentage.

**This is .37 for the population represented by 17516 people. (ie for every 100 working persons, 37 are dependent on them). The all India figures for the year 2000 were .63**

## 5. housing infrastructure



When we separate the employees on the basis of whether they come from a village or a semi-urban place, we have 84% coming from villages, while 17% comes from towns and semi-urban areas. This makes it more meaningful for us to compare figures for rural areas and compare figures for towns/semi-urban areas along with Census of India 2001 figures.

For those with salaries more than 3000 per month, 50% of them have pucca (concrete roofed) houses while those with salaries less than 3000 per month, more than 50% live under thatched roofs (huts).

**Toilet facilities are in general very poor and is indicated by only 15% of the employees having a toilet facility at home** (see chart above); this is true regardless of whether the employees live in the village or a semi-urban area (see the shaded line in the large table below); this is ironical because there is water availability in these areas (with individual water connections in some cases)

Looking at the issues of infrastructure the only relevant information at the outset is that of toilets – Auroville has very high sanitation facilities; however if we take all the neighbouring 8 villages from where 60% of the work force come, an average of only 7-8% employees have houses having toilets. One can argue that these villages have open spaces like most villages and hence no problem of space for defecation; however it should also be noted that hygiene care and sanitation conditions in Auroville has a very important priority and this priority has not trickled down to the neighbouring villages. But we would now have to categorise the population and we find that amongst these 8 villages, 44% of employees with pucca houses do have toilets. And hence, the first target for sanitation/toilets would be the remaining 56%. There are also 50% employees coming from villages further away from Auroville living in pucca houses without toilets, while for those employees coming from Pondicherry, 90% of the owned pucca houses have toilets.

Most of the employees from villages have household electricity and all have public water supply (some houses in Pondicherry with individual water supply).

<b>Pondy/ Semi-urban areas</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>16.39</b>
<b>Village</b>	<b>3101</b>	<b>83.61</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3709</b>	<b>100</b>

	Employee residence in Pondy, semi-urban areas	Urban India	Urban Tamil Nadu	Urban Pondy	Employee residence in villages	Rural India	Rural Tamil Nadu	Rural Pondy
<b>Housing infrastructure</b>								
Own house	56%	66.79	58.5	60.1	83%	94.37	91.3	84.3
Electricity	89%	87.6	88.0	91.4	78%	43.5	71.2	81.0
TV	60%	64.3	60.7	65.5	46%	18.9	24.3	39.5
Individual water connection/within premises	62%	65	48.2	71.9	25%	29	12.0	39.0
Drainage (soak pit or drainage)	64%	77.9	70	68.1	37%	34.2	27.4	20.5
Radio	27%	44.5	50.5	48.0	19%	31.5	38.6	33.8
Toilet	52%	73.7	64.3	65.0	8%	21.9	14.4	21.4
Telephone	3%	23.0	19.9	24.3	4%	3.8	5.1	9.2

## 6. agricultural land holding in acres

	Owned Wetland	Owned Dryland	Owned Land	Leased Wetland	Leased Dryland	Leased Land	Total Land
Numbers	326	393	671	41	35	69	700
Average	5.12	2.67	4.05	3.41	5.26	4.70	4.35
Std. Dev	26.73	4.21	19.19	10.36	7.63	9.68	19.14
Sum in acres	1668.66	1049.13	2717.79	139.97	184.12	324.09	3041.85

Of the 3000 acres held by 700 employees, 1400 acres are held by 400 employees from the 8 villages of Kulilapalayam, Edayanchavadi, Kottaikarai, Alankuppam, Sanjeevinagar, Rayapudupakkam, Bommaiarpalayam, Periyamudaliarchavadi. This indicates that the Auroville bio-region is still an agrarian area.

There is a question in the database of employees who give land on lease – their exact numbers are not available due to some errors in calculation.

## 7. crop names

643 employees have a total of 25 listed crops under cultivation; the first 6 crops are the major ones covering 93.5% of crops cultivated. All the millets have practically disappeared with a 1-2 acres here or there and this comes under Others.

