Chapter VII

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter deals with the

- Major research findings,
- Recommendations based on the research findings,
- Further scope and research directions,
- Conclusion

7.1 MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

The major findings of the research are presented as:

- Findings related to the personal profile of the respondents
- Findings related to the work environment
- Findings related to the life environment
- Findings related to the work-life conflicts
- Findings related to the quality of work life
- Findings related to the prevailing work-life balance practices
- Findings related to the perception of respondents towards work-life balance practices
- Findings related to statistical analysis based on research data

7.1.1 Findings related to the personal profile of the respondents

Following are the major findings based on the personal profile of the respondents.

1. 62% of the respondents of the IT companies in Chennai city are male and the remaining 38% are female.
2. 64.6% of the respondents fall in the category of the age group 26 to 30 years, 30.3% fall in the category 21 to 25 years, 5.1% fall in category 31-35 years and none of the respondents belong to the age group of 36 years and above.

3. 54.8% of the respondents are unmarried and remaining 45.2% of the respondents are married. None of the respondents are either widow/widower, divorced or separated.

4. 73% of the married respondents’ spouse are employed and 27% of the married respondents’ spouse are unemployed.

5. 41.8% of the respondents are living in an independent and nuclear style family away from the parents and grandparents and other relations. 34.5% of the respondents live in a joint family with other relatives. While 23.7% of the respondents are living away from their family and have come to Chennai only for their employment.

6. 68.4% of the respondents have dependents and the remaining 31.6% doesn’t have dependents.

7. 35% of the respondents who have dependents are having children below 5 years of age as dependents, 34% of the respondents have elderly dependents and the remaining 31% have other type of dependents like unmarried brothers / sisters.

8. For 58.5% of the respondents, their parents are taking care of the dependents, for 32.5% of the respondents, their spouse looks after the dependents and remaining 9% of the respondents leave their dependents at care centres while they go for work.

9. 54.6% of the respondents are coming under the group of 4 – 6 years of total work experience. 40.7% of the respondents are having less than 3 years of
total work experience. The remaining 4.7% are having above 6 years of total work experience.

10. 88.9% of the respondents are under 3 years of experience in the present company. Whereas, the remaining 11.1% fall under the 4-6 years of experience category and none of the respondents are having above 6 years in the present company.

7.1.2 Findings related to the work particulars

Following are the major findings based on the particulars related to ‘work factors’ of the respondents.

1. 94.5% are working above the standard 48 hours per week. The remaining 5.5% are working below 48 hours per week.

2. 74.2% of the respondents are working 1 to 5 hours additionally per week. 15.3% of the respondents work about 6 to 10 hours additionally a week and remaining 5.1% of the respondents work additionally for about 11 to 15 hours a week.

3. The respondents strongly agree that they are working additional hours to meet the deadline.

4. The respondents agree that the present working pattern suits them well.

5. The respondents agree that they have a fear about being expelled out anytime.

6. The respondents agree that they have to attend work related calls even during leave times. Hence they agree that technology for working from home is a nuisance.

7. The respondents strongly agree that remuneration is same in spite of what ever work is done.
8. The respondents agree that they are working additional hours to get career advancement.

9. The respondents agree that promotion is based on experience, availing training regularly helps to learn and working hard leads to promotion.

10. Considerably, male respondents strongly agree that they tend to often think about work instead of focussing on home.

11. Female respondents agree that they are availing the possibility to take leave and work from home. Male respondents disagrees it.

12. The female respondents agree they enjoy working whereas male respondents disagree to it.

13. The female respondents strongly agree they get flexible work timing and the male respondents agree the same.

14. Female respondents agree that they are satisfied with the current compensation package. Male respondents are not satisfied with the current compensation package.

15. Invariably, both male and female respondents strongly disagree that they are paid high for extra work they do.

16. The respondents strongly disagree that they work extra hours because they have no other work.

7.1.3 **Findings related to the life particulars**

Following are the major findings based on the particulars related to ‘life factors’ of the respondents.

1. The respondents agree that they can attend all religious functions as they wish.
2. The respondents agree that they are able to look after the family as they wish.

3. The respondents agree that they find time to fulfil their personal needs.

4. The respondents agree that they spend ample time with their loved ones.

5. The respondents agree that they are able to go for religious worships as and when needed.

6. The respondents agree that they find time to spend on their hobbies.

7. The respondents agree that they can attend all the important functions in their family.

8. The male respondents agree that they can actively participate in religious faith groups for self satisfaction but the female respondents disagree it.

