CHAPTER - 5

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
5.1. BRIEF ABOUT LITERATURE REVIEW:

Literature review is the selection of available documents: both published and unpublished, on the topic, which contains information, ideas, data and evidence written from a particular standpoint. Using the published literature is a core part of research. It connects our work to the scholarly chain of knowledge, and in more immediate terms, it demonstrates our understanding and puts the work in a wider context. There is an added benefit of literature review that it helps us to narrow down our study to a specific area of research by studying what work have already been done; along with its scope, methodology and limitations giving a direction for future study by framing the research gap. Reviewing the literature is similar to honoring the past to inform the present to affect the future.

Anderson et al. (1971) say, “the review of literature is a task that continues throughout the duration of the thesis. It begins with a search for a suitable topic. Since a thesis aims to be a contribution to knowledge, a careful check should be made that the proposed study has not previously been carried out. Although completely new and original problems are rare, a previous study should not be exactly replicated unless the techniques used had been faulty or the findings and conclusions doubtful to shed new light on the problem. A good test is whether the problem still requires solution”.

Specifically, literature review helps the researcher to understand conceptual and theoretical frameworks underlying the area of research. In addition to this, extensive review of literature shares five important functions, as follows:
(a) To build a foundation,
(b) To demonstrate how a study advances knowledge,
(c) To conceptualize the study,
(d) To assess research design and instrumentation, and
(e) To provide a reference point for interpretation of findings (Merriam & Simpson, 2000).

It also helps us to determine if the topic is researchable, to report the results of closely related studies, and to establish the importance of the current study in relationship to previous studies (Creswell, 2003). A clear understanding of earlier researches provides better guidance for organizing, conceptualizing, and conducting research. Henceforth, all empirical studies - qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods - must be connected to literature or concepts that support the need for the study, be related to the study’s purpose statement, and situate the study in terms of previous work (Rocco & Plakhotnik, 2009).

In regard to the topic of study, while going through the earlier researches; it was found that there is a sizable literature available on Quality of Work Life (QWL) and Job Involvement conforming its long history, wide popularity and far reaching impact and importance. Extensive literature review on both these concepts has provided a lot of insights.

5.2. SELECTED STUDIES FOCUSING ON QWL:

After the conceptualization of human needs in an easy-to-understand sort of Need Hierarchy Framework by the famous psychologist Abraham H. Maslow in the form of a Content Theory of Motivation in 1943; many initial studies on QWL adopted this as a base. In this line, Sharma (1973) reported very interesting finding that the primary needs such as physiological and safety needs of the typical Indian workers are mostly satisfied and that have not remained a major area of concern. With this, the workers are increasingly concerned about their social and esteem (ego) needs. This was an eye-opener indication for all those who kept on believing in ‘taylorism’ with all their fancy
personnel policies and schemes predominantly focused on monetary aspects for ensuring QWL of workers, as it was emphasized that the workers are showing concern for meaningful social interactions from the healthy inter-personal relationships at the work place (social needs) as well as concern for satisfying their need of feeling valued and worthy (esteem needs) of making contributions to organizational well-being. So, higher order needs were found to be more relevant compared to lower order needs.

Singhal (1975) studied the need-gratification and organizational behaviour of industrial employees and reported that the physiological, autonomy and self actualization needs are not adequately met, while safety needs were found to be effectively met. It was also found that physiological needs still remained important for all levels of employees and the higher order needs were important only after the lower needs are marginally satisfied. This is consistent with the basic postulate of need progression in the need triangle of Maslow (1943). Interestingly, it was found that participation in organizational functioning has a profound influence on the differential behaviour of workers and involvement (Siegel & Ruh, 1973; IDE Research Group, 1979). This signals the need for fostering participative management practices even at the lower levels of the hierarchy, and thereby positively affecting their job satisfaction, job involvement and organizational commitment (Locke & Schweiger, 1979); as well as QWL, productivity (Rosenberg & Rosenstein, 1980) and absenteeism (Marks, et al; 1986). Martell & Holbrook (1984) also highlighted participation as a strategy to improve QWL.