CROP NAME	Numbers	%
CASHEW	237	36.86
CASURINA	159	24.73
PADDY	157	24.42
GROUNDNUT	22	3.42
SUGARCANE	17	2.64
COCONUT	9	1.40
Others	42	.93
Total	643	100.00

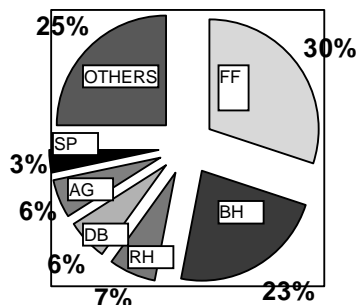
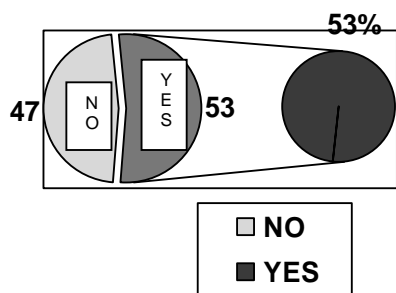
There is a specific question in the database asking about the **total acreage under cultivation with the above crops**. This figure is **1758 acres**, for the employees who are growing the above crops (**605**). This means that from the earlier table where total land holdings were **3000 acres for 700 employees**, using the figure of **1758 acres as total acreage under cultivation**, we can infer that the remaining **1250 acres remains fallow (at the time of Survey)**.

Amongst the **600 employees** who report the total acreage under any crop, **471 employees** give specific annual income returns of an average of **Rs. 25306.01** (the std deviation is very high), while **129 employees** don't know these income returns.

### 7. asset holdings

ASSETS	Percent	Rural India	Rural Tamil Nadu	Rural Pondy
<b>BICYCLE</b>	<b>75.6</b>	42.8	39.9	50.0
<b>TELEVISION</b>	<b>48.48</b>	18.9	24.3	39.5
<b>WET GRINDER</b>	33.57			
<b>MUSIC SYSTEM</b>	28.12			
<b>MOTOR BIKE</b>	<b>18.66</b>	6.7	10.7	14.5
MIXIE	14.96			
REFRIGERATOR	3.88			
BULLOCK CART	1.91			
HEATER	0.92			
TRACTOR	0.22			
CAR	0.11	1.3	1.1	1.4

### 8. do employees take loans, why and from where?



- FOR FAMILY FUNCTION
- BUILDING HOUSE
- TO REMODEL THE HOUSE
- FOR DOING BUSINESS
- FOR AGRICULTURE
- FOR STUDY PURPOSE
- OTHERS

Others = Medical expenses, survival needs (home-related), land purchase or purchase of consumables below (339)

loans taken for:	Valid
bullock cart	9
bicycle	93
tv	86
music system	15
Mixie/blender	11
wet grinder	55
Motorbike	65
Fridge	2
Tractor	2
Car	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>339</b>

**Loans taken from:**  
**63% from Friends, relatives, nidhis (small financial institutions), pawn-brokers**  
**20% from moneylender.**  
**10% banks**  
**5% working place (as advance)**

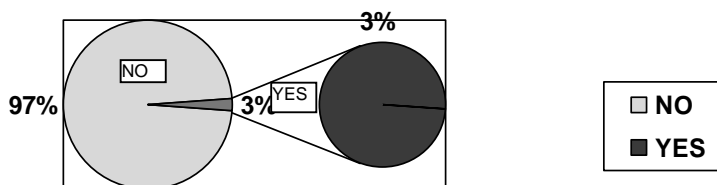
*A case-study: 2 women employees from Kulapalayam village had borrowed Rs. 2 lakhs from 10 people and for the last 8 years they were paying high interest and SEWA brought all the people together for dialogue and conflict resolution for 3 months; the moneylenders were warned them that this interest-scheme is illegal for which they could be imprisoned (kandu vati – very high rates of interest) – hence SEWA assured them of returning the capital not the interest and they finally had to accept it – an association was formed and help given through sourcing funds from outside to repay on behalf of these 2 women employees who could finally settle their capital dues – this prevented at least 5 women from committing suicide – not only these 2 women borrowers, but also 3 of their lenders who had borrowed from other sources (chit funds).*

**The problem in this area is the lack of awareness of interest and how it operates – since money is available easily for borrowing, people immediately take it and they do not understand how the economics of interest works and they get trapped into it. The need for education is a necessity here.**

	loan taken so far	INTEREST PAID monthly	ACTUAL INTEREST to be paid monthly
#	1919	1280	1235
Avg Rs.	22344.92	828.19	1011.22
<b>Indebtedness</b>	<b>Rs. 428 lakhs</b>	<b>Rs. 10 lakhs</b>	<b>Rs. 12 lakhs</b>

