CHAPTER VII

Conclusion and Suggestions
Organisation is a means to an end rather than an end in itself. The test of a healthy organisation is the efficiency and effectiveness with which it attains its objectives. Efficiency by definition connotes the ability to produce a particular unit of output with the optimal utilization of resources which if applied to a service organisation implies the achievement of immediate objectives. Effectiveness on the otherhand implies the achievement of ultimate objectives, which in a service organisation can be judged by the level of customer’s satisfaction and the profitability. After a close introspection one feels convinced to conclude that the aforesaid parameters revolve round man – the central nerve in an organisational framework. The organizational efficiency /effectiveness emerges therefore as a direct function of well qualified, motivated and committed employees who work together to achieve the organisational objectives. In order to comprehend the importance of human system and the psychological energy it possesses, a study of employees morale can hardly be ignored.

Morale is psychological in nature. It, therefore, requires a proper matching of suitable psychological components, to develop and maintain the system as a whole and to solve the problems relating to human behaviour. Since man has become dependent upon organisations, his morale is directly dependent upon the efficiency/ effectiveness of the organisation and the vice-versa. That is, higher the degree of organisational efficiency/ effectiveness, greater the morale of its employees. Likewise the higher morale leads to an efficient effective organisation. This circular relationship is a prime mover in the dynamics of overall organisational effectiveness.

In view of the aforesaid interdependencies, the present study was undertaken to ascertain the implications of the aforesaid relationships in State Road Transport corporation- a service organisation in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Before a detailed diagnoses is made of the implications of the morale of its employees on the overall organisational effectiveness and vice-versa, it is
imperative to touch upon a brief profile of J&K State Road Transport Corporation.

At national level public sector participation in the passenger road transport services commenced with the passing of The Road Transport Corporation Act 1950 and, at present, there are 71 State Road Transport Undertakings in the Country. With the planned intervention particularly from the sixth five year plan the SRTU’s have lead the path of distlnx improvement in the productivity parameters, when the fuel efficiency and the staff productivity indices continue to be the challenge for policy planners. Being conscious of such a disquieting situation including the financial position, the Planning Commission Government of India from 1995 followed numerous policy measures to bring about improvement in State Road Transport Services.

The Jammu & Kashmir State Road Transport Corporation ranking 22nd possesses a unique distinction in view of the marginal support from Indian Railways which, otherwise, constitutes an important mode of transport system in the country. Although Jammu division has been brought on the railway map of India but Kashmir and Ladakh divisions, due to their physical extremities, continue their dependence on road transport. Road Transport, as such, bears both economical and social connotations. Realising the importance of the aforesaid factors, inter-alia, the state government, since independence, has treated road transport a priority sector.

In order to meet the requirements of operational flexibility a full-fledged Transport Department came into being on 1st June 1948. Over the period of time the department underwent major changes and in Oct.1965 it was given a status of Govt. Undertaking. In 1976 the state government announced its maiden transport policy with the objective of providing adequate, efficient and economical transport system and to provide uninterrupted quick and prompt transportation of goods to various places in the state. Consequently, the Government Transport
Undertaking was converted into the J&K State Road Transport Corporation from Sept. 1976 with specific objectives.

Consequently, a new organisational structure came into being. However, one of the fundamental disquieting parameters has been the dynamics of labour absorption which at the dawn of its emergence as a corporation had reached an alarming level, and as such the corporation was born with a huge liability of its manpower. It is only during the recent past from 1983-84 to 1996-97 that the trend of persons employed has started showing deceleration. This is one of the positive developments in the policy decisions adopted by the management and if allowed to perpetuate shall go a long way in slashing down the recurring expenditure and as such shall transform the basic texture of the corporation.