But, Kakar (1971) raised doubts about the advantages and effectiveness of participation in Indian Industries, considering the parental and mostly assertive types dominate superior-subordinate relationships creating a stumbling blockage to participation. Despite this, Malavia (1977) reported that even in Indian culture; mostly characterized by authoritarianism at the work place; a positive relation between participation-job satisfaction, participation-QWL (Boyd, Cross & Wertheim, 1977) and participation-job effectiveness holds true, which is certainly a welcome sign. Considering this, Pathak

Contrary to this, Mehta (1978) while studying the objective and subjective factors in employee satisfaction in life and work, reported that money seems to be an important factor in general life satisfaction, though not the only one.

In the context of the Indian industries, it was found that the existing level in all dimensions of QWL is much lower than satisfactory, or even considerably poor. Ganesh (1982) opined that the notion of QWL in Indian Organizations seems to be an irrelevant view. Sengupta (1985) also highlighted similar issues related to quality of working life in the Indian context. So, a lot needs to be done to foster a better QWL in Indian industries (Singh, 1982, 1983, 1984; Chakraborty, 1987).

Rahman (1984) while studying the QWL of industrial workers of India found that the demographic variable of educational background and income level have negative correlation with the QWL, and the age of the respondents has no association with QWL.

The study of Maccoby (1984) focused on identifying the level of job satisfaction, the guaranteed outcome of QWL, of employees of Bell System over a period of 5 years; revealed that the employees and supervisors were satisfied with pay and benefits and were motivated to work productively, but they were dissatisfied with technology and perceived too much supervisory control. They believed they were mismanaged, pushed around, not listened to, and more importantly the spirit of service was being eroded by the drive to increase profit. In the context of this study, it is noteworthy that today, GSRTC is also at cross roads, in a dilemma whether it should reorient itself from being a vehicle to meet the social and political objectives of the government to a commercially viable service organization.

Efraty and Sirgy (1990) found that in reality, the term quality of work life should be conceptualized in terms of satisfaction of workers’ need of survival, social, ego, and
self-actualization needs, and those organizational resources relevant for meeting them. The hypotheses of need satisfaction being positively related to organizational identification, job satisfaction, job involvement, job effort, job performance, and negatively related to personal alienation; were validated from the analysis of the data collected from 219 service deliverers to the elderly in a large Midwestern city. In the course of the this study, while reviewing the literature on the subject, the researchers have reported that as Jackson and Mindell (1980) found, today's employees want more control over their environment and a chance to feel a sense of meaning in performing their jobs. Similarly, today's managers are less interested in direct control of their subordinates and are willing to work in an unstructured environment and develop personal relationships with their subordinates. In a way, we are moving from control to commitment sort of culture at our work place (Walton, 1985). That is, both workers and managers express a strong interest in higher-level need satisfaction. While these findings certainly make sense in terms of the progressive and forward looking outlook of today’s workforce, mainly due to changing profile of the workforce over the years; it needs to be examined to what extent these conclusions hold true in case of a traditional, seemingly bureaucratic set up of the GSRTC – the State Transport Undertaking (STU).

Positive correlation between three pairs - QWL and Job Satisfaction, QWL and Performance, and Job Satisfaction and Performance was found in a study of 63 nurses from three government hospitals; and QWL was found to have the highest contribution to performance (Hossain & Islam, 1999). A very remarkable insight was that the size and/or brand name-big banner of the organization are inversely related to the perceptions of QWL and Job Satisfaction, as QWL and Job Satisfaction were significantly higher among the respondents in small organizations than in large organizations., which is contrary to the traditional and popular belief of larger the organization, more likely it would be perceived as better in terms of QWL and Job Satisfaction.

Looking to the security concerns reported by the respondents, it was suggested to allow these respondents to work in small groups with dual advantage – One is to provide a
feeling of security and second is to provide an opportunity to interact with each other leading to improved and congenial working relationship at the workplace. This is very close to one of the pioneering study in the field of Human Relations by Elton Mayo (1927-32) – the famous Hawthorne Experiments, wherein it was concluded that workers look for socio-emotional support at the work place also and managerial attitude towards workers’ grouping, mostly informal, has a significant impact on their attitude towards work. The present study also gives another very remarkable insight that the size and/or brand name-big banner of the organization has inverse effect on the perceptions of QWL and Job Satisfaction, which is contrary to the traditional and popular belief of larger the organization, more likely it would be perceived as better in terms of QWL and Job Satisfaction.