When **loans are taken for surviving**, this means they do not have the money to spend at home – they are caught in a trap and need to borrow money for even food – they are repaying interest amounts to money lenders and for this also they have to borrow again. The figures below show that the indebtedness of Auroville employees is Rs. 428 lakhs, their monthly interest paid is Rs. 10 lakhs, while their monthly income is Rs. 120 lakhs (of the Auroville employees and their working family members) – ie **10% of total incomes goes to pay interest amounts (not even repaying the loan)!**

### 9. loans given by employees, do employees save money?



	AMOUNT LENT	Rate of Interest (%)
Numbers	72 (2%)	12
<b>Average Rs.</b>	<b>12296.597</b>	3.5 %

	MONTHLY SAVINGS	SAVINGS TILL DATE
Valid	84	260
<b>Average Rs.</b>	<b>1550.06</b>	<b>8961.98</b>
total savings	8156.83	32109.70

CHIT FUNDS	Monthly amt	# of installments
Numbers	884	786
Average Rs.	680.53	28
Total amountt	<b>Rs. 6 lakhs</b>	

**Chit funds :** We see this as a very important borrowing-saving activity that people are involved with. Although one could also consider this chit funds as a savings scheme, it still means that on an average Rs. 6 lakhs is not available for consumption expenditure (food) in that month – this is approximately 5% of total incomes of employees and their families (Rs. 120 lakhs). But this Rs. 6 lakhs is usually rotated within the Auroville employees, because these schemes are generally joined by employees. Usually chit funds are being used for borrowing for socio-cultural obligations (marriages, festivals, religious events -see section 11 below) and capitalize on the dire-need of the member and does not reflect a socially equitable means of borrowing/lending.

## 10. health related information

	Percent
EMPLOYEES WITH FAMILY MEMBERS HAVING ILLNESS IN THE LAST ONE MONTH	35.54

HEALTH EXPENSES Doctor fees, medicines, bribes/kind, transport, testing, others	Period	Valid	Average expenses in Rs.	Total expenses for health
first member	one month	1103	836.86	922,108
hospitalization - first member	one month	53	4775.92	253,075
second member	one month	128	352.51	45,056
hospitalization - second member	one month	5	894.00	4,470
			<b>Total</b>	<b>1,224,699</b>
chronic illness treatment for family members	one year	418	4048.88	1,692,064

Another expense that becomes part of their indebtedness is health and not only is morbidity a matter of concern, but the fact that they would end up spending in one month **Rs12 lakhs** on health expenses (hospitalization), out of a total income of **Rs120 lakhs** for the 3709 families **(10%)!**

## 11. expenses related to socio-cultural obligations

The local Indian culture of the villages can be characterized as socio-religious. This means that the relationship with neighbours and the invisible world is prioritized over the relationship with the physical world and one's self. The identity and personality is manifested in the internal sensitivity, which feels its way in the cosmic and social structure. This is so in order to identify one's right place and role and adapt oneself to the existing society. This attitude is deemed to bring about spiritual happiness and peace.

It can be observed that 4 types of obligations (marriage of family member, that of relative/friend, regular festivals and pilgrimages/temple festivals) have taken a very big priority on their lives and people go out of the way to borrow money for these purposes at high interest rates, mostly unaware of the economics of borrowing.

These socio-cultural obligations as visiting temples, marriages, death ceremonies, puberty functions play a very crucial role in the life-style of peoples who are native to villages, communities and maybe usually related by blood – kith and kin to each other. Their responsibilities are several and they cannot be ignored, as in cities and hence play an integral part of the consumption-expenditure pattern. When questions regarding what has happened in previous one month or the previous year were posed, the following were the results:

<b>SOCIETAL EVENTS ATTENDED</b>	<b>%</b>
SOCIAL FUNTION in 1 month	51.74
PILGRIMAGE/TOUR in 1 year	29.60
VILLAGE (temple) FESTIVAL in 1 year	61.18
MARRIAGE FUNTION IN FAMILY in 1 year	7.66

	<b>social functions like marriage, death of family/friends in one month</b>	
	<b>expenses on gifts, etc</b>	<b>travel expenses</b>
Valid	1882	1318
<b>Average (Rs.)</b>	<b>610.12</b>	<b>57.36</b>

Here total expenditures are around Rs. 12 lakhs on one month for attending marriages, deaths, puberty attaining function for girls, ear-piercing functions, etc. These events are for that of extended family or friends and not for events for own family members.

