

**Living Condition of Lower Category Employees of Indian Railways**

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**Introduction**

"Living conditions" refers to the circumstances of a person's life—shelter, food, clothing, safety, access to clean water, and such. An alternative might be "conditions for life," which refers to circumstances needed for physical or biological life to exist—water, energy, a suitable environment, and such. If there is a distinction between these two then living conditions means "conditions *under which you live*" and life conditions means "conditions *under which you are alive*" though other phrases like 'conditions for life' are more common (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, 2018). Several studies are carried out in different countries and different population but less in India and particularly none among lower grade of group D employees of Indian Railways.

In Indian Railways, the employees of Group A and B are in the managerial capacity and group C and D employees are working directly/indirectly in Train running duties in different categories / ranks calling them as technical, non-technical, ministerial, skilled, semi-skilled, un-skilled, paramedical, etc., The group D employees are working under different department with allotted works and responsibilities. Their job functions are

- Collect, remove and dispose of rubbish and night soil from Railway premises and colonies etc.
- Sweep the road and other surface area of the Railway premises and colonies and collect the sweepings and put these in the dustbins and also dust and remove cobwebs, etc.
- Clean the drains and carry out periodic de-silting.
- Undertake all other activities related to cleaning of colonies/stations.
- Carry sanitary stores.
- Carry out any other duty as ordered by the Health Inspector and other Medical Officers.

Group D employees are recruited through Railway Recruitment Cells or on compassionate ground. This recruitment Board and Cells are controlled by the Railway Recruitment Control Board (RRCB) of Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) at New Delhi.

The lower grade group D employees are directly involved in manual work in Indian railways and they are the backbone of Indian railways. The recognized Trade unions are demanding to revise their wages, provide more welfare measures and the privileges given to them. They are not in a satisfactory level proportionate to their contribution towards the earnings and development of Indian Railways. There is no machinery to fill up the vacancies immediately arising in the lower grade posts and the work load due to these vacancies is also to be shared by the existing strength of lower grade employees without any incentives.

Among the lower grade of Group D employees in Indian Railways, more number of lower grade employees are in Medical department. They are working as Sanitary Cleaners, Sanitary Sweepers, Conservancy Sweepers, Safaiwalas. In fact, most of such employees are from Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribe communities and are working only for their food and survival. In order to supervise their work, their immediate supervisory staffs are working and designated as Safaiwala Jamedars.

In Indian Railways, lower grade Group of D employees are working and their representation is more than the Group A, B and C employees. Their contribution to made the Indian Railways emerge as a second biggest employer in the World is a fact. But it is a vain to note that the wages, welfare measures and status of the lower grade employees are at low level in comparison with employees working in other public and private sector performing similar nature of work. They are also excluded and discriminated in wages, promotional avenue and status compared to other Group of A, B and C employees even though they had more than 30 years of experience. There is no uniformity in providing the privileges for all employees. They experienced social exclusion and discrimination in their working place and residential areas. They are deprived in social status and left behind in the poor economic status especially high in medical department. These issues have not been investigated so far. Moreover their living condition is not assessed so far. Hence it is necessary to investigate the living condition of lower grade of Group D employees in Railway Hospital, Railway colony and workshops in Perambur, Chennai, Tamil Nadu and suggest ways and means to improve their living condition.

## **Objectives**

### **General objective**

To assess the living condition of lower grade group D employees in Railway Hospital, Railway colony and workshops in Perambur, Chennai, Tamilnadu for development of inclusive measures.

### **Specific Objectives**

- To examine the socio-economic and demographic status of lower category employees.
- To assess the drop out from school and reasons for drop out.
- To investigate the access to school for children.
- To analyze the standard of living of household.
- To assess the health status (morbidity) and treatment seeking behavior.
- To identify the inclusive measures and recommend the strategies towards improving the living condition of lower category employees in Railway.