The study of Routinization of Job Context & Job Content as related to employees’ QWL by Baba & Jamal (1991), indicated that nurses who worked in routine shifts perceived higher levels of QWL compared to those on non-routine shifts. It also revealed that nurses who experienced high routinization in job content perceived lower levels of QWL compared to those nurses who experienced low routinization in job content.

Hoque and Rahman (1999) measured the perceived QWL among the 100 workers of two textile mills in Bangladesh and found that the age, education, experience and income of workers as demographic variables have no significant association with the perceived QWL. The study also proved that QWL has significant positive correlation with performance of the workers.

The study of Saklani (2004), focusing on empirically evaluating the importance and existence of various QWL factors in the Indian organizations, conclusively proved that contrary to the findings of the earlier researches, the existing level of QWL is not poor, and is better than the average, in Indian industries. Analysis of the data collected from a rich sample of 294 managerial and non-managerial employees of 24 different types of organizations, also proved that the Indian employees place high value on many non-financial factors that satisfy the higher order needs like esteem and self-actualization.
needs. This is in sharp contradiction to the popular jaundiced perception regarding typical Indian employees that they are more interested in material well-being and monetary aspects only.

Study of Raduan, Loosee, Jagak & Khairuddin (2006) consisting of a sample of 475 managers from the free trade zones in Malaysia for both the Multinational Corporations (MNCs) and the Small & Medium Industries (SMIs); found that with 63% variance in QWL, three exogenous variables were found to be significant: Career satisfaction, Career achievement, and Career balance.

In the empirical study of Naik (2006), reviewing the performance appraisal in APSRTC – one of the STUs, it was found that performance appraisal reports are used as a threatening tool and not a development tool, and the personnel policies adopted in the corporation are not very conducive to employee development. The ratings are based on their personal relationship with the immediate superiors. The rating yardsticks are not clearly defined and this gives ample room for subjectivity in rating. The study reveals that a very important HR mechanism like performance appraisal has; contrary to its philosophy, adversely affected the morale and motivation level of the employees; and thereby lowering their QWL & consequently job involvement.

The physical and psychological health of the bus driver is a critical factor in the driving performance. Any problem in this can lead to undesirable consequences for the passengers. It could be due to the lack of driver’s decision-making authority, fatigue, fear of assault, social isolation, tight running schedules, vehicle mechanical faults, reduced rest breaks, poor cabin comfort, continually rotating shift patterns, adverse weather conditions, traffic congestion, the sedentary nature of the job, noxious air from other vehicles, pressures of ensuring safety of passengers, and demanding passengers (Duffy & McGoldrick, 1990; Carrère, Evans, Palsane, & Rivas, 1991; Evans & Carrère, 1991; Bovenzi & Sadini, 1992; Evans, 1994; Kompier & di Martino, 1995; Krause, Ragland, Greiner, Syme, & Fisher, 1997; Evans & Johansson, 1998; Greiner, Krause, Ragland, & Fisher, 1998; Rydstedt, Johansson, & Evans, 1998; Carty, M., et

Smallwood (2006) indicated that work-life issues are key determinants for drivers.

Ravichandran & Surya Prasad (2007) in their study entitled “Reviving Gujarat State Road Transport Corporation (GSRTC): An Agenda for Action” examined in detail the reasons related to the declining operational and financial performance of GSRTC. While trying to diagnose the problem in the light of various environmental and governance issues, the researchers found that the non-participative employees and their indifferent and detached view to the operating and financial health of GSRTC has also been a major concern. In the discussion of the detailed revival plan consisting of a set of actions to be taken, the stakeholders’ contribution in the proposed revival plan has been emphasized. The researchers have specifically pointed out that the changes at the government and the management level in GSRTC for revival should be supported by appropriate responses by GSRTC employees. While fleet is a critical hardware resource of GSRTC, responses and initiatives from its employees would ensure a smooth and speedy implementation of proposed changes. Keeping this in the background, a set of initiatives at the employee level that would contribute to the revival of GSRTC was presented:

- The employees need to prepare themselves to be outstanding professionals. Their attitude, approach, and action would be driven and influenced by professional considerations rather than inherited bias within or outside the organization.

