CHAPTER -11

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Today, IT professionals are the most envied people in Kerala. They are envied because of the high pay-scale, glamour, and great employment opportunities, associated with IT profession. IT is a new field of employment which gained popularity in modern times. IT professionals are ‘knowledge workers’ who work with and produce information than physical goods. India is emerged as the fastest growing IT hub in the world. At present, thousands are employed in IT industries and thousands buckle up in the background to snatch a job there. The IT professionals face certain problems which affect their family, self and social life, which requires special attention today.

The single most revolutionary development of this age, the IT revolution is credited with ushering in the concept of current spaces into the public imagination. The idea of virtual space and the possibility of earning at rates unthinkable until recent past are made possible by the information revolution. The impact of IT has been universally felt in the economic domain, and India is believed to be the best IT destination.

The populations of the study constitute all the IT professionals working in TECHNO-PARK Thiruvananthapuram and INFOPARK Kochi. The central objective of the study was the socio-economic analysis of IT professionals in Kerala.

The other objectives of the present studies were:

1) To analyze nature of the work and working conditions.
2) To understand job specific qualification, skill and training requirements.
3) To find out jobs stress and its impact on the quality of social and family life.
4) To study occupational health problems and risks.
5) To understand the extent by which the work affects the family life and marital life.
6) To analyze the problem of female IT professionals.

Based on the above objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated:

1) IT professionals have little time to spend with their family members.
2) IT professionals have several health problems.
3) IT professions change the attitude and perspective of one’s life.
4) The quality of family environment is poor where both partners are working in IT.
5) Female IT professionals face various Socio-Economic problems.
6) IT professionals face problems in their works.

300 IT professionals - 150 each from TECHNOPARK Thiruvananthapuram and INFOPARK Kochi -were chosen as samples for this study. The samples were selected using simple random sampling method. Carefully designed questionnaires were given to those selected.

Chapter-5 of this study analyzes the Socio-Economic background of IT professionals in Kerala. IT Industry, compare to their industries, has several differences in terms of employment, qualification and capabilities. Majority of the IT professionals belongs to the age group of 20-30 years which constitutes 72.67 percent of the respondents, and the average age is 29 years. There are more (61.33 %) female IT professionals compare to their male counterpart. Majority (43.67 %) of the respondents possess MBA degree. The monthly salary of most (39.33 %) respondents falls in the range of Rs. 25,000.00 and Rs.45,000.00 while the average is Rs. 40,000.00. 48 percent of the respondents belong to Hindu religion out of which 71 percent of them are from forward caste. 87 percent of the respondents are from nuclear family. In this research, it is found that most (61.33 %) of the IT professionals working in TECHNOPARK and INFOPARK are unmarried.
While 96 percent of the respondents have own houses, 39 percent possess 22 to 32 cents of the land. All the respondents have saving habit. 71.6 percent of them deposit their money in nationalized banks, few of them invest in private finance institutions and others invest in gold and real estates. Nevertheless, the study also indicates that 74.3 percent of the respondents are in debt, because, they make use of the loan and other facilities for different purposes like education, house construction, acquiring properties etc., which they think beneficial in the long run. They repay the loan in small installments. It is also evident that majority of the IT professionals in Kerala are from upper class families. They have good education and having higher salary. At the same time they also have needs like any others in the society. Thus, the Socio-Economic backgrounds of IT professionals have been analyzed to fulfill the main objective of this study.

The recreation or leisure life available for IT professionals in Kerala has also been made subjected to this study, which also forms part of Chapter-5. Recreational activities are often done for enjoyment, or pleasure or fun, whereas, IT professionals are normally busy with their hectic job schedules. This study found that most of the respondents spent 1 to 2 hours every day with social networks. Compare to male counterparts, female IT professionals finds it difficult to avail leisure time. Some of them find time to engage in public entertainments and a few have membership in local clubs. In general, it can be concluded that the IT professionals lack quality leisure life. They keep themselves busy with their work. While at home, they do not get enough time for recreation or leisurely activities. Because of various family obligations, female IT professionals, in particular, hardly get time to engage in recreational activities.