The state government's budgetary support which has been increasing over the period of years amounting to Rs.11403.50 laks in 1998 is the prime mover of the corporation. However, the corporation has neither paid any part of principle amount nor the interest back to the government. In view of the decision taken by Central Government of not participating in the capital of any corporation making losses from 1986-87, the corporation has adversely been effected and it has not been possible for it to meet the capital requirements even for the replacement of aged fleet and, as such, the fleet strength has significantly declined during the period under reference. Since aging of the fleet strength is a continuous process yet the corporation presently has 62.54% fleet declared as overaged. This is a vivid challenge for the very existence of the corporation particularly in view of the stoppage of capital flow from the Central Government. Consequently the market share of the corporation has significantly declined from 22.00% to 7.76% during the period under reference. Again, the average operated fleet also indicates a decline. The comparative efficiency parameter in the corporation viz., a) Fleet Utilization B) Vehicle productivity (Kms) C) Bus-staff Ratio and D) Fuel efficiency (Kms) are all trailing in comparison to the national averages. Under
these circumstances the corporation demands an absolute overhaul on all the major fronts as already discussed.

Operational performance of the corporation which has been studied along three directions viz., Routes operated, passengers carried and goods carried also portrays a disquieting situation. Reflecting the mismanagement in the corporation the three variables indicate a total mismatch between the increase in routes operated and the decline in passengers carried. The extension of the routes has probably taken place not keeping in view the economics of scale. Besides the decline in the passengers carried has more than offset the increase in goods carried resulting in no tangible financial gain in the corporation.

After analysing the income and expenditure statements of the corporation particularly for the period under reference, any assumption that the corporation will reach a breakeven point in the foreseeable future seems to be unrealistic. Some experts have even opined that any effort to bring about improvements in the financial health of the corporation is likely to be overtaken by the increasing wage bill, most of which is unproductive. The objective underlying the existence of transport market is equally difficult to accomplish because, with the very insignificant market share it holds, it is not able to influence the operators in the private sector in terms of either frequency of services or fares. The significant causes of the present state of the corporation has been listed as:

a) Lack of adequate finances.
b) Shortfall in revenue
c) Overstaffing
d) Poor workshop facilities
e) Uneconomical routes operated
f) Uneconomical fare structure
g) Lack of operational flexibility
h) Lack of training facilities, and
i) Lack of public confidence
To reduce the increase of losses in the immediate paradigm in the corporation the following recommendations are made:

1) Introduction of VRS.
2) Nationalisation of routes.
3) Automatic Fare/Fright revision
4) Replacement of overaged vehicles
5) Interest on delayed payments
6) Commercial exploitation of immovable assets
7) Provision of wayside facilities.

Although the arguments and counter arguments continued about the closure/continuation of the corporation yet the fact remains that the corporation continues to be in red unless drastic measures are taken in-either direction. Besides, the present state of affairs is expected to continue with all negative socio-psychological ramifications over its employees working at different echelons of its management.

To analyse the morale of the employees working at different levels of management in the corporation an analysis was made to ascertain the attitude of five levels of employees towards 1) Job & organisation  ii) Immediate boss iii) Management  iv) Colleagues. While weighing the responses on the category scale as proposed by Likert, the analyses shows that the morale of employees is highest at the upper middle level (3.39), followed by top level managers (3.29) operating force (3.23), and supervisory level (3.17). Employees working at middle level management show the lowest degree of morale at (3.04). The overall average of all the five levels of management has been worked out at (3.22) marginally higher than the average of averages. A close introspection of scores reveals that the attitude of all the employees towards job and organisation is 2.78 which is lower than the median on the Likerts scale. This is more so with
respect to the majority of the employees working at middle level, supervisory level and operating level. Similarly the attitude of all the employees towards management stands at 2.75 which is yet again lower than the median at the Likerts scale. All the employees working at middle level, supervisory level and operating level are not satisfied with the management of the organisation. The results, therefore, amply show that the majority of employees are not satisfied with the jobs they are doing, the policies pursued by the organisation and the attitude of the management towards people operating at lower levels. Although the average of average score stands at 3.22 which is higher than the median on the Likerts scale, yet the shortfall in the average mean score in category I (Job & Organisation) and category III (Management) has been more than offset by the scores in category II (Boss) and category IV (Colleagues), which have recorded the highest level of morale.