9. Male respondents agree that their food habits have changed, whereas the female respondents disagrees it.

10. Male respondents strongly agree that they feel tired and depressed because of work whereas female respondents disagree to it.

11. Male respondents agree that they need meditation and yoga practices to get relaxed from work. But female respondents disagree to it.

12. Male respondents disagree that they get enough sleep, exercise and healthy food. But female respondents agree that they get it.

13. The male respondents agree that they have a considerable change in eating habits, whereas the female respondents strongly disagrees it.

14. The respondents, irrespective of gender, strongly disagrees that they tend to smoke, take alcoholic drinks, drugs and medicines to get relieved from work stress.
15. The total mean score for work and life factors reveals that male respondents are able to balance between work and life. Female respondents are giving more importance to work than life, and hence an imbalance between work and life exists within them.

7.1.4 Findings related to the work-life conflicts

Following are the major findings based on the particulars related to ‘work-life conflicts’ of the respondents.

1. The respondents strongly agree that having a good day at job makes them a better companion at home and vice-versa.

2. The respondents, in order to get noticed in their company, need to put work constantly ahead of their family life.

3. The respondents disagree that they get distracted at work thinking of home and personal worries.

4. They disagree that they need to take plenty of leaves to fulfil their family needs. They disagree that they put personal life on hold for work.

5. Male respondents agree that they neglect personal needs because of their work where as female respondents disagree to it.

6. Male respondents agree that stress at home reduces their work efficiency where as the female respondents disagree to it.

7. Similarly, male respondents agree that household duties prevent them from getting enough sleep to perform their job well, but female respondents disagree to it.

8. Male respondents agree that responsibilities at home reduces the effort that they can devote to job where as female respondents deny it.
9. The over all score shows that the women respondents are better in handling work life conflicts as they scored lesser than the male respondents.

10. A considerable difference is found among the respondents with employed spouse that they strongly agree that they would carry official work to home.

11. They strongly agree that they would re-arrange their personal plans frequently due to their work.

12. The respondents with their spouse unemployed strongly feel that having a good day at job makes them a better companion at home and vice-versa.

13. They agree that their responsibilities at home reduce the effort that they can devote to job.

14. They agree that household duties prevent them from getting enough sleep and stress at home reduces their work efficiency.

15. They agree that they put personal life on hold for work.

16. The unmarried respondents have a considerable low score on all dimensions, which means that have less work life conflict than the married respondents.

17. The respondents who doesn’t have spouse are better in handling work life conflicts, followed by respondents whose spouse is employed and the respondents whose spouse are unemployed are poor in handling work life conflicts as they fall on the higher end of the scoring scale.

7.1.5 Findings related to the quality of work life

Following are the major findings based on the particulars related to ‘quality of work life of the respondents.

1. The respondents strongly agree that they have the opportunity to learn new things on the job.
2. They strongly agree that the place of work provides a good environment to work, and they would like to take more responsibilities than that they are handling at present.

3. They also strongly agree that their organisation provides opportunities for expansion of their knowledge and career growth.

4. They strongly agree that there is no discrimination among the employees of the organisation.

5. The female respondents strongly agree that they keep in mind about the goals and success of the organisation and progress thorough achieving them.

6. They strongly agree that the organisation has regular health programs for welfare of the employees.

7. They strongly agree that when they do a good job, their accomplishments are appreciated and rewarded.

8. The female respondents strongly agree that they have enough leisure time to follow their interest and hobbies whereas the male respondents disagree to it.

9. Similarly the female respondents strongly agree that regular inter-departmental meetings are arranged to enhance interpersonal relationship and the male respondents disagrees to it.

10. The female respondents again strongly agree that most of their needs are taken care by the management. But male respondents disagree to it.

11. Female respondents strongly agree that their work gives them a feeling of personal accomplishments whereas male respondents disagree to it.

12. The respondents of the age group 21-25 years strongly agree that they would like to take more responsibilities than that of they are handling at present.
13. The respondents of the age group 21-25 years strongly agree that the organisation has regular health programs for welfare of the employees.

14. They strongly agree that when they do a good job, their accomplishments are appreciated and rewarded.

15. The respondents of the age group 21-25 years strongly agree that regular inter-departmental meetings are arranged to enhance interpersonal relationship.

16. They strongly agree that their organisation provides opportunities for expansion of their knowledge and career growth.