### **Review of Literature**

In Tamil Nadu, Pallar, Parayar and Arunthathiyar are the three major dalit groups in the state of Tamil Nadu. Among them, Arunthathiyars are considered to be the lowest and the most marginalized, therefore, most excluded caste group among dalits and are known as the „Dalit among Dalits“. They are the most oppressed and poorest caste group in India, compelled by their status and poverty to do the most menial and low, dignified jobs such as manual scavenging, death messengers for upper caste community, dead body burials, flaying carcasses or dead animals, drum beating in upper caste death funerals, cleaning communal toilets etc. In Tamil Nadu, it is reported that there are 6 million people belonging to the Arunthathiyar community, densely concentrated in the western districts namely Coimbatore, Erode, Tirupur, Karur, Namakkal, Salem and Dharmapuri districts and sparsely concentrated in the other districts of the state. They are identified with different names such as Chakkliar, Thoti, Pagadai, Adi Andhra, Madiga and Madari in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh

The nature of work, salary paid and services provided through welfare programs differs between Arunthathiyar (State Govt. employee) and Sanitary Cleaner, Sanitary Sweeper and Safaiwala (Govt. of employee). Hence we can't either compare or refer the status of living condition of these two different populations. The living condition of lower grade of Group D railway employees in India have not been investigated so far. Hence the related literature for lower grade of Group D railway employees is not available for reference. This study is the first attempt in the research.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Approach**

Descriptive research approach is adopted for the present research on the living condition of lower category employee of Group D employees in Railway.

### **Source of Data**

The lower category of Group D employees in Railway Hospital, Railway colony and workshops in Perambur, Chennai, Tamil Nadu constitutes the study population. This study used the data collected from randomly selected 422 lower category employees in Railway Hospital, Railway colony and workshops in Perambur, Chennai, Tamil Nadu under the study on “**An Investigation on Social Exclusion and Discrimination of Lower Grade Employees of Indian Railways**” (Santhanagopal, 2017). Data was collected through interview with the selected lower grade employees in Railways.

### **Variables**

The following variables are considered in this study:

Social: Religion, caste, education, reasons for drop outs from school, marital status, type of family, occupation, residence (Rural/ Urban). Work experience of employee and their spouse.

Economic: Present basic pay, income of respondent and their spouse, total family income, total family expenditure, debt and its source/repayment, type of house and its ownership , and standard of living.

Demographic: Age of employee and their spouse, family size, and age at marriage of employee.  
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### **Others**

Access to school for children.

Preference of school for children’s education Morbidity experienced by respondent and their spouse Treatment seeking behavior

Use of alcohol and its expenses.

### **Method of Analysis of Data**

Tabular analysis with application of percentage is adopted in the analysis of data.

## **RESULTS**

### **Social Characteristics**

The social characteristics of respondent (employee) and their spouse are presented here.

Table 1. Religion, caste, sex, education and occupation of respondent and their spouse

Table No.	Variable and category	Number	Percent
1.1	Religion		
	Hindu	355	84.1
	Muslim	5	1.2
	Christian	62	14.7
	Total	422	100.0
1.2	Caste		
	Scheduled Caste	195	46.2
	Scheduled Tribe	43	10.2
	Non-Scheduled Caste / Scheduled Tribe	184	43.6
	Total	422	100.0
1.3	Sex of respondent		
	Male	264	62.6
	Female	158	37.4
	Total	422	100.0
1.4	Education of respondent		
	Not attended school	66	15.6
	1-5. Years of schooling	100	23.7
	6-8 Years of schooling	61	14.5
	9-12 Years of schooling	131	31.0
	13-17 Years of schooling	64	15.2
	Total	422	100.0
	Mean=7.81, Standard Deviation=5.13		
1.5	Education of spouse		
	Not attended school	28	6.6
	3-5 Years of schooling	15	3.6
	6-9 Years of schooling	305	72.3
	10-16 Years of schooling	74	17.5
	Total	422	100.0

### **Religion and Caste**

Majority of respondents are Hindus (84.1 percent) followed by Christian (14.7 percent) and Muslim (1.2 percent) . Forty - six percent of respondents belong to Scheduled Caste (SC), 10.2 percent to Scheduled Tribe (ST) and 43.6 percent to non -SC/ST. Respondents belong to SC/ST (56.4 percent) are more than non -SC/ST (43.6 percent) (Tables-1.1 and 1.2).

