Chapter 3

Methodology

Research is to see what everybody else has seen and to think what nobody else has thought - Albert Szent-Gyorgyi (1893 - 1986)

The purpose of the chapter is to set down at the outset the expectations and the line of enquiry for the study. The chapter is divided into fourteen different sections which outline the methodological nuances as undertaken in the research process.

3.1. Research Objective

The study aims to assess the significance of individual and organizational factors in enhancing the value of non-monetary recognition for employees; it proposes to delineate the ways in which non-monetary recognition can be made more meaningful for employees. As an explanatory study, the purpose of the research is to identify the patterns and relationships between the factors and discover the significant ones which make non-monetary recognition valuable to employees. The research sets out to determine the individual perceptions about non-monetary recognition and outline the important variables which impact the value of non-monetary recognition for employees. The organizational factors which largely affect the value of non-monetary recognition for employees are also established. That is, the organizational factors, which are operating in the system, are analyzed in the light of their significance to employees.

As a cross-sector study, the research also intends to present a comparative picture of non-monetary recognition practices and employee perception across
varied milieu. All in all, the study claims to present a blueprint for enhancing the value of non-monetary recognition for employees and developing a successful recognition program.

3.2. Research Paradigm
The word 'paradigm' comes from the Greek word *paradeiknyai*, which means to show side by side, and is a pattern or example of something. The word represents the ideas of a mental picture or pattern of thought. It is defined as a "set of beliefs that guides action." (Guba 1990 p.17) and draws an outline within which a research is conducted. It comprises three generic elements: Ontology, Epistemology and Methodology. The word 'Ontology' is derived from the Greek word 'ont' which means 'being' as such, Ontology raises the basic question of what is the nature of reality? What is the nature of being? 'Epistemology' is derived from the Greek word episteme which means knowledge, epistemology thus questions, how do we know the world? What is the relationship between the enquirer and the known? And, how do we know what we know? Finally methodology focuses on how do we gain the knowledge? Steven Eric Krauss (2005) emphasizes a close relationship between ontology, epistemology and methodology as ontology involves philosophy of reality, epistemology focuses on how to know that reality and methodology identifies the practices used for gaining that knowledge. Thus, any research has to begin with answering the three basic questions which provide a model or framework for observation and understanding of the phenomenon under study. (Denzin and Lincoln 1998 p.185)
Sujin Kim (2003) asserts the significance of positivist paradigm in case of organizational research saying that it is one paradigm which can sustain the validity of findings and generalisability of results the best compared to the other two paradigms of interpretive research and critical theory. It is said that organizational research goals are supported best within positivist tradition because of its ability to predict and control. Citing Fanslow, Kim stresses the relevance of correlational design of positivism for studying organizational issues as it helps analyze the impact of large number of variables on a given factor in a single study. Asserting the nexus between good research and effective practice, Kim says that for a research to be able to contribute to effective organizational practice it must be free of subjectivity and there lies the relevance of positivist paradigm in organizational research. "Because of the fundamental premises that underlie positivism, specifically the requirements that the development and testing of hypothesis be conducted in a manner that is both quantifiable and replicated, the subsequent findings would be less prone to error introduced by investigator subjectivity and hence more widely accepted. Empirical procedures used in positivistic tradition, moreover, are best able to assess and develop practical organizational interventions relative to the outcomes produced by the interpretive and critical science paradigms." (Kim, 2003, p.16)

Following the positivist nomenclature, the present study thus made the ontological assumption of reality as objective in nature (that is recognition as a process could be studied independently of any predisposition) and it intended to comprehend the world through objective responses of the key players. The study sought a nomothetic explanation to identify the various factors which impact the
value of recognition for employees. The basic premise that guided the research was that recognition as a phenomenon was perceived differently by different people, and as an extrinsic motivator it had the potential to be manipulated by the system. The study aimed at delineating the different individual and organizational factors which influenced the value of recognition for employees. This entailed objective understanding of the recognition process as operating in the organization and analysis of employees' viewpoint as regards various factors impacting recognition. The process of recognition as operating in the organization was understood through discussions with HR managers with the use of an interview schedule, while the employee's viewpoint was captured through a structured questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ontology</th>
<th>Epistemology</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Logic of Reasoning</th>
<th>Role of researcher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reality is objective in nature; recognition as a process can be studied independent of any bias</td>
<td>Reality can be studied in a systematic way; employees are rational human beings and their objective responses can be studied to understand how they perceive recognition and what is important to them</td>
<td>Empirical structured methods are used which allow for replication; structured questionnaire for comprehending employee's viewpoint and an interview schedule for HR managers to understand organization's practices</td>
<td>Deductive logic; hypothesis were proven or refuted to substantiate the knowledge of the phenomenon</td>
<td>Objective, independent of the subjects under study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table#3.1: Research Paradigm
3.3. Research Design and Process

