CHAPTER V

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS, ECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION
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AND

CONCLUSION

This chapter provides findings from the study carried out, suggestions and recommendations to the management of the Hotels as well as conclusion of the study along with the scope for the future research.

The percentage of women employee in the Pune hospitality industry comprises of around 13 %. It has been observed from the literature review that there has been insignificant research carried out on the challenges and issues they face while working in the hospitality industry.

5.1 Findings

Key findings of the study are:

5.1.1 Demographic Profile:

i. Age group: Around 50 % of the hotels had 26-50 women employees working as against 100-300 total employees working in the hotel. (table 4.3) The average age of the women employees was 26 years working in the industry.

ii. Percentage of women employees at various level: It was observed that women employees working at :

Entry level were: 13 %
Supervisory level were: 15 %
Managerial level were: 22 %
It can be observed that overall percentage of women employees working is only 14.6 %.
Thus, it is concluded that women are still underrepresented in the hospitality industry as compared to men. (Table 4.3 A )

iii. Around 50% women were between the age of 18-25 years, 44% were between 26-40 years and very negligible women were of the age above 40 years. (table 4. 47)
This shows that women working are mostly young, fresh and middle aged.

iv. Marital status: Majority of women (60%) working were unmarried. (table 4. 48).
Most of the women were fresher’s having 1-3 years of work experience. Very less women (5%) were having more than 10 years of experience. (table 4. 51)

v. Work Experience Most of the women at entry level had 1-3 years of experience. ( table 4. 54) Most of the women at supervisory level had 1-3 years of experience. ( table 4. 52,4.53 and 4.54) Majority of women (73%) working at managerial level have 1-3 years of experience. Very few women (12%) were seen working at managerial level for more than 7 years.

5.1.2 Women friendly HR policies

i. Special leaves/ Medical leaves: Majority of women (60%) have disagreed to the provision of special leaves like childcare or caring for old parents. (table 4. 124)

ii. Male/Female ratio: Most of the hotels (60%) did not have any policy/guidelines maintained with regards to the male and female ratio (4.10). No special quota had been assigned for women at recruitment level by majority of the hotels. (table 4. 127)

iii. Pick up and drop facility: Majority of women (92%) are not provided with pick up and drop facility which at times creates problems in commuting as most of the hotels are situated at outskirts of the city. (table 4. 129)

iv. Flexible hours: Majority of the hotels (62%) did not provide any flexible working hours which affects the work life balance of women employees that in turns affects the career progression. (table 4.12 &4. 134)
v. **Crèche facility**: Most of the hotels (92 %) did not provide any crèche facility which is a major challenge women faced with regards to child care responsibility that makes them homebound and at times leave their jobs too. (table 4.13 & 4.126)

vi. **Maternity leave benefits**: Only 11 % hotels provided maternity leave benefits of 6 months with pay as per the government norms which is quiet low. This facility is only extended to the permanent employees whose percentage is quiet low. (table 4.14)

vii. **Age limit**: Majority hotels (65 %) had no age limit for the women employees at the time of recruitment as they required to balance the gender diversity. (table 4.17)

viii. **Marital status**: Majority of the hotel (92 %) prefer both married as well as unmarried women at the time of recruitment. (table 4.18)

ix. **Night shifts**: Most of the hotels (88 %) did not allocate night shifts as a part of safety and security of the women employees except few exceptions in some departments.(table 4.19 & 4.128)

x. **Grievance redressal cell**: Most of the hotels( 89 %) did not provide any grievance redressal cell for women employees to register and resolve their grievances arising at workplace due to various reasons. (table 4.21 & 4.131)

xi. **Come back policy after career break**: Majority hotels did not provide any comeback policy to the women employees after their career break due to various reasons like maternity, spouse transfer, childcare responsibility etc. Thus, hotels in turn loose talented pool of women employees. (table 4.20 & 4.132)

xii. **Counselling cell**: Most of the hotels (73 %) did not provide any counseling cell fro women employees where they could be counseled for their career planning, work life balance issues or any other issues they face. (table 4.22)

xiii. **Incentives and perks**: Majority of the women had disagreed to provision of any perks and incentives by the hotels that actually would motivate them to work more efficiently in the male dominated environment. (table 4.136)
xiv. Women working at senior positions were very insignificant (3%) as compared to their male counter parts. ( table 4.23)