- Preparing for change would be an important mindset the GSRTC employees would need in the near future. This change may be in adopting technology, developing new skills, adopting a set of new performance measures, professional orientation to work, and innovating way of conducting business, etc.

- GSRTC employees should learn to keep pace with the environment (market, social, and competition), in terms of their day-to-day working like schedule, pricing and
customer focus, quality of services, flexible working hours, and variable compensation, etc.

- Employees may have to reposition their role as change agents for achieving the social objective of providing safe, convenient, and affordable transport to the general public of Gujarat.

- As a part of preparation to revive GSRTC, employees should develop a reorientation to their occupation, viz., an occupation based on Government grants and subsidy to an employment by contributing to an organization with social objectives.

The suggested improvement measures are feasible only when there is extensive communication among all sections of the employees, the management, and the government. This is also one of the high felt needs in terms of QWL highlighted in many earlier researches, that is, to have continuous interactions across all levels of the organizations. In a way, communication is to be considered a key variable for improving the quality of working life (King, 1992). In nutshell, the whole proposed revival plan emphasizes on increasing/improving the job involvement of these employees, so that they really care for their work/job and serve the customers (passengers) in the best possible way by developing an entirely new outlook. And the best way to do this would be to provide them expected QWL.

The study of Ramanayya, Nagadevara & Roy (2007), consisting sample of Drivers, Conductors and Cleaners from KSRTC – one of the STUs in India, concluded that the working environment, compensation package and future prospects offered by the organization to the frontline staff would make a significant difference in their motivation levels and consequently the quality of service rendered to the passengers. It also revealed the KSRTC – a state-run transport corporation – STU (State Transport Undertaking) is able to provide better quality of work life to the employees in terms of their service conditions and future prospects compared to private transport organizations.
The pioneering study of Dhar (2008) focused on assessing the Quality of Work Life of Bus Drivers of Municipal Corporation of Pune, India. A qualitative study was conducted with the help of fifteen bus drivers, selected through Quota Sampling, from four different Pune Municipal Corporation bus depots. The study focused on four main themes: (a) Work Demands and Quality of work life. (b) Coping strategies to reduce stress. (c) Organizational initiatives to reduce stress and (d) Humor, Team work and Work life Balance. It was reported that the quality of their life at work was mainly hampered due to time pressures, deteriorating condition of the buses and increasing pollution. Other types of stressors relate to their professional relationship, temporary nature of their job, lack of recognition and appreciation. Many participants reported that there is nothing, or next to nothing, happening within the organization to improve the quality of work life. This was due to lack of awareness about the programmes themselves. Communication was an issue. It was also found that team working increased QWL & consequently quality of service also.

Several recommendations can be offered to improve the quality of work life of the drivers. Some of them are mentioned as under:

1) There is a need to provide an opportunity for staff to interact socially with other members of the organization both formally as well as informally.

2) Arrangement of get together parties and related activities on various occasions is very much needed to be done by the organization.

3) There is a need of robust systems in place such as targeted training to strengthen and enhance stress coping strategies for bus drivers (e.g., exploiting relaxation exercises and learning how to change negative appraisals of stressful situations).

4) Introducing Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) to provide workers with the counseling support to manage their personal problems. This would be effective in assisting drivers to ensure that good psychological health is maintained.
5) Health promotion on-site - educating drivers of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle would also be justified; motivating drivers to engage in regular physical exercise, adopt a healthy and balanced diet, and reduce tobacco and alcohol intake. There is a need for free and regular medical checkup of the drivers to keep them fit.

6) A genuine attempt to improve the whole work environment is needed, which may not only lead to achievement of “distress” prevention but also find ways to generate eustress.

7) While recruiting the drivers, Realistic Job Previews (RJPs) to potential employees outlining positive and negative job related information could be given so that individuals can form more accurate expectation from their job. This would help to align person environment fit leading to workforce more resilient to the difficulties of the job.