Research design provides a logical structure to the research inquiry. Its main objective is to ensure that the research questions are answered as explicitly as possible. (De Vauss 2001, p.9) Drawing an analogy of constructing a building De Vauss says that an architect cannot order material and machines prior to knowing what to build. One needs to know what kind of edifice is to be constructed before getting work permits and sketching a plan. Likewise social research needs to have a design before collection of data and analysis can commence. Citing Yin, De Vauss further asserts that research design is a 'logical' problem and not a 'logistical' one, that is, issues of sampling, data collection and analysis are secondary to the research question under study.

The research design in the study was as such guided by the research questions and the research process. The process of research had commenced with the exploration of the phenomenon in field through a qualitative inductive study (Mphil). Literature review was done to sensitize the researcher to the various concepts and identify the gaps in the subject domain. The exploratory study was based on the assumptions made by the researcher from the review of literature; the relationships identified in the theory building exercise were then set as propositions for the theory testing in the present study. The study thus aimed to provide a holistic understanding of the phenomenon of non-monetary recognition and thus complete the research cycle initiated as a part of Mphil work. Figure 3.1. depicts the process of research.
The research study thus entailed adopting a cross-sectional design with a deductive mode of inquiry whereby hypothesis were proven or refuted to add to the domain of knowledge of non-monetary recognition.

**Research Process involving the Qualitative and Quantitative aspects**

*Figure#3.1.*
3.4. Research Questions

The process of designing any research begins with the question to be answered by the research. As Flick points out, "Research questions are like a door to the research field under study. Whether empirical activities investigated produce answers or not depends on the formulation of such questions." (Flick 1998 p.53) According to Black, research questions describe the potential relationships between the variables to be tested and hence should be potentially testable. (Black 1999 p.30) It is however important to have a question with sufficient scope that can be resolved with the available resources. Devising of research questions is thus an important task which determines the entire course of research process and to quote De Vauss, "the first question to ask is, 'what question am I trying to answer?'" (De Vauss, 2001p.17)

Being an explanatory study, research intended to answer the 'What' and 'How' questions as regards non-monetary recognition. The study proposed three broad questions which were subsequently broken into specific questions.

Following is the list of research questions:

1. What are the individual factors which impact the perceived value of non-monetary recognition for employees? What is their significance?
   
   => How do employee demographic (age, sex), psychological (WLOC) and functional characteristics (career stage, years of experience, functional area), impact the value that the individual attaches on non-monetary recognition?

2. What are the organizational factors which impact the perceived value of non-monetary recognition for employees? What is their significance?
Methodology

How does top management's and the superior's belief on non-monetary recognition impact the value that the employee attaches to non-monetary recognition?

How do the relations with superior impact the perceived value of non-monetary recognition for employee?

What is the significance of organization's non-monetary recognition practices in impacting the perceived value of these practices for employees?

What factors in the delivery of non-monetary recognition make it valuable for employees?

3. What are the differences in individual and organizational factors across different sectors?

What is the difference in employee perception of non-monetary recognition across public and private sectors?

What is the difference across varied sectors in the private domain?

What are the possible reasons for these differences?

3.5. Operationalization of Research Variables

A variable is defined by Singh (2002) as the attributes of objects, events, things and beings, which can be measured; these are the characteristics or conditions that are manipulated, controlled or observed by the experimenter. The relevance of variables to social research is emphasized by Babbie in the following words, "Social theories are written in a language of variables, and people get involved
Methodology

only as the 'carriers' of those variables." (2004, p.17) Thus in order to develop a theory or seeking answers to a research question, a study of variables and their relationships is required.

This study sought to identify the individual and organizational aspects of non-monetary recognition, which if integrated in the system would enhance the perceived value of such programs for employees. The study uses the word Value to connote 'perceived value' as the study does not differentiate between the two. In the words of Edward de Bono (2006), "Since all value is only value when it is perceived as such, it must seem unnecessary to write about 'perceived value'. Is there any other type of value? Obviously a value is not a value unless it is perceived to be one. No matter how real a value may be, it has no value at all until the value is perceived." The study focuses on the value of recognition as perceived by the employees. Value of recognition in the study is assessed in terms of its desirability and memory value to the employees. It would also be determined whether the individual feels a sense of achievement and accepts the recognition as true and sincere acknowledgement of his/her efforts.