5.1.3 Opinion of women employees and HR managers on challenges faced in the career progression:

i. Conflicts with family responsibility: Around 55 % women did face this challenge which affects their work life balance and thus, at times demotivates them to grow in their career.( table 4.24 & 4.55)

ii. Child care responsibilities: It was faced as a major challenge by 54 % women employees as no provision of even crèche facility was provided by most of the hotels where women could carefree at workplace. ( table 4.25 & 4.56)

iii. Marital status: It was a challenge faced by women as it increases the responsibility of women at home front which makes it difficult to give priority to their careers at time, thus compromising growth opportunities. ( table 4.26 & 4.57)

iv. Single parent: It was found as a challenge by women, as managing child single handedly with long/ irregular working hours becomes difficult thus, affecting the work life balance too. ( table 4.27 & 4.58)

v. Family support: Lack of family support was a major challenge faced by 51 % women employees as it hampers the work life balance due to the long working hours and other industry expectations. ( table 4.28 & 4.59)

vi. Special job characteristic: Women is expected to be a co bread winner as well as homemaker. Majority women faced irregular / long working hours which disturb the women’s home as well as work front, thus becoming an obstacle in the career progression. ( table 4.29 & 4.60)

vii. Inadequate job knowledge: Mostly the fresher’s who join industry faces inadequate job knowledge as a challenge as they were not mostly aware of the working of the industry which at times lowers their confidence. (table 4.30 & 4.61)
viii. **Lack of acceptance by the society:** Few women employees (45%) did face lack of acceptance by the society as a hindrance in their career progression due to cultural and societal pressures that still prevail in India. (table 4.31 & 4.62)

ix. **Commuting at work place:** It was a challenge faced by women employees as most of the hotels are situated at the outskirts, where more time had to be spent on commuting in addition to the long working hours of the industry. Thus, it did at times affect the health and work life balance of women employees. (table 4.32 & 4.63)

x. **Difficulty in moving to new place:** Around 45% women faced difficulty in moving to new place as women in India are still expected to take care of family and children first and then give priority to the career. (table 4.33 & 4.64)

xi. **Lack of equal pay:** Few women did face this as a challenge as they were offered less salary for the same jobs that were offered to their male counterparts. (table 4.34 & 4.65)

xii. **Lack of fairness in training:** Few women (20%) did face this as a challenge as few hotels did give priority to the male employees to undergo training as they were not assured of women’s long term commitment in the organization. (table 4.35 & 4.66)

xiii. **Lack of fairness in promotions:** Around 40% women did face this a challenge since the industry is male dominated, the management preferred promoting men as they are not assured of women’s commitments to the jobs due to their issues and problems. (table 4.36 & 4.67)

xiv. **Lack of mentors:** Majority women faced lack of mentors as a challenge as they were not able to develop their own networks for their progression. The women also were neglected at times by their senior management in terms of providing mentors.(table 4.37 & 4.68)
xv. **Lack of Role models:** Majority women faced this as a challenge as they believe that they did not get motivated enough to progress and also there were very few women seen in leadership roles. (table 4.39 & 4.71)

xvi. **Lack of safety and security at work place:** Few women found this as a challenge due to the special job characteristics like long/irregular working hours, guests interactions etc. (table 4.38 & 4.69)

xvii. **Conflicts amongst each other:** Almost 50% women felt conflicts amongst each other was a challenge faced as it creates a negative environment which is termed as catfight which does not exist in men. (table 4.42 & 4.73)