Chapter-6 analyzes the work and working conditions of the IT professionals. In contrast with other employment sectors, IT professionals have lots of problems in their work. Long working hours, unspecific working time, shift duties, job specific training and orientations, etc., are common features. IT profession requires special trainings for candidates discharging various responsibilities. There will always have induction training at the time of joining and sometimes at regular intervals during
employment. Often, they have to work overtime to complete their targets but many of them are not compensated. Majority of the respondents are trying for other jobs and are willing to work in other companies. IT professionals are of migrative nature. Though far better, they are generally not satisfied with their salary and surroundings. Thus we have analysed nature of work and working conditions. This fulfilling the first objective of our study.

The case studies brought out the fact that the respondents are very much worried about job insecurity and high competition. They endorsed that they have no job-satisfaction. They mostly work under pressure from higher authorities and closely pursued to complete the rather tough tasks in a limited time frame. It is found that while they face bitter experience from higher authorities, their hard work and excellence are not appreciated. Though the jobs can be taken to home, many of them are not allowed to do the office work at home. At times, they are forced to go for long official trips to locations outside the local region, state and country. The level of personal interaction between colleagues is very low in IT field. Late night work and shift duty schedules affect the daily routines and project various public and health issues. Nevertheless, IT field, with its glamour, makes people run after it and remains the most sought employment sector.

This study underlines the fact that IT jobs vastly vary from jobs in other industries. This profession influences the attitude of individuals and society. Some of its features incline people to turn away from essential social values and to give little or no importance for human relations. Thus the nature of work and working conditions of IT professionals are analyzed

**Chapter-7** analyzes the family and marital problems among IT professionals. Unlike other job sectors, IT professionals are exposed to specific job related family and marital problems. This study also came across some of the changing attitude and family problems of IT professionals. They are lured to lead a job oriented life. They find it difficult to strike a balance between the family life and professional life. Those who
have an urge to spend time with their family fail to satisfy their desire as they get very little time to spare. Most of the IT professionals live away from their parents and dear ones and unable to be in touch with them, regularly. If both husband and wife are working in IT field, it is very difficult for them to run their family life smoothly. IT professionals like to avail good education to their children, but they are not getting time to look after their studies and other activities in the school.

Some of the IT professionals are not willing to look after their parents because career is important for them and they are fully dedicated to their job. Their career prevents them from participating in family, social and religious functions. Many of the respondent’s do not support their wife to work late or to work at night. The case study also supports the fact that IT professionals are not willing to take partner from IT field. Unlike other professionals, the IT professionals’ view on marriage and family life has sharp contrasts. The idea of ‘living-together’, single life inter-caste marriage and divorce are getting prominence among the IT Professionals. All these are because of their profession. They are paid well, isolated from society, neither aware of nor valuing human relations, and social responsibilities. Like this we have proved the 3rd hypothesis that IT professionals change the attitude and perspectives of ones life.

**Chapter-8** analyzes the health issues related to IT profession. IT professionals experience many health problems directly related to the job they do. The nature of work and demanding work schedules including continuous work posture, mental stress and disturbed daily routines and habits pause serious health risks. Most of them suffer from stress, head ache, back ache, muscle pains, sleeplessness, visual fatigue, obesity, irregular body cycles, increased triglyceride, blood pressure, lethargy and above these there are such emotional problems as frustration and psychological impotence. Like this we have analysed the 4th objective formulated and 2nd hypothesis.

IT professionals are spending more time in front of computer screens. They have to work long hours. Sleeplessness, tension, stretching work, eye strain etc., causes head ache, Unreasonable job demand, tight completion schedules, fear of failure, undue
machine failure, lack of participation in decisions affecting their work, difficulty in getting adjusted to team work, failure in balancing work and family life epic adds to their tension which in turn results in blood pressure. Due to work related issues, money matters, strained relation with partners, children or other family members most IT professionals are feeling stressed in their life. Continuous work on computers badly damages the eyes and leads to muscle tension and musculoskeletal strain injury. The work pattern, lack of exercise, continuous work posture, improper food timing etc., leads to heart diseases, different types of pain, obesity, high cholesterol, etc. Stress and hectic work schedule also leads to bad habits like alcoholism and smoking which would cause potential damages. Like this we have fulfilled the 4th objective of the study and 2nd hypothesis formulated earlier.

This study also establishes the fact that the IT profession impacts the perspective and attitude of individuals. Majority of the respondents confirmed the fact that their behavioral pattern have changed. This includes diminishing social interaction, declining family relations, luxurious spending, ignoring social surroundings, change in attitude due to stress, troubled daily routines, lower physical drive etc. Though it is a white collar profession, occupational stress is common among IT professionals. Irrespective of the age and position they work, most of them are suffering from various health problems.