Indicated in the study as ERVS, Employee recognition value score was the ordinal variable about which the study intended to make some prediction. It was assessed through a set of eight statements on a five point Likert scale.

Independent variables under the individual category were individual demographic factors (age, sex), functional factors (career stage, years of experience and functional area) and psycho-social factors (work locus of control, an individual's past experience and individual's self belief about non-monetary recognition)
Age as calculated in years was a ratio measure; Sex was a nominal, dichotomous variable; Career Stage measured as 'Junior', 'Middle' and 'Senior', was an interval measure that was decided for the employees by the organization. Other definition of career stage as used by other researchers was not incorporated in the study. Managers categorized themselves in junior, middle or senior segment as per their prudence; Years of work experience calculated in years was a continuous, ratio measure; Functional Area measured under six headings 'HR', 'IT', 'Sales', 'Finance', 'Marketing' and 'Any other', form a nominal multinomial variable.

As proposed by Julian Rotter, Locus of Control is a belief about whether one is responsible for the outcomes of one's actions or forces outside the person determine the outcome. That is, whether a person has control over one's life or not. LOC as a construct may be referred to a uni-dimensional continuum with external and internal as the two ends of the continuum. People with a high internal LOC, tend to have a higher control over their life and perceive that their efforts can alone get them the desired end. They are achievement oriented and tend to tolerate delay in rewards more than externals. (Wikepedia.com) In context of employee recognition, it is assumed that internals will have a high sense of intrinsic motivation and hence may not find recognition from others as critical to their success. For research purposes in context of work and an organization setting, Rotter's LOC was adapted and modified by Paul E Spector (1988). The Work Locus of Control Scale (WLCS) is a 16 item instrument designed to assess control beliefs in the workplace. It is a domain specific locus of control scale that correlates about .50 to .55 with general locus of control. The format is summated rating with six response choices: disagree very much,
disagree moderately, disagree slightly, agree slightly, agree moderately, agree very much, and scored from 1 to 6, respectively. Total score is the sum of all items, and ranges from 16 to 96. The scale is scored so that externals receive high scores. Internal consistency (coefficient alpha) generally ranges from .80 to .85 in the English language version. Test-retest reliability for a year was reported as .57 by Bond & Bunce (2003) and .60 by Moyle (see Moyle, 1995). The scale has been shown to relate to several work variables, including job performance and job satisfaction. It also relates to counterproductive behavior and organizational commitment. (Spector 2004)

Past experience of employee was an ordinal variable assessed through statements on a five point Likert scale. Experiences of non-monetary recognition with the seniors and subordinates were considered the main determinants of assessing one's past experiences with non-monetary recognition. If an individual felt that in the past his or her senior had thanked him or her enough and that even the subordinates have valued the recognition that the individual had bestowed, it is considered that the individual has positive experiences with non-monetary recognition. A high score on this entails better positive experiences with non-monetary recognition.

Individual's self-belief about non-monetary recognition, an ordinal variable, was also measured through five point Likert scale. An individual's belief about whether the recognition influences his/her job goals, whether it is an important part of one's work and whether providing recognition to subordinates impacts performance were the assessment criteria for this variable. A higher score on this scale indicated a stronger belief in non-monetary recognition for the individual.
Independent variables under the organization category were top management's belief about non-monetary recognition (ordinal variable), Superior's belief about non-monetary recognition (ordinal variable), the relations that an individual shares with her/his superior (ordinal variable) and the recognition practices of the organization (ordinal variable).

"Belief is understood as the psychological state in which an individual is convinced of the truth or validity of a proposition or premise (argument)." (Wikipedia.com) It is asserted that one's belief in any phenomenon has to be demonstrated lest it appears phony to others. That is to say that an individual's belief in non-monetary recognition can be illustrated through active participation in the various forums. Top management's belief about the significance of non-monetary recognition will be studied in context of whether the senior managers have enough conviction to carry out the process. Top management's belief about non-monetary recognition was thus assessed on the basis of their involvement at various forums and whether they walked the talk by actually coming forward to praise and acknowledge employees' efforts either verbally or in writing. Superior's belief in non-monetary recognition was assessed on the basis of three criteria: whether one encourages subordinates to praise others, whether one praises his/her subordinates and whether one participates in team celebrations. A higher score on this scale indicated a stronger belief in non-monetary recognition for the top management and the senior.