### **Sex of respondents**

More males (62.6 percent) than females (37.4 percent) are working with sex ratio of 598 females per 1000 males (Table-1.3).

### **Education**

About 16 percent of respondents have not attended school and 15 percent attended school for more than 12 years. Mean years of schooling is at 7.81. They are very backward in education (Table-1.4). More illiterate females (39.9 percent) than males (1.1 percent) and more males (21.3 percent) with 13 and above years of schooling than females (5.1 percent) are found. Females are found in more disadvantage position compared to male employees.

Regarding the education of spouse of respondents, 6.6 percent of respondents have not attended school and 17.7 percent attended school for 10-16 years (Table-1.5). A higher proportion of wives of male employees (22.1 percent) attended school for 10-16 years than husbands of female employees (10.1 percent). Considering years of schooling of both respondent and spouse, male employee (58 percent) is in much more advantage position in higher level of education compared to female employee (13 percent). (Table is not shown).

Table-2 shows the occupation, residence (Rural/ Urban), type of family and marital status

### **Occupation**

Majority of respondents are working as Safaiwala (97.9 percent) and the remaining are Sanitary cleaner (0.9 percent) and Sanitary Jamadar (1.2 percent) as seen in Table-2.1 .

Only 6.9 percent of respondent's spouse are working (Table-2.2). Most of the spouse of male employees are house wives.

### **Residence**

Sixty-nine percent of respondents are living in urban and the remaining are living in rural areas (Table-2.3). Out of 291 respondents staying in urban area, 55 (18.9 percent) are staying in railway staff quarters.

### **Type of family**

About 60 percent of respondent are living in nuclear family and the remaining are in joint family.

Table 2. Occupation, residence (Rural/ Urban). type of family and marital status

Table No.	Variable and category	Number	Percent
2.1	Designation of respondent		
	Safaiwala	413	97.9
	Sanitary Cleaner	4	.9
	Sanitary Jamadar	5	1.2
	Total	422	100.0
2.2	Occupation of spouse		
	Un employed	6	1.4
	Housewife	154	36.5
	Safaiwala	8	1.9
	Others	21	5.0
	Not applicable (unmarried /widow / widower)	233	55.2
	Total	422	100.0
2.3	Residence		
	Rural	131	31.0
	Urban	291	69.0
	Total	420	100.0
2.4	Type of family		
	Nuclear	251	59.5
	Joint	171	40.5
	Total	422	100.0
2.5	Marital status of respondent		
	Married	189	44.8
	Unmarried	122	28.9
	Widow/Widower	111	26.3
	Total	422	100.0
<b>2.6</b>	Work experience of respondent		
	1-3 Years	146	34.6
	4-11 Years	123	29.1
	12-42 Years	153	36.3
	Total	422	100.0
		Mean=10.59, Standard Deviation=10.82	
<b>2.7</b>	Work experience of spouse		
	1-8 Years	15	3.6
	10-25 Years	14	3.3
	Not applicable	393	93.17
	Total	422	100.0

**Marital status of respondent**

Less than half of respondents (44.8 percent) are married and the remaining are unmarried (28.9 percent) and Widow/Widower (26.3 percent) (Table-2.5). Proportion of married (53.8 percent) and unmarried (45.5 percent) is higher among males and widow is higher among females (69 percent).

**Work experience**

Thirty-six percent of respondents are having experience of 12-42 years and 35 percent in 1-3 years. The mean years of experience works out as 10.59 years at survey (Table -2.6). Work experience of 29 respondent's spouse is 1-8 years in 3.6 percent and 10-25 years in 3.3 percent (Table-2.7).

