CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In this final chapter, the results, of this study are recapitulated and the implications thereof spelt out.

Section 6.1 summarises the broad findings of the study.

Section 6.2 draws attention to theoretical implications of the findings.

Section 6.3 espouses pragmatic implications of the results.

Section 6.4 identifies the methodological implications forthcoming from this research.

Section 6.5 points out the limitations of this study.

Section 6.6 indicates areas to be probed by further research.

6.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This study finds


b. The adverse nature of relationship of work stress with individually and organisationally valued states for both manufacturing and process industries is confirmed.
c. Sectoral differences as hypothesized for role ambiguity and role conflict with the processing industry executives expressing more stress than their manufacturing industry counterparts.

d. The test for moderators finds a reasonable number of interaction effects of the dimensions of Empowerment as well as Empowerment as a composite with work stress in it’s relationship towards individually and organisationally valued states for the processing industry sample. The support for the interaction effect is however modest for the manufacturing sample.

e. Empowerment from Supervisor also displays interaction effects more for the process industry than the manufacturing industry.

f. The support for the main effect of Empowerment dimensions, as well as Empowerment as a composite is overwhelming as in a majority of the relationships examined the dimensions and the composite add significantly as a supplementary predictor to work stress in predicting individually and organisationally valued states for both the manufacturing as well as process industry samples.

g. Empowerment from Supervisor is also equal to the task in serving as a supplementary predictor to work stress in predicting individually and organisationally valued states for the manufacturing and process industry samples.
h. Replication of interaction effect is scarce while generalisation of main effect finds greater support for the two production (manufacturing and process) units studied.

6.2 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

(i) Conger and Kanungo (1988) defined empowerment as the motivational concept of self-efficacy. After reviewing relevant literature, Thomas and Velthouse (1990) argued that Empowerment is multifaceted and that it's essence cannot be captured by a single concept. This study confirms that the Empowerment composite has a four factor structure comprising of Meaning, Competence, Self-determination and Impact dimensions.

While this is one way of approaching the question of empowerment there exists another approach. The alternate approach advocates the use of the Supervisor as the source and initiator of Empowerment (Das, 1992). Several studies of the mentor protege relationship strongly indicate that it can be instrumental in supporting both career advancement and personal growth (Kram, 1985; Levinson et al, 1988; Phillips - Jones, 1982). Hence a combination approach to study Empowerment is recommended and is adopted for this study. The findings of the study confirm that Empowerment by Supervisor displays moderating effects similar to the ones displayed by Empowerment and its dimensions. Thus the inclusion of both the approaches has been justified.
(ii) The differential efficacy of the Empowerment dimensions in conjunction with work stress found by this study supports the cause for further efforts to study individual differences by work stress research. Nevertheless from a theoretical perspective the findings throw up the question 'do individual differences determine perceived role conflict and role ambiguity or moderate employee's reaction to ambiguity and conflict?' (Jackson & Schuler, 1985)

(iii) The production set up differences revealed by this study provides support to the view that factors operating at a distance can affect employee perceptions of stress (Newton & Keenan, 1987). The plethora of inter- and intra- organisational factors which may interplay with the individual makes the arena for research investigation appear as far spread. Meaningful thrust for research in this direction requires theoretical reinforcement linking environment, organisation and the individual.

6.3 PRAGMATIC IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study offer several implications from an applied perspective.

This study by confirming the adverse relationship between work stress and valued states establishes the need for stress monitoring and alleviating efforts by organisations.

Stress audit to determine the dominant stresses prevalent in the organisation, its departments and divisions by periodic and systematic data
gathering on the climate of the organisation, work stressors, satisfactions and frustrations is vital. Every organisational measure aimed at minimizing executive's work stress must begin with specific job descriptions to be prepared so that each executive understands his or her basic function. Public sector undertakings, irrespective of process and manufacturing industries, must define not merely the ultimate objectives but also the extent to which they are considered relevant and important and the manner in which these objectives are to be attained.

The findings imply emphasis on providing executives with job related skill through on the job training programmes. Implications for employee placement are also offered by the findings of low job satisfaction. Employees with lower ability may benefit more from leader initiating structure than employees with higher ability (Schuler, 1977 a).

The results supporting Empowerment as a moderator of the work stress-valued states relationship suggests that organisations through non-threatening performance appraisal interviews, cohesive co-worker interaction and considerate supervision may enhance employee self esteem (Mossholder et al, 1981) contributing to the individual's sense of personal worth and competence.

Singh (1997) has suggested the following empowerment strategies:

a) delegation of authority: delegation of authority to lower managers is likely to bolster their sense of perceived control which in turn would probably reduce distress reaction; b) participation in decision making also provides an opportunity to express one's power needs; c) people role - efficacy
can be enhanced through their perception of their roles and by providing
behavioural opportunities that confirm their perception of being effective;
d) quality circles build confidence and competence in employees and therefore
they are empowering in nature; e) the experience of nurturant task leadership
is empowering for subordinates because competence is developed through the
relationship; f) mentoring, by building competence enables the proteges to
respond to stressful situations more effectively, thus aiding well being even
after exposure to stressful events. These Empowerment strategies may be
judiciously applied for positive results.

6.4 METHODOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

In the search for moderators using linear moderator multiple regression
analysis this study identifies limited interaction effects. In addition, the
replication of interaction effects by the two samples also proves to be meagre.
On the other hand, the analysis finds main effects to be abundant. Viewed
together these findings reaffirm the following methodological implications
voiced by previous related research.

1. Investigators must consider the independent contribution of
   moderators to the prediction of individual outcomes (Morris &
   Snyder, 1979; Batlis, 1980).

2. Further research must begin to allow for non linear moderating
   influences (Batlis, 1980) such as plotting predictability indices
against values of moderator variables and then mathematically
describing these functions (Zedeck, 1971).

3. Research findings, regardless of their level of significance, and
size of correlation, can be entitled to serious consideration only
when replicated to a degree of consistency (Lykken, 1968).

6.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The data derived is from self report measures and the possibility
that method variance may have affected the relationships cannot
be ignored.

2. The data of this research are static in nature. Longitudinal or
experimental research efforts are needed to draw causal
inferences for the relationships reported here.

3. Due to severe limitations in availability of internet facility to aid
computerised survey of literature the related studies referred
though extensive cannot be termed as exhaustive.

6.6 SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. As an appropriate follow up to this study, research may be undertaken
with employee performance, measured objectively and through peer and
superior ratings, as an outcome variable to examine for main and
interaction effect of empowerment with work stress.
2. Replication research for extending the findings of this study is required for various work groups in divergent organisational contexts.

3. A similar production set-up comparison (manufacturing Vs process) study for other sectors (Private and Joint enterprises) is warranted to confirm the influence of production set-up on employee perception of work stress and its outcomes.
Appendices