Sharing good relations at workplace include a whole lot of factors; the study however focuses on working relationship with the senior. It is evaluated whether an individual can readily discuss one's problems with the senior, whether he/she
would like to spend time with the senior and whether one perceives the relationship as healthy. A higher score implied better relations with the senior.

Finally the organization recognition practices were assessed through a set of 12 items. It was assessed whether the organization culture was supportive of recognition and that the organization provided for the basic necessities for recognition like sufficient budget, formal and informal forums of recognition, opportunities for spot recognition, training to employees for recognition etc. A higher score on this scale indicated that the organization was supportive of recognition and that it had an extensive configuration of non-monetary recognition practices.

The study also tried to identify the employee choices as regards the delivery of recognition. Although not included as a variable in the study the delivery of recognition was captured through forced ranking by employees. It involved investigating the different aspects related to the way recognition is imparted to employees, like the setting (Formal/Informal), the form of communication (Verbal/Written), the time (during the process of achieving target/after achievement), the token involved (monetary/ non-monetary), the person (senior manager /team) providing recognition and the forum (public/private).

3.6. Hypothesis

Any empirical investigation begins with the statement of a solvable problem and a tentative solution in the form of a testable proposition. (Singh, 2002, p.356) This testable proposition is called hypothesis which involves seeking relationship between two or more variables. Hypothesis is guided by an existing theory or
Methodology

assumptions made by the researcher as regards the concept. The research exercise involves proving or refuting these hypotheses so as to add to the knowledge domain of the subject under study by refining the existing theory and as Black says, the aim is not to provide the perfect theory, but a better one. (Black, p.8) Figure 3.2. depicts the various hypothesis to be tested in the present study; these present the relationship between the dependent variable i.e. employee's value for recognition and other independent variables.

Following is the list of Hypothesis:

1. Older managers tend to value recognition more than younger (under 40) managers.
2. Women managers will value recognition more than men.
3. Managers with more years of experience will value recognition more than those with lesser experience.
4. Managers at higher career stage will value recognition more than those at lower stages.
5. Managers across different functions will perceive recognition differently.
6. Managers with an external WLOC will value recognition more than those with an internal WLOC.
7. Managers with a positive past experience of non-monetary recognition will value recognition more than those with a negative past experience.
8. Managers with a stronger self belief in recognition will value it more than those with a weaker belief.
9. Managers from an organization with a stronger top management belief in recognition will value recognition more than the managers from an organization with a weaker top management belief in recognition.

Fig 3.2.: Hypothesis Testing
10. Managers with a superior who believes in recognition will value recognition received more than the managers whose superior does not believe in recognition.

11. Managers sharing good relations with a senior will value recognition more than the managers who do not share good relations with their senior.

12. Managers from an organization with a high recognition score will value recognition more than the managers from an organization with a lower recognition score.

3.7. Sampling

Sampling is the procedure involving selection of individual observations for the purpose of finding knowledge about a given population. It entails empirical selection of a small group of subjects (sample) from the population such that the sample is representative of the population under study. The present study involved selection of organizations as well as employees from the selected organizations.

The organizations under study were chosen through random sampling of the organizations available in Mumbai. The targeted organizations were sent requests for participation along with a brief overview of the study. Thereafter, meetings with HR head were scheduled and a brief presentation explaining the objective and expected outcome of research was made. Of the sixteen organizations that were identified and contacted for the purpose of research, seven complied to participate.
Methodology

The employee sample from each organization was chosen through random sampling with the help of organizational representatives. The HR managers of the organization identified the employees for participation in the study ascertaining that a representative sample from across functions and levels was obtained for the purpose of research. An email was framed introducing the study to participants and explaining the significance of their participation in the study; this was then forwarded to the targeted employees. In some organizations, a letter was drafted for the purpose of circulation across employees. Thereafter the interested employees were sent questionnaires for data collection.