	<b>Religious (temple) festival, pilgrimage in one year</b>	
	<b>festival (temple) expenses</b>	<b>pilgrimage expenses to sabarimala, tirupati, or visiting their native deities (kula deivam)</b>
Valid	2189	991
<b>Average (Rs.)</b>	<b>686.10</b>	<b>920.42</b>

Pilgrimages, temple festivals amount to Rs.24 lakhs per year, and hence it is Rs.2 lakhs per month.

	<b>FAMILY CLOTHES EXPENSES PER YEAR</b>	<b>YEARLY DEEPAVALI &amp; PONGAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>total annual expenses on clothes and festivals</b>
Valid	3512	3565	
<b>Avg (Rs.)</b>	<b>1655.05</b>	<b>1382.37</b>	<b>3037.42</b>

Auroville is paying for bonus of Deepavali / Pongal bonus, one month's salary (of say Rs. 1547) which is close to the figure (Rs. 1382) quoted above.

Festivals like Deepavalli and Pongal - Rs. 50 lakhs per year – ie 4 lakhs per month

Clothes expenses per year is another Rs. 58 lakhs ie Rs. 4.8 lakhs per month

	<b>Total Expenses for Marriage</b>	<b>INCOME IN THE FORM OF GIFT</b>	<b>Net Marriage Expenses</b>
Valid	251	219	
<b>Average (Rs.)</b>	<b>88387.46</b>	<b>11153.90</b>	<b>77233.56</b>

This figure is quite normal and not under-quoted as it is known that in this area any marriage expense in this area is usually Rs. 1 lakh.

The figures show that in a year approx Rs. 200 lakhs is being spent on marriages of family members.



## C. Satisfaction with their work and Auroville:

The following set of tables have resulted out of a need to know what the employee feels about the place of work and about Auroville. Most of these questions require a fair amount of thinking and answering and the questions were so constructed that there are many instances of cross-verifying to ascertain whether the answer remains valid. **Care should be taken that such questions are very dependent on the nuances of culture and language and hence one needs to have a very good command of both Tamil and English to make any strong interpretations.**

### 1. Job Satisfaction levels

Question: in your workplace, are you satisfied with the following facilities listed?

Job Satisfaction according to:	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	NA
TOOLS	1.54	12.81	<b>83.39</b>	2.26
EMPLOYER/ EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIP	3.88	22.22	<b>70.34</b>	3.56
SUPPORT FROM CO-EMPLOYEES	3.07	16.42	<b>75.76</b>	4.75
CLEAN PLACE	2.91	18.41	<b>76.54</b>	2.13
SAFETY MEASURES	8.65	25.96	<b>63.87</b>	1.51
EXCURSION (STUDY TOURS)	<b>42.25</b>	14.07	20.25	23.43
PROMOTION AVENUES	<b>43.81</b>	14.34	4.99	<b>36.86</b>
NEW SKILLS	32.92	12.62	8.25	<b>46.21</b>
CREATIVITY	33.35	13.48	10.16	<b>43.00</b>
FURTHER LEARNING	37.18	8.28	5.72	<b>48.83</b>
WAGES	27.53	<b>52.31</b>	19.06	1.11
EMOTIONAL SUPPORT	19.20	29.17	36.48	15.15
REWARD SYSTEM	28.23	24.37	10.16	<b>37.23</b>
TRAINING	27.64	21.30	20.98	30.09
MEDICAL BENEFITS	25.34	31.57	21.41	21.68
INSURANCE	37.07	29.01	24.10	9.81
LEAVE FACILITIES	24.29	33.84	26.72	15.15

The above table did not reveal any glaring/ radical impressions about facilities in their unit, but we should note that the figures in **bold** in the last column reveal a high level of **lack of awareness (NA)** on these facilities; similarly the figure of **wages**, that shows a high level (52) of **fair** satisfaction, is a way of expressing the Tamil term 'ok/ doesn't matter (*paravaaillai*)' – this means it is **not good**, but the employees don't want to say it negatively. **Poor** satisfaction levels for excursions was because in that year 2000, a lot of these study trips were temporarily stopped.