17. They strongly agree that there is no discrimination among the employees of the organisation.

18. The respondents of the age group 31-35 years strongly disagree that they find that they are not able to spend quality time with their family and friends.

19. They disagree that the place of work provides a good environment to work.

20. They strongly disagree that their last performance evaluation helped them to enhance their performance and they have enough leisure time to follow their interest and hobbies whereas the respondents of the age group 21-25 years strongly agrees to these.

21. The respondents of the age group 31-35 years disagree that most of their needs are taken care by the management and their work gives them a feeling of personal accomplishments. But the respondents of the age group 21-25 years strongly agree to these.

22. The score of the respondents of the age group 26-30 years goes along with the mean score.

23. On seeing the overall score across genders, the female respondents are having a high level of quality of work life.
24. On comparing the overall score across age groups, the quality of work life is higher for the age group 21-25 years, followed by 26-30 years group and the least score is for the age group of 31-35 years.

7.1.6 Findings related to the prevailing work-life balance practices

Following are the major findings based on the particulars related to the prevailing ‘work-life balance practices’ of the respondents during the study period.

1. 55% of the respondents feel that their organisation is committed to help the staff members to balance their work & personal life.

2. 74% of the respondents say that they can share their job with their colleagues.

3. 64% of the respondents say that they can work with flexible start / end timings.

4. 84% of the respondents feel that they are allowed to take leave to care of their family.

5. 56% of the respondents say that they are allowed to take a break in career for engaging in studies.

6. 71% of the respondents feel that they are allowed to take leave for cultural / religious functions.

7. 69% of the respondents feel that they can take leave for the overtime work they have worked.

8. 53% of the respondents feel that they are able to avail leave in accordance with school holidays of their children.

9. 84% of the respondents feel that they are allowed to leave work any time in case of family emergency.

10. 68% of the respondents feel that they have exclusive cell at the organisation to fulfill their domestic works like paying bills etc.
11. 73% of the respondents feel their organisation provides facilities for yoga and meditation.

12. 83% of the respondents feel the organisation gives counseling services for employees experiencing work / family stress and personal issues.

13. 84% of the respondents feel their organisation gives health assistance programme and basic medical services.

14. 63% of the respondents feel their company has its own gym or gives allowances for gym membership.

15. 69% of the respondents feel that all employees, irrespective of gender, are treated the same way when applying work-life balance policies of organisation.

16. 85% of the respondents say that in practice, it is not difficult to use the work-life balance practices in their organisation,

17. 54% of the respondents feel that employees are not encouraged to use work-life balance policies at their organisation.

18. 60% of the respondents feel that, while relocated, the organisation does not help the family to adapt to the new environment.

19. 52% of the respondents feel that the organisation does not provide transfer for employees to relocate to place of employee's choice.

20. 51% of the respondents feel they are not allowed to work from home during normal working hours.

7.1.7 Findings related to the perception of the respondents towards work-life balance practices

1. The respondents feel it is very important to be allowed to leave work any time in case of family emergency.
2. They feel it is very important to provide transfer for employees to relocate to a place of employee's choice.

3. They feel it is very important to share their job with their colleagues when needed.

4. They feel it is very important to take leave for the overtime work for which they have worked.

5. They feel it is very important that the organisation must give health assistance programme and basic medical services.

6. They feel it is very important to be allowed to take leave to care of the family.

7. They feel it is very important to take leave for cultural / religious functions.

8. They feel it is very important that the organisation must be committed to help the staff members to balance their work & personal life.

9. They feel it is very important to have exclusive cell at the organisation to fulfill the employees’ domestic works like paying bills etc.

10. They feel it is very important to treat all employees, irrespective of gender, in the same way when applying work-life balance policies of organisation.

11. They feel it is very important to allow them to work from home in normal working hours.

12. They feel it is very important work with flexible start / end timings.

13. They feel it is very important to allow them to take a break in career for engaging in studies.

14. They feel it is very important to have company’s own gym or to give allowances for gym membership.
15. They feel it is very important that the organisation must provide facilities for yoga and meditation.

16. They feel it is very important that in practice, organisation must make it easy to use the work-life balance practices.

17. They feel it is important that organisation encourages to use work-life balance policies.

18. They feel it is very important that when the employees are relocated, the organisation must help them to get adapted to the new environment.