A comparative analysis of the levels of morale at different levels of management portrays an interesting picture. The distribution of employees according to hierarchy shows that about 53.41 percent of the total employees are not satisfied with the job and the policies of the organisation as is evident from below average morale level reported by them. This is particularly so with respect to the lower levels of management viz. Middle level, supervisory level and operating level. About 20.45 percent of the employees fall in the category of average level, which shows that they are sitting on the fence of job satisfaction. This makes out a strong case for making an indepth analysis on part of the management of J&KSRTC to find out the reasons for indifferent attitude of the majority of employees towards job and organisation particularly falling in the categories of middle, supervisory and operating levels.

On the basis of the present study it may be stated that there is an immediate need to restructure the organisation in such a manner that jobs are so carved out as to sustain the morale of the employees at a higher level. The guiding principle for such restructuring ought to be educational and professional
competence of the employees and also the expectations of employees at different levels with regard to job demands and favourable response from the organisation. It requires readjustment of jobs in such a manner that each employee gets the job of his own choice which will enable him to put the best out of himself. A built-in system of job loading both vertically and horizontally should be created so that the employees don’t feel bored by repeating the same job over and over again. The organisation ought to pay adequate attention towards job enrichment so that all employees could put their mind and heart into their work. Being vertically loaded, they shall respond more responsibly to their increased feeling of being a part of the management.

Employees have the expectations from their organisations with regard to fulfillment of their esteem and self actualisation needs also in addition to the physiological and security needs. For physiological and security needs, they may be provided with adequate perks in the form of convenience facilities, medical facilities, recreational facilities and overtime allowance etc. The cost benefit analysis of these perks will largely be in favour of the organisation by way of improving the productivity of employees.

SRTC may examine the possibility of introducing the system of rewards/punishment on the basis of productivity of employees.

SRTC have thus to attempt to satisfy the esteem and self actualisation needs which shall promote the level of morale in the long run by building an organisational culture conducive to growth and initiative. It is suggested that SRTC should devise a system of recognising the merit of those employees who have done good work. It may be in the form of certificate of merit or medal which may be distributed periodically by the Chairman/member of Board of Directors giving full publicity through media to acknowledge widely the achievement of hard work.

To update the knowledge of employees they must be sent to training within and outside state which is totally lacking in SRTC. After their exposure,
they shall feel encouraged to implement their ideas into actual practice. By doing so, the level of morale of employees working in JKSRTC will undoubtedly improvise.

Attitude of employees towards their boss constitutes an important component of morale dynamics. The study shows that more than 86.00 percent employees have a positive attitude towards their bosses across the levels of management. Only 13.06 percent of the employees have reported less than average level score in relation to their attitude towards immediate boss. According to hierarchy, the level of morale shows that as against 63.64 percent of the total employees falling in the category of above average, 46.67 percent constitute top management, 76 percent upper middle management, 58.82 percent middle management, 67.50 percent supervisory level and 62.91 percent from operating force.

Inspite of the fact that the majority of the employees fall under above average level of attitude towards immediate boss, yet there is a substantial scope for improving upon the superior subordinate relationship particularly at the lower levels of management. A beginning, in this direction, may be made by top management in establishing a system of interaction in which superiors and subordinates could have free exchange of thoughts and ideas to thresh out issues and arrive at conclusions. Such an activity shall provide an opportunity to both superiors and subordinates in correcting their perceptions, clear misunderstandings and thereby further improving upon the superior subordinate relations. Besides, the corporation may hire the services of subject matter specialists to impart sensitivity training to the functionaries with an objective of furthering the superior subordinate relationships.