3.8. Unit of Analysis

Unit of analysis is the 'what or whom' under study (Babbie, p.94, 206) and is as such drawn from the research objective. The study proposed to assess the significance of individual and organizational factors which enhance the value of recognition for employees. It also sought to identify the differences across organizations which influence the value of recognition for employees. As such the unit of analysis for the study was both the individual and the organization. As a nomothetic research, the study intended to study 'aggregates' (large collection of employees) from each organization and at the same time proposed to compare each organization from other. The unit of observation for analyzing employee data was the individual employee, while for analyzing organizational aspect, data was collected from organizational representatives, mainly the HR manager in charge of rewards and recognition.
3.9. Data Source

primary data was collected from employees and the HR managers in two stages. An interview schedule was used for discussions with HR managers to comprehend the existing status of non-monetary recognition in the organization while a structured instrument was used to capture employee data. The research instrument was constructed on the lines of the questionnaire used by Nelson (2001). The instrument comprised six sections with demographic data in the beginning, the Work Locus of control (WLOC) scale by Spector (1988), Item List A, B, C and a final section on forced ranking of some variables. The items in the questionnaire were developed after each of the research variables was operationalized. For each of the attribute of the variable an item was phrased on the lines of instrument used by Nelson. A five point Likert Scale was used to solicit responses.

3.10. Pilot testing

The instrument was pilot tested on 40 cases and the necessary changes were made. Initially the instrument had 50 items besides the Work Locus of Control test (total 66 items); through pilot testing it was realized that some of the items were ambiguous and not understood easily by respondents. This led to some changes in the instrument which was finally reduced to 62 items including the WLOC scale. Another change made in the instrument through pilot testing was in the last section wherein more than two choices were given and the respondents were asked to rank the options in an order of importance to them. The respondents were unable to mark this section precisely, as such this was later
changed to forced ranking with just two options such that it could be comprehended easily by the respondents.

3.11. Validity and Reliability

For a scientific instrument to successfully serve the objective of a research and collect data precisely, two characteristics of validity and reliability are of foremost importance. Validity refers to the degree to which a test measures what it claims to measure and involves correlation with some outside criteria which is regarded by experts as the best measure of the trait being measured by the test. (Singh, 2002, p.73) Criterion-related and construct validity could not be ascertained for the test and as such efficiency of the test was ensured through face validity. Face validity involved validation of the test from experts such that it could be claimed that the instrument appeared to measure ('looks like') what it intended to measure. The face validity of the instrument was ensured by discussion with two experts from the field and the research guide.

"Reliability is that quality of measurement method that suggests that the same data would have been collected each time in repeated observations of the same phenomenon." (Babbie, 2004, p.141) The reliability analysis of the scale (total 46 items) was done through SPSS 15.0 using Cronbach's Alpha which was 0.868. The reliability of the standardized test (16 items) by Spector was 0.628.

3.12. Data Collection and Timing

The research was a cross-sectional study with data being collected during a course of eight months. Sixteen organizations were identified and the HR heads
were briefed about the project seeking their participation in the study. Limitations in terms of organization's work commitments and research's timeline, led to the inclusion of seven organizations in the study. After a brief meeting with the HR head, and approval for conducting research, other meetings were scheduled with HR manager in-charge of rewards and recognition in the organization. Interview schedule was used to comprehend the recognition program as operating in the organization. Subsequent step involved selecting employees for participating in research. This was done in consultation with the HR manager; a mail was framed with a brief overview of the study and seeking voluntary participation of employees. The mail, along with the questionnaire, was sent to employees either online or personally by the researcher. Thereafter the responses were awaited from the willing employees included as participants in the study.

3.13. Data Analysis

Babbie suggests, quantitative analysis involves the quantification of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena as reflected by those observations. (Babbie, 2006, p.396) As such, the foremost step prior to analysis involved reduction of data into a form readable by the computer. SPSS 15.0. was used for analysis and after data entry, variables were coded and computed from the responses on the different items of the questionnaire. Thus sixteen items of the work locus of control scale were reduced to a single column of SPSS data sheet, with a single number indicating the score for individual respondent. Likewise other variables were also computed. Analysis thus began with the
procedure of analyzing the missing values. Of the 432 responses received, 32 were discarded due to the missing values.

Thereafter the process of analysis was phased out into three parts. The foremost objective of any empirical research is to describe the phenomena on the basis of different variables under study. Descriptive statistics provide statistical computations which describe the characteristics of a sample or the relationship among variables in the sample. (Babbie, 2006, p.442) Chapter five named 'Results II', discusses the sample on the basis of different variables like age, sex, etc. Univariate (description through a single variable) and multivariate analysis (description through many variables) was done to illustrate the sample.