**Economic status**

The economic characteristics of respondent are presented in Table-3.

Table 3. Economic Characteristics of respondent and their spouse

Table No.	Variable and category	Number	Percent
3.1	Present basic pay of respondent (Rs)		
	10,000-20900	137	32.5
	20,901-23,500	122	28.9
	23,501 and above	163	38.6
	Total	422	100.0
3.2	Annual income of respondent (Rs)		
	21,000-2,36,400	92	21.8
	36,401-2,82,000	182	43.1
	2,82,001- 5,52,000	148	35.1
	Total	422	100.0
Mean=2,75,090, Standard Deviation=848449.3			
3.3	Annual income of spouse (Rs)		
	0	6	1.4
	60000-96000	10	2.4
	120000-336000	19	4.5
	Not applicable	387	91.7
	Total	422	100.0
3.4	Annual total family income (Rs)		
	96,000-2.70,000	156	37.0
	2.70,001-4,20,000	153	36.3
	4,20,001-9,48,000	113	26.8
	Total	422	100.0
Mean=353140, Standard Deviation=150016			

3.5	Annual expenditure(Rs)		
	10,000-127200	137	32.5
	127201-213400	140	33.2
	2,13,401-100,00,000	145	34.4
	Total	422	100.0
Mean=194470, Standard Deviation=135313			
3.6	Type of house		
	Hut	37	8.8
	Kacha	23	5.5
	Pucca	313	74.2
	Quarters	49	11.6
	Total	422	100.0
3.7	Ownership of house		
	Lease	51	12.1
	Rented	226	53.6
	Owned	145	34.4
	Total	422	100.0

### Income and Expenditure

One-third of respondent are getting basic pay in the range of Rs. 10,000-20900, 28 percent in Rs.20,901-23,500 and 39 percent in Rs.23,501 and above (Table-3.1). The mean annual income of respondent is Rs.2,75,090.A higher proportion f respondents are in Rs. 36,401-2,82,000, followed by Rs. 2,82,001- 5,52,000 and Rs. 21,000-2,36,400(Table-3.2). Among spouse of respondents only 6.9 percent earned annual income of Rs.60,000-96,000 (2.4 percent) and Rs.1,20,000-3,36,000 Rs. (4.5 percent) (Table-3.3). Mean annual total family income is Rs. 3,53,140. About 27 percent are in high level income of Rs. 4,20,001-9,48,000(Table-3.4)..Per capita total family income per month is Rs.7357.Mean annual total family expenditure of Rs. 1,94,470 (Table-3.5) is less than mean annual total family income of Rs. 3,53,140 with a difference of Rs1,58 ,670.It seems that respondents are in a position to manage their family and having the chance for savings.

### Type of house and ownership of house

Majority (85.8 percent) of respondents are living in pucca house which includes railway quarters (11.6 percent ) and the remaining are living in hut and Kacha houses (14.3 percent) (Table-3.6). Regarding the ownership of house, 53.6 percent are in rented house which includes railway quarters, 34.4 percent owned the house and 12.1 percent are in leased house (Table-3.7). About one- third of respondents owning the house indicate the poor economic status.

### Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Characteristics of respondents are shown in Table-4.

Table 4. Demographic Characteristics of respondent and their spouse

Table No.	Variable and category	Number	Percent
4.1	Age of respondent (years)		
	19-29	135	32.0
	30-40	76	18.0
	41-50	96	22.7
	51-59	115	27.3
	Total	422	100.0
Mean=39.9, Standard deviation=12.46			
4.2	Age of spouse (years)		
	No spouse	274	64.9
	18-34	57	13.5
	35-50	70	16.6
	51+	21	5.0
	Total	422	100.0
4.3	Age at marriage of respondent		
	Unmarried	122	28.9
	16-17 years	77	18.2
	18-21 years	97	23.0
	22 + years	126	29.9
	Total	422	100.0
4.4	Family size		
	1-2	264	62.6
	3-4	26	6.2
	5- 7	132	31.3
	Total	422	100.0
	Mean=4, Standard Deviation=1.46		

**Age of respondent and spouse**

More respondents are in younger age of 19-29 years ( 32 percent ) and less more in old age of 51-59 year(27.3 percent). Mean age of them is at 39.88 years (Table-4.1).More spouse of respondents are in age of 35-50 years followed by 18-34 years and 22 and above in descending order (Table-4.2).