In Chapter-9 the problems associated with women was subjected to scrutiny. Majority of the respondents in this study expressed their desire to lead a good and family oriented life. This study discovered that some of the female IT professionals are not supporting luxurious marriage. At the same time some of them support inter-caste marriage and living together. Compare to men married female IT professionals get lesser time to spend with their family. If their partner is also working in IT field, it is very difficult for them to run their family smoothly. They have role conflicts. Many give important to their job and some are not willing child bearing. Divorce rate is very high among the IT professionals. Many of the IT professionals are not ready to adjust
with their partner. In their view both need equal status in family. IT field do not give any special care for women professionals.

Many young IT women professionals are not thinking about marriage as they are not ready or willing to take the burden of family life. Some married respondents conveyed the fact that miscommunication and less time spend with family - which is common among IT couples –cause quarrels and misunderstanding in family life. On the other hand, a number of respondents support both husband and wife working in IT field.

This research found that female IT professionals encounter various job related problems. Nevertheless, many young women prefer IT jobs as they are fond of the high salary and other attracting facilities offered by IT industry. Thus we have analysed the problem of women IT professionals thus fulfilling the 6th objective formulated. Similarly we have also fulfilled the 5th hypothesis that IT women professionals face various socio-economic problems.

**Major finding of this research are:**

♦ The nature and working conditions of IT professionals vastly differ comparing to other sectors. IT field offers high salary and other attractive packages to young generation. In IT field, it is not experience, but skill and talents are important

♦ Though educational qualifications like MBA, MCA, MTCH and BTCH are much preferred, job qualification is not much important. Most IT professionals have to undergo 6-12 months training while they begin their IT career.

♦ Job stress is very high in IT field. This affects their personal and family life. Most of the IT professionals find it difficult to balance their family life and profession. They are not getting ample time to spend with their family and to get involved with society. IT professionals in Kerala are more dedicated to their job.
♦ IT professionals have occupational and health problems. Majority suffer from eye problems, back pain, high blood pressure, cholesterol etc. They have no fixed routines especially with regard to sound health habits. For most, improper sleep schedules, junk food and alcohol consumption, distracted dining time etc., becomes habit. On the other hand, many prefer five star hotels for their dinner.

♦ IT professionals in Kerala face several problems in their family and married life. They are not getting enough time to spend with their family. They fail to take care of their aged parents. They carry the tension and frustration from office to home and neglect the feeling of their children and spouse. Misunderstanding and communication gap is very high among IT couples. They tend to give more priority to work than family life. They foster an attitude that money is more important than anything else, and if they have money, they can be satisfied in life. Divorce rate among IT Professionals are increasing day by day.

♦ Many young women are working in IT field. They face issues like shift duty, night working, etc., which has associated social issues. IT profession can easily change the perspective and attitude of women. While they are lured to be fully dedicated to their job, they are made not to worry about the surroundings or future. IT Sector treats men and women equally, it is not giving any special care for female employees like other sector. IT professionals are not giving due importance to marriage. Some of them silently support ‘living together’. They are neither interested in childbearing nor fostering children. Many of the young IT women professionals like to lead self oriented life, neglecting family and other social obligations.

Suggestions

♦ Make fixed working time in IT field

♦ Reduce the workload in IT field
♦ Give good counseling and encourage charity among IT professionals so as to make them understand problems of society and take part in social activity.

♦ Reduce lavishness among IT professionals and make them understand the value of money.

♦ If both husband and wife are working in IT field, help them to adopt a suitable work schedule.

♦ Special Care and protection should be given to women. Exempt women from late working and night works.

♦ Provide good and peaceful job atmosphere

♦ Give them dedicated time and room to interact with their colleagues and to get aware about the social problems around. Encourage and help them find regular time to take part in social life especially charity.

♦ Arrange leisure trip with family and colleagues, to help them get rid of job tension and monotonous life. Different games, entertainment and fun programs also may be arranged.

♦ Ensure job security in IT field

♦ Reduce giving high pressure to IT professionals

♦ Heath problems should be given due attention. Good health consultants should be made available at workplace.

These are some of the suggestion to solve the problems of IT professionals in Kerala.