Regarding the attitude of employees towards management the study shows that a significant proportion of employees fall under the category of below average scoring. The incidence is very high at lower levels of management viz., middle, supervisory and operating levels. In tune with the above trends
management of the corporation shall have to take necessary steps to bring about needed changes in the attitude of employees towards management.

Based on the present study some of the main causes for such a state of affairs are that the employees functioning at different levels are not satisfied with the terms and conditions, facilities available and the given work environment. They find themselves stagnated and at a far distance from the management. Inorder to sort out such problems, interalia, the higher levels of management may work for the welfare of the employee’s particularly with respect to their security, esteem and self-actualisation needs. The corporation must launch suitable welfare schemes to bring about the desired attitudinal change amongst its employees towards management. The management must take steps in building up of a sound human system while training its managerial carders in the areas of interpersonal communication, leadership styles, motivation, group dynamics and transactional analysis. Inorder to bridge the perceptual gaps the management of the organisation must develop the system of co-operation, co-ordination and interdependence so that the employees find themselves in unison with the overall management. Besides the rules of the organisation unless strictly adhered to shall continue to make the employees perceive the management discriminatory and exploitative. These are some of the vital areas which bear profound importance in improving upon the attitude of employees towards management.

The study of the attitude of employees towards their colleagues indicate that not even a single employee operating at any level of management has below average score. Since the attitude of employees towards colleagues is highly satisfactory, it is very safe to conclude that there are very good interpersonal relations prevailing in the organisation. Besides, a very high scoring of the employees towards the immediate boss and colleagues has significantly contributed towards raising the average of average level of morale of employees working in the organisation.
In brevity, it can be concluded that the behavioural problems in JKSRTC lie squarely in terms of job and organisation and the management variables. The corporation shall have to have a fresh look at the HRD policy prevailing in the organisation. In order to develop an element of professionalism at the higher echelons of management desired attitudinal changes in their work, behaviour and style of functioning is necessitated particularly in relation to their superiors, subordinates and peers. Since all the parameters of organisational effectiveness are not available in JKSRTC, therefore, only two parameters viz, customers satisfaction and profitability were studied. The customers satisfaction amongst service class and business class, assessed in terms of Likert's scale, stands below the median, indicating that both the classes of customers are not in any way satisfied with the services rendered by the corporation. The responses on all the three variables viz., organisation, employees and management are trailing behind with a greater intensity amongst the business class customers. Generally the customers attitude towards employees is much lower as compared to the other two variables.

Inspite of the fact that customers satisfaction is main component of organisational effectiveness particularly in a service organisation, yet, JKSRTC is an exception because of the prevailing behavioural mismatches. The employees and the management seem significantly insensitive towards customers needs and expectations. There is, therefore, a fervent need for adjustment in the internal attitudinal mismatches on the one hand and imbibe the sense of customers supremacy amongst its employees on the other. Besides these measures, rationalization of routes and the availability of buses at peak hours emerge as most important areas of concern in the organisation. Although there is an increase in the routes operated but at the same time there is a decline in the passengers carried. The extension of routes has probably taken place not keeping in view the economics of scale. The condition of given hardware is a fundamental cause of dissatisfaction amongst the customers which needs to be
corrected on priority with whatever capital inflow available to the corporation. In view of the given attitude of the customers with respect to employees, employees mannerism emerges as the most important independent variable. Sensitivity training to its employees, particularly, working in the field can to a considerable extent, take care of this behavioural correction. The organisation does not possess any mechanism to invite customers suggestions and, as such, customer grievances do not reach to the management of the organisation. It is suggested that the corporation should constitute grievance cells at easily accessible points within the area of its operation. Lack of sense of accountability and responsibility have emerged common management problems from the responses given by the customers. Strict adherence to rules and strengthening monitoring mechanism can go a long way in strengthening this fundamental parameter of organisational effectiveness. Such initiatives, interalia, shall undoubtedly bring about a considerable positive change not only in the operating efficiency but in the overall organisational effectiveness as well.