**Age at marriage**

About 29 respondent of respondent are unmarried.18 percent married at 16-17 years, 23 percent at 18-21 years and 30 percent at 22 and above years (Table-4.3).

**Family size**

Number of family members is at higher proportion for 1 or 2, 31.3 percent for 5-7 and 6.2 percent for 3 or 4. Mean family size worked out as 4.

**Standard of living**

Standard of living refers to the level of wealth, comfort, material goods, and necessities available to a certain socioeconomic class in a certain geographic area, usually a country. The standard of living includes factors such as income, quality and availability of employment, class disparity, poverty rate, quality and affordability of housing, hours of work required to purchase necessities, gross domestic product, inflation rate, amount of leisure time every year, affordable (or free) access to quality healthcare, quality and availability of education, life expectancy, incidence of disease, cost of goods and services, infrastructure, national economic growth, economic and political stability, political and religious freedom, environmental quality, climate and safety. The standard of living is closely related to quality of life (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia 2018, "Standard of Living Definition". Investopedia.com. Retrieved 5 November 2011).

It is measured at household level using the available data on type of house , ownership of house , source of drinking water , electricity for house , fuel used for cooking , toilet facility , value of plot , value of jewels , possession of telephone/mobile , fan , cycle ,grinder ,mixy , two wheeler , computer , refrigerator , television and car .Scoring procedure is adopted to arrive total score of these items for each respondent (see Annexure-I).

Table 5. Standard of living at household

Variable	Number	Percent
Type of house		
Hut	37	8.8
Kacha	23	5.5
Pucca	313	74.2
Quarters	49	11.6
Total	422	100.0
Ownership of house		
Lease	51	12.1
Rented	226	53.6
Owned	145	34.4
Total	422	100.0
Source of drinking water		
Tap in staff quarters/others	59	14.0
Well	2	.5
Public bore well	51	12.1
Own bore well	14	3.3
Public tap	267	63.3
Own tap	29	6.9
Total	422	100.0
Electricity for house		

No/Quarters	25	5.9
Yes	397	94.1
Total	422	100.0
Fuel for cooking		
Fire wood/Coal	20	4.7
Kerosene	13	3.1
Gas/Induction	389	92.2
Total	422	100.0
Telephone or Mobile	399	94.5
Fan	404	95.7
Cycle	204	48.3
Grinder	205	48.6
Mixy	250	59.2
Two wheeler	159	37.7
Computer	42	10.0
Refrigerator	198	46.9
TV	292	69.2
Car	5	1.2
Pit toilet	393	93.1
Flush toilet	37	8.8
Staff quarters-toilet	13	3.1
Plot value (In Rs) 300000	5	1.2
Value of jewels (Rupees)		
0	289	68.5
7000-25000	30	7.1
25001-40000	43	10.2
40001-400000	60	14.2
Total	422	100.0
Standard of living index score		
10-22 Low	82	19.4
23-35 Medium	230	54.5
36-47 High	110	26.1
Total	422	100.0
Mean=30.11, Standard Deviation=7.34, Median=29		

Majority (85.8 percent) of respondents are living in pucca house which includes railway quarters (11.6 percent) and the remaining are living in hut and Katcha houses (14.3 percent).