19. They feel it is important to give counseling services for employees experiencing work / family stress and personal issues

20. They feel it is important to avail leave in accordance with school holidays.

21. The respondents have ranked first for flexible start and finish timings.

22. The respondents has ranked second for Employee Assistance Programme.

23. The respondents have ranked third for part time working scheme.

24. The respondents have ranked fourth for working from home scheme.

25. The respondents have ranked fifth for counseling programme.

26. The respondents have ranked sixth for maternity leave scheme.

27. The respondents have ranked seventh for job sharing scheme.

28. The respondents have ranked eighth for paternity leave scheme.

29. The respondents have ranked ninth for providing transportation facilities.

30. The respondents have ranked tenth for Family meets and get-togethers.

31. 65% of the respondents feel that the work-life balance policies must be customized to individual needs and 35% feel that it is not necessary to be customized to individual needs.
7.1.8 Findings related to statistical analysis based on research data

1 There exists a significant association between the gender of the respondents and the components of work / life related factors of the respondents.

2 It is found that male respondents are relatively balancing the work and life with a mean score of 49.39 and 49.17 respectively.

3 The female respondents have variation in balancing work and life with a mean score of 51.35 and 57.23 respectively.

4 There is high significant association between the age of the respondents and the components of work / life related factors of the respondents.

5 It is found that the respondents of the age group 21-25 years are relatively more balanced with a mean score of 51.07 and 54.87 respectively.

6 The respondents of the age group 26-30 years are giving more importance to life than work. Their mean score for work is 49.38 and life is 52.9.

7 The respondents of the age group 30-35 years are relatively the most affected with poor work life balance. They tend to work at the cost of their lives. The score for their work and life is 54 and 28 respectively.

8 There is exists a highly significant relation between the marital status of the respondents and the components of work / life related factors of the respondents.

9 The married respondents were found to be relatively more consistent in work and life with a mean score of 55.52 and 54.87 respectively.

10 The unmarried respondents are giving more importance to their personal life there by showing a less score on their work factors. Their attitude towards work seems to be different. Their mean score for work and life is 45.69 and 50.06 respectively.
11 Looking deeper into the components of life factor, it is found that the health aspect alone has no significant relationship with the marital status of the respondents. It is found that both married and unmarried respondents are relatively equally affected on health aspect.

12 There exists a significant association between the employment status of spouse of the respondents and the components of work / life related factors of the respondents.

13 The respondents with employed spouse are in a struggle of balancing work and life. But it is found they are relatively good at balancing work and life. Their score for work and life factors are 56.27 and 60.91 respectively.

14 The respondents with unemployed spouse find it very hard to balance work and life. They are not possible to devote fruitful time for life factors and feel guilty for the same. Their mean scores for the work and life factor are 53.48 and 38.62 respectively.

15 Further, on having a deep insight into the work factors, it is found that the technological aspects have no significant relation with the employment status of the respondents’ spouse. It says that whether the respondents’ spouse is employed or not, the impact of technological aspects remains the same.

16 There is high significant association between the nature of the family of the respondents and the components of work / life related factors of the respondents.

17 It is found that the respondents those who live in individual nuclear type of family are able to perform good in the work as well as able to manage life. They are having relatively a good mean score for work and life of 51.42 and 51.76 respectively.
The respondents who live in joint family are balancing work and life with a few differences in the mean score. They are slightly inclined towards work than life with a mean score of work to life 53.53 and 49.97 respectively.

The respondents who stay away from the family are relatively the most affected group. It is found that they are moved by that various aspects of life factors and scored less towards work factors. Their score for work and life factors are 42.93 and 56.37 respectively.

There exists a significant association between the dependent status of respondents and the components of work related factors and no significant association between the dependent status of respondents and the components of life related factors of the respondents.

It is found that it is not possible for the respondents with dependents to give significance to life factors as they give it for work. Their mean score for work and life is 53.01 and 51.95 respectively.

But the cases of the respondents without any dependants are just the reverse of the respondents with dependants. Their mean score for work factor and life factor are 43.91 and 52.85 respectively.

On having a deeper insight into various aspects of life factors, the dependant status does not influence the health aspect, relationship with friends and spiritual aspects. It remains similar for the respondents who have dependents and who does not have dependants.

There exists a significant association between the total work experience of the respondents and the components of work / life related factors of the respondents.

The respondents of the total years of experience group below 3 years and
above 6 years form a subset where as the respondents of the total years of experience group 4-6 years form a different subgroup.

26 The respondents of each group of total years of experience, i.e., below 3 years, 4-6 years and above 6 years forms mutually exclusive subsets.