## 2. Likes about their unit/place of work

Question: what do you like most in the place where you work? (open)

EMPLOYEE LIKE MOSTLY IN THEIR UNIT	Percent
<b>THEIR JOB</b>	<b>29.28</b>
<b>PEACEFUL ENVIRONMENT WITH NATURAL BEAUTY</b>	<b>16.85</b>
<b>NOTHING</b>	<b>15.80</b>
<b>FREE MOVEMENT AND INTERACTION (WITH OTHER EMPLOYEES)</b>	<b>12.83</b>
<b>WORKING CDNS LIKE TMG,WH'S,SLY,TMT,JB S,FI, GOOD*</b>	<b>13.37</b>
<b>LIKE EVERYTHING</b>	<b>8.98</b>
NOTHING ABOUT AUROVILLE (NEUTRAL)	1.16
WORK WITH FULL COMMITMENT AND SINCERITY	0.16
EQUAL TREATMENT OF ALL PEOPLE	1.08
OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN NEW SKILLS AND TRAINING	0.05
DON'T KNOW	0.08
ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES AND HOSPITAL	0.03
TOTAL	100.00

\* Timing, Working Hours, Salary, Treatment, Job Security, Financial Incentives

The **Nothing** here is a way of expressing ‘no comments/nothing to say’ – this does not express clearly what the employee feels, because either of his lack of awareness or communication capacity to think and answer or because the interview has taken a long time and she/he is tired.

## 3. dislikes about their unit/place of work

Question: what do you dislike most in the place where you work? (open)

EMPLOYEE MOSTLY DON'T LIKE IN THEIR UNIT	Percent
<b>NOTHING</b>	<b>71.37</b>
<b>WORKING CDNS LIKE TMG,WH'S,SLY,TMT,JB S,FI, ARE BAD*</b>	<b>25.05</b>
NON-PARTICIPATN OF EMPLOYEES IN DECISION MAKING (NO COOPERATION)	0.97
HARASSMENT FROM THE MANAGEMENT (ADMINISTRATION BAD)	0.92
POOR INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP IN THE WORK PLACE	0.86
LANGUAGE DISCRIMINATION	0.08
GRAND TOTAL	100.00

\* Timing, Working Hours, Salary, Treatment, Job Security, Financial Incentives

The **Nothing** here also could have the same connotation as above – (a way of expressing ‘no comments/nothing to say’ – this does not express clearly what the employee feels, because either of his lack of awareness or communication capacity to think and answer or because the interview has taken a long time and she/he is tired); but could also very strongly be a culture-based nuance of the language, which will not want to hurt or offend the other person directly by a refusal/or a negative reply especially when it involves areas of external relations.

#### 4. opinions about Auroville

Any of the following answers which are more than approx 25%, should be considered as opinions worth reflecting upon.

<b>LIKES</b>	
<b>EMPLOYEES WHO LIKE:</b>	<b>%</b>
- PEACE IN AUROVILLE	86.76
- HIGH EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY IN AUROVILLE	61.04
- PUNCTUALITY IN AUROVILLE	33.32
- VILLAGES HAVE DEVELOPED DUE TO AUROVILLE	31.46
- AUROVILLE'S INVOLVEMENT IN VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT	23.75
- DISCIPLINE IN AUROVILLE	11.32
- EQUAL TREATMENT IN AUROVILLE	8.03
- FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN AUROVILLE	7.63
- OTHERS IN AUROVILLE	4.21

<b>DISLIKES</b>	
<b>EMPLOYEES WHO DISLIKE:</b>	<b>%</b>
LOW SALARY	59.72
JOB IMPERMANENCY	50.98
CULTURAL DEGRADATION	44.08
DRUG HABITS	45.46
PARTIALITY BETWEEN AUROVILLIANS AND NON-AUROVILLIANS IN AUROVILLE	37.75
NO RESPECT TO VILLAGE PEOPLE	20.73
LONG WORKING HOURS	5.18
UNABLE TO SELL LAND AT MARKET RATES	5.66
OTHER ACTIVITIES	4.04

Cultural degradation could mean dress-codes that have been forced to change, marital relationships, ways of addressing people (forms of language). Partiality is a grievance because when people from outside this region, without adequate experience, are able to immediately join Auroville and become the managers of the local people who have been here much longer, this becomes a reason for getting their sentiments hurt.