xviii. **Conflicts with women bosses:** Around 30% women did face this challenge which is termed as ‘Queen bee syndrome’ where the women bosses possess male traits, ambitions and believes in results and not people and feels threatened by efficient subordinates. (table 4.45 & 4.78)

xix. **Male dominant society:** Half of the women did feel this as a challenge as the hospitality industry does have a male dominated environment because of its nature and the culture that prevails. (table 4.45 & 4.76)

xx. **Vertical segregation:** Around 40% women did face this as a challenge as in the male dominated environment of the industry, women are not promoted at senior level positions by few hotels even if they possess the essential experience and skills. (table 4.46 & 4.77)

5.1.4 **Thus, the major challenges faced by women in their career progression are concluded as below:**

1. Conflicts with family responsibilities
2. Child care responsibilities
3. Long/irregular working hours
4. Strong male dominated culture

5. Lack of Role models and mentors

6. Commuting to the work place.

7. Lack of family support

Thus, it can be concluded that the hotels are not found gender sensitive as against providing benefits like flexible timings, childcare leaves, crèche facility, maternity leave, grievance cell, Counselling cell, maternity leave as per government laws etc. for women employees which would assist them in their career progression. The study also confirms that the marital status especially, does play a major role in facing the work life balance related challenges.

5.2 SUGGESTIONS

The following suggestions have been stated as the outcome of the study:

i. **Flexible timings**: Long working hours creates immense stress and the work life imbalance issue. Provide flexible timings for women employees to avoid work life imbalance. Provision of part time work plans is also a good option.

ii. **Training programmes**: Provide cross training to women employees across all the departments and ensure they have experience of operation departments too. Empower the women employees to take apt decisions without requiring a manager's permission to improve the guest interactions, thus improving their decision making abilities.

iii. **Pick up and drop facility**: Provide pick up and drop facility as commuting to the work place becomes quiet stressful as the location of the most of the hotels are on the outskirts of the city, thus increasing the travel time.
iv. **Incentives and perks**: Offer incentives and leaves to rejuvenate and rest, thus, one can work with fresh minds to improve the guest interaction. Taking good care of employees will help the women serve guests in a better way.

v. **Gender discrimination**: No gender bias or discrimination at the time of recruitment should be practiced and women should be preferred and given jobs in all departments. Set targets to increase the percentage of women at various levels to enable the organization provide various initiatives that will support women for future leadership roles.

vi. **Succession planning programmes**: Establish targets for recruiting women employees at various levels and assess their performance against the targets made. Promote them by providing right kind of training and growth opportunities to retain their talent. Thus, plan a succession programme for them.

vii. **Mentors and Role models**: Train and create more mentors for the women employees to motivate and empower them in their career progression. It is important to develop role models within organizations to, discuss their issues and challenges and give guidance in their career progression in hospitality industry.

viii. **Crèche facility**: Provision of crèche for children in the organization. This will enable women employees to work carefree in the organization, thus balancing work life issues.

ix. **Come back policy**: Introduce provision of comeback policy after a career break which may be because of various reasons like transfer of spouse, maternity leave, childcare leave etc.

x. **Sexual redressal cell**: Provision of sexual harassment redressal cell, wherein women can confide about their issues against sexual harassment and a strict action can be taken to avoid such incidences.

xi. **Counselling cell**: Provision of counsellors to listen and advise on women’s issues with regards to their career, home front, challenges they face, career progression opportunities etc.
Thus, after studying the issues and challenges the women faces, the management of the hotel has to take initiative to provide some women friendly policies to improve their representation at all levels in the hierarchy.