7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENSURING EFFICIENT WORK LIFE BALANCE AND ERADICATING IMPROPER WORK LIFE BALANCE

Based on the major findings of the study, and interaction with the respondents, subject experts and literature study, the following recommendations are provided.

7.2.1 Recommendations to Employees

1. The employees must focus on effectiveness of the work done rather than length of working hours. By doing so, they can eliminate extended working hours and spare the time for personal work.

2. The employees must drop unnecessary multi tasking and concentrate few works at a time. By doing so, they can attain perfection and avoid work repetition.

3. Making use of modern technologies and skilful time-management strategies may enable the employees to lessen the work burden.

4. Employees must recognize and realize that to perform better and obtain satisfaction in the work they do, they need to view their work as personally significant and meaningful.

5. The employees must figure out what is really important in their personal life. Once the important things are charted, set out priorities for each of them and never let it go for any reason.
6. The employees must ensure that they get their private time to fulfill their personal needs. They would definitely act like rechargers and make them prepare for the next task. It is very similar to ‘sharpen your axe’ concept.

7. The employees must make sure they get healthy food, proper sleep and enough exercise to keep them fit. Having a sound body and sound mind really helps to get things done on time, thereby ensuring proper balance between work and life.

8. The employees should not only work harder, they must work happier and work smarter.

9. The employees must look for a relatively permanent remedy for the stress that arises out of work and life. Proper meditations, physical exercise, medicines with guidance of medical practitioner are few of the remedies. Instead use of alcoholic drinks, excessive smoking and excessive sleeping pills should be avoided.

7.2.2 Recommendations to Employers

1. The IT Companies must acknowledge that employees whose work and personal lives are balanced can bring significant flow-on benefits to the company.

2. Higher work life balance will reduce absenteeism of the employees and hence greater productivity can be ascertained.

3. Supporting a work life balance culture in companies will surely encourage employee retention, which will be a boon to IT companies.

4. The employers must try to examine the type of work that each employee undertakes and attempt to maximize satisfaction by providing skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback.
5. The companies should encourage the employees to finish the work within working hours and help them to reduce extended hours of work. This may enable the companies in cutting down their expenses too.

6. The policies on work life balance must be in accordance to difficulties and problems what the employees actually experience. Unsupportive policies will not be useful in any means.

7. Encourage fair and flexible usage policy to all the employees of the organisation instead of fixed policies pertaining to work life balance.

8. The employers must allow the employees to enjoy the benefits of work life balance practices when they avail it. For instance, if the employee avails any special leave, they must not be frequently asked to attend official calls.

9. The possible portions of the work life balance policies can be customized to individual needs. It includes providing maternity leave as preferred by the employee either before, or after or both in accordance to norms, grant of leave relating to school holidays of their children, relocating to a place of employees’ choice.

7.3 FURTHER SCOPE AND RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Further research can be undertaken for work life balance in other different industries. A similar research can be done for comparing work life balance practices of different companies of same industry. A comparative study for work life balance among a company in public sector and private sector can be undertaken. Research for identifying problems in parenting issues and work life balance can be conducted. Focus on Individual differences and strategy used by different individuals can be made for further researches.
7.4 Conclusion

Work life balance is like a ‘give and take’ philosophy. Both employer and employee must be willing to bend a little. By doing so, both the employees as well as the employers are benefitted much.

Changing business environment will demand more and more from their employees. The changing needs and wants of the individuals also force the husband and wife to go for dual earning. This situation makes work life balance even worse.

There is no single perfect solution for balancing work and life and choices will often change as the demands in work and life changes for every individual. The main purpose of this research was to find out and offer a wide range of options and possibilities so that the employees of IT companies can have more control and freedom to choose what suits them the best.

Gaining more knowledge over work-life balance imparts that the same is applicable to their colleagues too. Hence, they must be willing to extend the same cooperation when needed by the colleagues. When followed by everyone, this creates a greater flexibility in work place and helps much to achieve work life balance.

The former CEO (1986 to 1991) of Coca-Cola Enterprises Inc, Brian G. Dyson says “Imagine life as a game in which you are juggling some five balls in the air. You name them – Work, Family, Health, Friends and Spirit and you’re keeping all of these in the Air. You will soon understand that work is a rubber ball. If you drop it, it will bounce back. But the other four Balls – Family, Health, Friends and Spirit – are made of glass. If you drop one of these; they will be irrevocably scuffed, marked, nicked, damaged or even shattered. They will never be the same. You must understand that and strive for it.”

“Value has a value only if its values are valued.”