53.6 percent are in rented house which includes railway quarters. 34.4 percent owned the house and 12.1 percent are in leased house. About one- third of respondents owning the house indicate the poor economic status. Allotment of staff quarters for group D employees is not meeting their needs,

Source of drinking water facility either in staff quarters or piped water (public or own tap at home) is good for 84.2 percent of households. Majority (94.1percent) of households are having electricity facility. Fan(95.7percent), telephone or mobile (94.5 percent), gas/Induction stove for cooking (92.2 percent), television (69.2 percent), mixy (59.2 percent), grinder (48.6 percent), cycle(48.3 percent), refrigerator (46.9percent), two-wheeler (37.7percent), flush toilet (11.9 percent), jewels valued (Rs. 7000-25000 in 7.1 percent, Rs. 25001-40000 in 10.2 percent and Rs. 40001-400000 in 14.2 percent), plot valued Rs. 300000 (1.2 percent) and car (1.2 percent) are available in households of respondents. 19.4, 54.5 and percent of households are in low, medium and high level of standard of living respectively.

**Education**

Sixteen percent of respondents have not attended the school (illiterates). Respondents who attended school dropped out from school in 6-17 years of age due to mostly non-interest in the study and poverty condition of family (Table-6).

Table 6.Reasons for drop out from school in 6-17 years

Reasons for drop out	Number	Percent
Not Interested	236	64.8
Economic Condition	154	42.3
Not access to school	20	5.4
Against education for girls custom	18	4.9
Fear of loss of purity for girls	10	2.7
Not dropped out	8	1.9
Total	364	*

Note:

\*Multiple answers. Won't tally to 100

All the respondents are probed on the reasons for not studied further and their responses are shown in Table-7. Stopped after puberty, non-interest in the study and economically non-affordability are the important reasons for not studied further.

Table 7. Reasons for respondent not studied further

Reasons for not studied further	Number(n=422)	Percent*
Stopped after puberty	248	58.8
Not interested to study	233	55.2
Economic : non affordability	58	37.4
Custom	21	4.9
Accessibility :Distance to school	12	2.8
Not admitted in the school due to caste factor	6	1.4

Note: \*Multiple answer

Type of school studied in 1-12th standard by the last child of respondent and accessibility in distance to school are probed with respondents and their responses are shown in Table-8.

Children studied in Government school (34.9 percent) ,Private school- English medium school(16.1percent) and Private school -Tamil medium school (3.6 percent)).Accessibility in terms of distance is easy for Government school (mean=7.27km) compared to Private school-English medium school(mean=8.2km) and Private school -Tamil medium school (mean=8.2km).Apart from easy accessibility, free education and other concession in Government school, poor economic condition and high fee structure in Private schools are the reasons for more children studying in Government schools.

Table-8. Type of school studied in 1-12th standard by the last child and accessibility to school

Type of school studied	Number (n=422)	Percent	Accessibility distance(km)	
			Mean	Standard deviation
Government School	147	34.9	7.27	5.98
Private school English medium	68	16.1	8.20	2.63
Private school Tamil medium	15	3.6	8.75	1.34
Preference of Government school				
Free education and other concession	63	14.9		
Economic condition	78	18.5		
Not applicable	281	66.6		
Total	422	100.0		
Reason for not studied in Private school				
High fee structure	141	33.4		
Not applicable	281	66.6		
Total	422	100.0		

### **Loan received**

Details of loan received during the last one year, purpose and repayment of loan are presented here.

Table 9. Loan received during the last one year

Variable	Number	Percent
Loan received		
0	186	44.1
20000-190000	106	25.1
190001-358000	116	27.5
356001-3000000	14	3.3
Total	422	100.0
Source of loan	n=236	
Bank	228	96.6
Hand loan	12	5.1
Purpose of loan		
Marriage and functions	98	41.5
Purchase of house/ plot and construction	50	21.2
To clear old debts	65	27.5
Children's education	23	9.8
Total	236	100.0

Fifty-six percent of respondents received loan in the range of Rs.20000-190000 (25.1percent), Rs. 190001-358000(27.5percent) and Rs.356001-3000000 (3.3 percent). They got it mostly from bank (96.63 percent).