5.3 Recommendations:

i. Gender diversity sensitization: Provision of gender diversity awareness training programmes and Sensitization of employee’s programmes to better handle the related issues.

ii. Women empowerment: Initiate an unbiased and diverse culture in the organization to strengthen and empower the women employees to encourage her abilities and strengths.

iii. Identification of High potential women: Identify and recognize HIPO( High potential women employee) amongst the women employees in the organization so that they can be provided with additional training.

iv. Career tracking programme: Implement a career tracking programme for women employees by keeping a record of their job experience and understanding their needs and aspirations.

v. Creating groups: Create platforms or groups for women employees to share their experiences, seek out guidance, support and motivation.

vi. Provision of Stretch Roles: Provide them with more of 'stretch' roles such as going on international assignments, being a part of new start ups to facilitate their team building and leadership qualities.

vii. Wellness activities: Provision of wellness facilities like yoga, meditation room and recreational facilities. These facilities will help them to refresh, thus making them work more efficiently.
5.4 Scope for Future Research

This study basically identified and only analysed the challenges faced by women employees in the hospitality industry. It only focused on a stratified random sample of women employees from the five, four and three star hotels in Pune city. The study in future may look at the male perceptions also, of the challenges faced by women employees in the hospitality industry. This may add more knowledge to the body of research. In future efforts can be made to include female students of hospitality schools along with the male respondents of the hotel to understand their perceptions of the problem in a better way. The following recommendations are suggested for future research.

1. The study can be carried out on some more challenges related to regional and cultural background which plays an important role in Hospitality sector.

2. The study can be conducted with in depth qualitative interviews to understand the perceptions of male and female employees both and the way they deal with these challenges.

3. The study can also cover the role of organization, its culture which plays a very important role in forming a women friendly environment at workplace.

4. Similar studies can be carried out in Retail and Entertainment sectors which are also a part of service sector.

And lastly, the current position of research related to the career progression of women employees topic is relatively new, but a growing area of academic concern. Although, there has been a significant research carried out in the recent past globally, research in the Indian context remains unexplored. Thus, due to dearth of research conducted on this issue in India, there arises a need for research attention and development of more conceptual frameworks and theoretical support. It’s hoped that this study provides some valuable insight in this area for further research.
5.5 CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that women in hospitality industry in Pune face various challenges in their career progression which are visible as well as invisible. The study revealed that women at all levels in the hospitality industry face same problems in their career progression. Also it reinforces that married women amongst all face more work life balance related issues which acts as a major hindrance in their career growth.

In the present study, we have highlighted the major outcomes resulting from the analysis of the primary data related to the challenges faced by women working in the hospitality industry in their career progression. Despite of recognizing the importance of women employees in hospitality, the study suggest that the industry has made a little progress in creating and developing these potentially talented pool of people. The fact of women’s participation and contribution in the workforce in India has increased yet their representation in higher management is quiet low as compared to their counterparts, which is not recognized.

Women contribute up to 9.1% of the total workforce in the Hotel and restaurant industry and men 90.9% thus merely having 0.9% share (indiastat.com).

The challenges related to the work life balance indeed are critical due to the customary belief that women needs to carry out her primary role as a mother, housewife and also as a co partner in the earnings.

Women representation at the senior level is also proportionately very low compared to men. There is an existence of glass ceiling observed that resists women’s upward mobility. This suggests that there needs to be a policy designed to bring in gender diversity in the organization thus encouraging capable women to overcome the challenges they face in their career progression. The study concludes that the most of the barriers for progression of women employees comes from inconsiderateness of the management towards women’s responsibilities and their social roles.
Women have made strides in reaching at the senior levels since the middle of the this century; however, even though the number of women choosing hospitality education programmes and hospitality industry has been increasing, there has not been a proportional increase in the number of women in reaching the top management positions. Studies have also brought forward the under-representation of women employees at various levels and gender discrimination challenges that exists at workplace.

The hospitality industry has to take cognizance about this scenario and adopt in practice various women friendly policies that would assist them to progress in their career.

Thus, even though the study reveals that the women are still not well represented in the hospitality industry due to various issues in their career progression, the hotel industry essentially should recruit and promote women at various levels by providing safe and encouraging environment leading to their upward mobility. The hotel industry should not under estimate the worth of women in the workplace and should make policies to retain such talented pool of people.