<b>EMPLOYMENT AT AUROVILLE PERCEIVED IN THEIR COMMUNITY/VILLAGE AS</b>	<b>GOOD</b>	<b>79.81</b>
<b>EMPLOYEES STATUS AT THEIR VILLAGE</b>	status higher	54.49
	status unchanged	36.32

Question: How do you perceive Auroville in general? (open)

<b>Auroville is perceived:</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>AS A PLACE WITH LOT OF JOB OPPORTUNITY</b>	<b>29.58</b>
<b>AS A PLACE WITH LOT OF NATURAL BEAUTY</b>	<b>26.88</b>
<b>NOTHING</b>	<b>15.29</b>
<b>IN A GOOD MANNER</b>	<b>9.73</b>
<b>AS A PLACE WERE PEOPLE WERE LIVING IN HARMONY AND FREEDOM</b>	<b>7.36</b>
AS A PLACE FOR TOURIST	4.13
A PLACE WITH LOT OF FOREIGNERS	2.02
AS A PLACE FOR INTERACTION BETWEEN DIFFERENT CULTURE	1.67
AS A PLACE FOR EXPLOITATION OF THE LOCAL PEOPLE	1.24
THE SPIRITUALITY OF MOTHER	0.97
AS PLACE FOR WORK	0.75
LIKE A TEMPLE	0.38
Total	100

There is a **high level of unawareness of Auroville programmes** (these programs have been happening for a long time now) below, either because they have not been given the opportunity to information, or because of their own lack of interest. For both these reasons, Auroville outreach-development / extension work will have a large responsibility and role to play, in the proper dissemination of information.

<b>AWARENESS OF Auroville PROGRAMMES</b>	<b>SPONTANEOUS</b>	<b>AFTER PROBING</b>	<b>NOT AWARE</b>
<b>WATER SUPPLY PGM</b>	<b>22.76</b>	10.68	<b>66.57</b>
<b>NIGHT SCHOOL PGM</b>	<b>11.94</b>	12.59	<b>75.47</b>
<b>MICRO PROJECT PGM</b>	<b>9.89</b>	5.74	<b>84.36</b>
<b>HEALTH CARE PGM</b>	<b>7.95</b>	14.34	<b>77.70</b>
<b>PRIMARY EDUCATION PGM</b>	<b>7.76</b>	7.44	<b>84.79</b>
CRECHE PGM	6.20	7.04	<b>86.76</b>
HEALTH AWARENESS PGM	5.42	13.51	<b>81.07</b>
SPORTS PGM	4.88	10.54	<b>84.58</b>
WOMEN'S GROUP PGM	4.45	10.41	<b>85.14</b>
YOUTH GROUP PGM	4.45	10.08	<b>85.47</b>
AFFORESTATION PGM	3.77	9.87	<b>86.36</b>
ORGANIC FARMING PGM	2.64	12.24	<b>85.12</b>
FAMILY PLANNING PGM	2.56	10.65	<b>86.79</b>
VILLAGE COUNCILS PGM	2.32	5.58	<b>92.10</b>
PARENT TEACHERS ASSOCIATION PGM	1.43	2.53	<b>96.04</b>
OTHER PGMS	22.19	4.66	<b>73.15</b>

## **Conclusion**

We see that from the previous few tables, the motive for the existence of Auroville, besides just being an institution generating employment, may not be deeply understood. Somehow if the ideals of Auroville have been understood and/or explained to the employees, their ways of expressing their feelings would be much clearer. Information dissemination about Auroville, on its ideals and its charter and exposure to

Auroville not just through their work situation, should be an active role for the Auroville community to undertake; as long as we remain as employer-employee, the perceptions of Auroville will remain institutionalized and work-oriented; if we consider them as collaborators in the Auroville experiment, their levels of awareness of Auroville and thereby their opinions of it will be much more lucid and clearer.

As early as April 1970, when the Mother had answered a query asking how Aurovilians should relate to the local villagers, she had said that *the best way would be education by example and when they are closely mixing in the life and work of Aurovilians, they not only would get influenced by it and start changing, but also start becoming curious and asking questions, for which answers what the Aurovilians know, are needed to be told* \*.

After 30 years, probably this time for dialogue has been reached.

\* For your questions, the best way, you see, it is education. To educate them not by words and speeches but by example. If you can make them mix with your life and your work, and if they receive the influence of your way of being, your way of understanding, then, little by little, they will change; and when they become curious and they ask questions, then it will be time to answer and to tell them what you know.

21.4.1970\*