In the second part of analysis, measures of association were checked to assess the relationship between variables. As the data was interval, Pearson correlation coefficient was used to ascertain the relationships among variables. Inferential statistics is applied to check for the generalisability of associations as found through the sample to the population from which the sample is selected. (Babbie, 2006, p.469) As such in the third section of analysis, relevant tests of significance were conducted to either support or refute the hypothesis identifying the significant independent factors that impact the employee's value for recognition (the dependent variable) The relationship between variables was further analysed through regression. Through regression analysis the relationship among variables was represented in the form of an equation which predicted the value of dependent variable with variations in the value of independent variable(s). Linear and multiple regression analysis was done to find an employee's probable value for recognition with changes in the different
independent factors. The impact made by independent variables on the
dependent variable was assessed independently for each variable as well as in
combination with other independent variables. Furthermore comparisons across
sectors and organizations were made to arrive at a better understanding of the
phenomenon of non-monetary recognition. Results in the form of organization
profile, the organization's recognition practices and employee profile were also
captured; chapter four 'Results Y presents these findings.

3.14. Research Constraints and Ethics

All social research projects are generally limited by four constraints: political,
scientific, administrative and ethical. (Babbie, 2006, p.62) The political issues
which deal with the 'substance and use of research' were limited in the study and
related to the acceptance of research proposal by HR heads for conducting
research in their organization. The proposal was discussed and reviewed in detail
by the manager and no ideological issue regarding the potential of research
emerged.

The study was however restricted by various administrative issues. One of the
most critical issues was getting appointments with the HR managers and other
respondents of the study. Due to their work commitments it was difficult for
managers to allocate time for the study and at the same time, the deadline for
data collection could not allow any extra time for the respondents. With repeated
requests and follow-ups on part of researcher and efficient time management by
participants the study was successfully conducted. Limitations in terms of time
and resources however did not allow the study to scale to a larger sample and a
Methodology

varied milieu. For the same reasons, the research was restricted to the study of managers. A study including the viewpoints of blue collar workers could provide a different insight into the phenomenon of non-monetary recognition and could provide a holistic understanding of the phenomenon.

The scientific constraints, that is the one related to the research design were also few in the study. As a nomothetic inquiry the study sought to 'explain economically' (Babbie, 2006, p.22) through limited factors the phenomenon of recognition. It thus provided a partial description of what factors impact the value of recognition for employees and hence falls short of rich description in that sense. Another constraint associated with the design of research related to the source of data collection. A structured questionnaire, with a five point scale, does not necessarily capture the respondent's true viewpoint. Survey researches are subject to artificiality (Babbie, 2006, p.275), and as such was the questionnaire under study.

Finally the research was also restricted by some ethical issues. One of the most important concerns was that of voluntary participation, that is the respondents participated in the research out of choice and not of any pressure from higher authorities. In some cases, employees did not have enough time but conceded to complete the questionnaire as their seniors had asked them. In such a situation, researcher affirmed that they were free to decline from participation as otherwise the research would grow to be unethical. With the work deadlines and less time for employees, voluntary participation became a major concern for the researcher. Since the fruits of research were not immediate, employees could not locate adequate return on their investment of time and as such many were
unwilling to participate. Moreover some of the targeted employees were apathetic to any research and found it redundant to their work. In such cases, researcher had to exclude them from participation. It was by targeting additional number of employees and by giving extra time to those who were willing to participate, the study could conform to the norm of informed consent.

The study also maintained anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents. In case of personally administered questionnaires, the filled forms were collected and jumbled such that the respondents could not be traced even by the researcher. While in case of questionnaires received through emails, the participants were ensured confidentiality of their responses. Although the HR managers had helped in selection of employees, they were not involved in compilation of responses. The employees were asked to send the questionnaires directly to the researcher through email. The HR manager was not allowed to go through the responses so as to maintain confidentiality of employee responses.

Another ethical consideration involved maintaining confidentiality of organizations under study. The HR heads of the organizations were interested in knowing of the other participant organizations in the study. Their request was politely declined citing the ethical concern. The recognition practices and findings of the study were however shared with the organizations in the form of a report submitted to each of the organization.

Finally the ethical issue of harm to the participants was eliminated through the cross-sectional design as the research did not introduce any intervention and did not seek to assess any changes post introduction of the intervention. As a cross-sectional design this issue was minimized compared to an experimental or
longitudinal design. Since participants were not to be traced for future study, data collection being a 'one-off procedure, an individual's privacy could be maintained easily. (DeVauss, 2001, p. 192)

The chapter discussed the various details involved in the process of research. The subsequent chapters Results I and II will present the findings of the research.