8) The proposed fixed work schedules rather than the usual rotating shift patterns that may change from week to week, will go some way to minimize fatigue (as highlighted by Evans, 1994), but will also help to establish regular meal times discouraging meal skipping which would further lessen fatigue.

9) There is also a need to recruit more drivers so that the existing drivers are relieved from working for extended hours, causing fatigue in them.

10) A lack of balance within the work day may suggest a need for greater promotion of the intended benefits of quality of work life initiatives and for more support and encouragement to be extended to staff in their efforts to participate.

This study provides an in-depth look into the working lives of drivers in the Pune Municipal Corporation. This study also demonstrates that quality of work life should not only be researched in terms of initiatives designed to improve work life for employees. Rather, there are potentially many factors that can impact quality of work life for drivers, including the challenges they are faced with during the work day and the condition in which they work.
Quality of work life initiatives, however, can provide certain positive experiences for staff, especially when they promote the opportunity to socialize and build connections with co-workers and help to fulfill employee needs for humor, and balance. Hence, such initiatives should be taken at regular intervals. But as the nature of this research was interpretive, the findings may not be generalized to represent the larger section of the work force.

Studies of Rao and Chandra Mohan (2008), and Rao and Venugopal (2009) focused on identifying the perceptual factors in Quality of Work Life of Indian Employees with a sample of 332 employees predominantly from Financial Sector and Transport Business. Lending a big support to Saklani’s (2004) findings, four main factors were derived namely Favorable work environment, Personal growth and autonomy, Rewarding nature of the job, and Stimulating opportunities and co-workers; as important for better QWL at work place. While this study helps us to have an insight into the major factors of importance for QWL among the Indian employees, other industries should also be studied to examine the possibility of generalization across industries. Further, to what extent these findings will be applicable to the frontline staff of a State Government owned and run State Transport Undertaking (STU) like GSRTC; is to be determined.

The empirical study of Saklani (2010) concluded that the non-managerial employees in India are more concerned about satisfying their lower order material needs. The “most important” QWL factors reported by this class of employees are predominantly having financial implications. Based on this, it was also recommended that organizations in India concerned about improving the non-managerial employees’ motivation and consequently organizational well-being; must include financial aspects as a top priority item in any of their schemes. Interestingly, the present research is also conducted on non-managerial employees of GSRTC – the Class-III-Operative staff. So, it is interesting to see how far these findings are applicable to GSRTC employees.
5.3. SELECTED STUDIES FOCUSING ON JOB INVOLVEMENT:

The process of ego involvement in work has been a concern of both psychologists, such as McGregor (1944) and Allport (1947), and sociologists, such as Hughes (1958) and Dubin (1958, 1961). The psychologists have tended to focus on organizational conditions that lead to job involvement: such as meaningfulness of work, adequacy of supervision, etc. The sociologists have been more concerned with aspects of the socialization process that lead to the incorporation in the person of work-relevant norms and values.

The literature on job involvement is sparse. In a series of careful laboratory experiments, Lewis (1944) and Lewis and Franklin (1944) reported that people do become ego involved in work, even in laboratory tasks; that under “ego-involving” instructions, recall favors the completed (i.e., successful) tasks; and that people working in a group of interdependent tasks show the same tension systems as those working alone, i.e., that people also become ego involved in a group task.

Wickert (1951) found that telephone operators and service representatives who had quit were less ego involved in their work than those who were on force: the on-force personnel tended to feel that they had a chance to make decisions on the job, and that their contribution to the success of the company was “very important”, “quite important”, or of “fair importance”.

In his study of the “central life interests” of workers, Dubin (1956) found that only 24% of the respondents could be classed as “job oriented”. Only 9% of respondents found their most significant informal group experience in work, 15% gave work as the most common source of pleasure and satisfaction, and 61% gave job-oriented responses on items dealing with formal organization life. Based on this, Dubin concluded that it is not surprising that only 24% of workers under study are job
oriented and the rest exhibit only “adequate” social behavior, given the organizational conditions under which most people work.

Hearn (1962) reported that job involvement is related to the perceptual skill required of employees. He presented a remarkable insight that team operators were more job involved than people working alone.