They got the loan for marriage and functions (41.5 percent)., to clear old debts (27.5 percent)., purchase of house/Plot and construction (21.2 percent) and children's education (9.8 percent). About half (52.1 percent) them have not repaid the loan for the major reason loan dues is more than income (91.9 percent) and high interest of personal loan (8.1percent).

### Practice of consuming alcohol

About 22 percent of families consumed alcohol. Mostly respondents and others having the habit of consuming alcohol as shown in Table- 10. Monthly expenditure for alcohol is reported Rs. 600-1500 (14.1 percent), Rs. 2000-5000 (42.4 percent) and Rs. 6000-15000 (43.5 percent).

Table 10. Practice of consuming alcohol by family members and its expenses

Variable	Number	Percent
Family members consuming alcohol		
Respondent	83	19.7
Family members	3	0.7
Others	6	1.4
Not consuming alcohol	330	78.2
Total	422	100.0
Monthly expenditure for alcohol (Rupees)		
600-1500	13	14.1
2000-5000	39	42.4
6000-15000	40	43.5.
Total	92	100.0

**Political Participation**

Majority of respondents are members in trade union but their position and role in trade union is very limited. They are not allowed either to join and function in any political party as per rules of Indian Railways.

**Morbidity experienced and treatment**

Morbidity experienced by respondent and spouse during the last 3 months before survey and treatment taken are presented in Table-11. Among the respondents 16.8 percent experienced morbidity such as fever, Chronic disease, Dengue and others. More males (59.2 percent) than females (40.8 percent) experienced morbidity. Majority (97.2 percent) undergone treatment more in Railway hospital (66.2 percent) compared to private hospital (28.2 percent) and State Government hospital (5.6 percent ). Only 17 out of 300 spouse experienced morbidity such as fever (9), Chronicdisease (6), and Dengue (2). All of them undergone treatment mostly in Railway hospital (13) and private hospital (4).

Table11. Morbidity experienced by respondent during the last 3 months and treatment.

Variable	Number	Percent
<b>Type of morbidity for respondent</b>		
Fever	31	43.7
Chronic disease	18	25.4
Dengue	9	12.7
Others	13	18.2
Total	71	100.0
Male	42	59.2
Female	29	40.8
Total	71	100.0
<b>Treated Morbidity</b>		
No	2	2.8
Yes	69	97.2
Total	71	100.0
<b>Place of Treatment</b>		
Railway Hospital	47	66.2
State Government Hospital	4	5.6
Private hospital	20	28.2
Total	71	100.0

**Satisfaction with the present occupation**

Forty-one percent of respondents are not satisfied with their present occupation for the reasons such as menial job (70.3 percent), not suited for their educational qualification (15.7 percent) and no promotion (14 percent)

**Summary**

This study assessed the living condition of 422 randomly selected lower grade group D employees in Railway Hospital, Railway colony and workshops in Perambur, Chennai, Tamil Nadu for development of inclusive measures.

Majority of respondents are Hindus (84.1 percent) followed by Christian (14.7 percent) and Muslim (1.2 percent). SC/ST (56.4 percent) are more than non-SC/ST (43.6 percent). More males (62.6 percent) than females (37.4 percent) are working with sex ratio of 598 females per 1000 males. Mean years of schooling of employees is at 7.81 with more disadvantage for females. Majority of respondents are working as Safaiwala (97.9 percent). Only 6.9 percent of respondent's spouse are working. Sixty-nine percent of respondents are living in urban. About 60 percent of respondent are living in nuclear family. Less than half of respondents (44.8 percent) are married and the remaining are unmarried (28.9 percent) and Widow/Widower (26.3 percent). Mean years of experience works out as 10.59 years.

Sixteen percent of respondents have not attended the school (illiterates). Respondents who attended school dropped out from school in 6-17 years of age due to mostly non-interest in the study and poverty condition of family. Respondents have not studied further due to stopped after puberty, non-interest in the study and economically non-affordability.

Children studied in Government school (34.9 percent), Private school- English medium school (16.1 percent) and Private school -Tamil medium school (3.6 percent). Accessibility in terms of distance is easy for Government school (mean=7.27km) compared to Private school-English medium school (mean=8.2km) and Private school -Tamil medium school (mean=8.2km). Apart from easy accessibility, free education and other concession in Government school, poor economic condition and high fee structure in Private schools are the reasons for more children studying in Government schools.

Majority (85.8 percent) of respondents are living in pucca house which includes railway quarters (11.6 percent). However only one-third of respondents owning the house indicate the poor economic status. Allotment of staff quarters for group D employees is not meeting their needs,

The mean annual income of respondent is Rs.2,75,090. Only 6.9 percent of spouse of respondents earned income. Mean annual total family income is Rs. 3,53,140. Mean annual total family expenditure is less than mean annual total family income indicating the chance for savings. But the loan received for marriage and functions, to clear old debts, purchase of house/Plot and construction and children's education is not repaid the loan (52.1 percent) for the major reasons of loan dues is more than income (91.9 percent) and high interest of personal loan (8.1 percent). Moreover 22 percent of families, mostly respondents, consumed alcohol spending considerable amount of their income. Employee's families are economically in more disadvantage position.

Assessment of standard of living reveals that 19.4 percent of households are in low, 54.5 percent in medium and 26.1 percent in high level of standard of living.

Employees are not participating in political activities. Even though they are members in trade unions their role is very limited.

Among the respondents 16.8 percent experienced morbidity during the last 3 months before survey such as fever, Chronic disease, Dengue and others. More males than females experienced morbidity. Majority undergone treatment more in Railway hospital compared to private hospital and least in State Government hospital. Only 17 out of 300 spouse experienced morbidity such as fever, Chronic disease, and Dengue. All of them undergone treatment mostly in Railway hospital and private hospital.

Forty-one percent of respondents are not satisfied with their present occupation for the reasons such as menial job (70.3 percent), not suited for their educational qualification (15.7 percent) and no promotion (14 percent).

### **Recommendations**

The following inclusive measures can be under taken by the Indian Railways for improving the living conditions of lower grade D Group employees.

- Provide the staff quarters for the needy persons of lower grade D Group employees.

- Improve the accessibility in terms of distance mode of transport to school and chance of studying in any desired type of school irrespective of affordability for paying school fees in private schools for children in future.
- Encourage parents to provide better education for children particularly girl children hereafter.
- All the employees particularly those belong to low and medium level of standard of living needs to be educated and counselled on savings, not to consume alcohol and spending considerable amount of their income and getting into the chance of getting loan with high interest and non-repayment of loan. Trade unions and other social organization can play their role in this direction.
- Employees needs to be empowered on knowledge on their rights, welfare programs of Indian Railways and utilize them through their active participation and play their role in Trade Unions.

**References**

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**Annexure-I Standard of living**

Sl.No	Items	Score	Sl.No	Items	Score
1	<b>Type of house</b>		4	<b>Electricity for house</b>	
	hut katcha	2		yes no	4
	pucca (owned)	4		staff quarters	0
	pucca (staff quarters)/rented	6 0			0
				<b>Fuel for cooking</b> fire wood / coal kerosene	0
				gas	2
				others (specify)	4
2	<b>Toilet</b>			<b>Household articles</b>	
	flush toilet	4		Telephone / mobile	1
	pit toilet	1		Radio	1
	no	0		Fan	1
	staff quarters	1		Cycle (own)	1
				Grinder (own)	2
				Mixy (own)	2
				RO water	3
				Television (own)	3
				Computer (own)	3
		Two wheeler	3		

			Refrigerator	3
			AC machine	6
			Car	6
			Furniture	2
			Cot	2
			Almirah	3
3	<b>Drinking water</b>		Plot value Rs. 300000	6
	well	1	Jewels value	
	public bore well	2	None	
	own bore well	3	Rs.7000-25000	0
	public tap	4	Rs.25001-40000	2
	own tap	5	Rs.40001-400000	4
	tap in staff quarters / others	6		6