Lodahl (1964) found that job involvement is an independent attitudinal factor. He even reported that job involvement remains relatively stable over time. Lodahl & Kenjer (1965) made the pioneering effort to precisely define and measure the construct of job involvement. They developed a scale for measuring job involvement. Then, several other researchers (Pelz & Andrews, 1966; Patchen, 1970; Rabinowitz & Hall, 1977; Saleh & Hosek, 1976; Kanungo, 1982) also developed similar sort of measurement instruments for job involvement. But, despite criticized on the ground of conceptual ambiguities and measurement adequacies, the scale developed by Lodahl & Kenjer (1965) has maintained its authenticity and popularity over the years.

In the Indian context, Agarwala (1978) made a remarkable attempt for developing a customized scale for measuring job involvement in India. In his opinion, the most widely used scale to measure JI (Lodahl & Kenjer, 1965) does not fit into the Indian work culture. He puts that in India, an individual is seldom judged by what work he/she does and how he/she does it. More often, the criteria are: how he/she relates with others (e.g., family and friends), how willing he/she is to make sacrifices for his/her sons, daughters, relatives, friends, and even strangers, etc. (Sinha, 1975). This seems to be consistent in the line of Hofstede’s (1984) finding that Indian culture is more relationship oriented and collectivist. Unlike the Western Country, the typical orientation of Indian employee is a strong preference for ‘aram’ (rest and relaxation). As a result, the Indian employee seems to be less competitive and committed, as he/she has an annoying preference for ‘aram’ over work (Sharma, 1973), and prefers personalized relationships in the work situation. The Indian employee is usually known to show increasing concern for the job-context factors, contrary to the Westerners who emphasize on job-content factors.
Further, in India, the central meaning of work is that it provides the means to pursue other interests. Work is indispensable for survival, and managers rank job security as the highest priority factor in the list of important job factors (Roy & Raja, 1974). Work values internalized during the socialization process mitigate against the industrial values, as for a typical Indian employee, a personalized relationship gets priority over office hours, duties, and responsibilities, and is much more satisfying than contractual work relationships (Sinha & Sinha, 1974). Preference for rest and relaxation, combined with a tendency to escape from work responsibility, is evident from the fact that Indian managers do not rank responsibility as an important factor. Thus, willingness to place work above free-time activities should be given due consideration while measuring Job Involvement in Indian context (Agrawala, 1978).

The research on JI as a personal characteristic has attempted to relate it to such personal demographic factors as age, education, marital status, sex, locus of control, length of service, higher order need strength, job level, etc. The findings are contradictory and no clear-cut pattern emerges (Rabinowitz and Hall, 1977).

The evidence on age-involvement relationship is mixed between studies showing non-significant differences among age-groups (Gurin, Veroff & Fled, 1960; Mannheim, 1975) and those that found increases in JI as individuals get older (Schwyhart & Smith, 1972; Jones, James & Bruni, 1975; Hall & Mansfield, 1975). Studies on education-involvement relationship have also provided mixed results. While Siegel & Ruh (1973) and Jones et. al. (1975) reported no relationship between education and involvement, Ruh & White (1974) demonstrated that JI was negatively related to education for rank-and-file workers. In contrast, Mannheim (1975) reported positive relationship between these two variables. Further, Lodhal & Kejner (1965) found no relationship between marital status and JI, Rabinowitz (1985) found higher average involvement for men than women. However, when the effects of job level and length of service were removed, sex difference in JI disappeared. Perhaps the length of time that a person has been on a job has something to do with his JI. While Jones et al. (1975) found positive relationship between these variables, Schneider, Hall & Nygren (1971), Schwyhart &
Smith (1972), and Hall & Mansfield (1975) found no relationship between JI and tenure for the sample of male middle managers, development scientists, and engineers. With respect to job-level-JI relationship also the findings are contradictory. Tannenbaum (1966) and Mannheim (1975) reported that individuals at higher ranks are more involved with their jobs, but Lodhal & Kejner (1965) and Rabinowitz (1985) found that these two variables are unrelated. The majority of studies cited so far have used either the original or adapted versions of Lodhal & Kejner’s (1965) job-involvement scale.

Sharma & Sharma (1978) conducted a study of job involvement among Engineers with the purpose to investigate the relationship of job involvement with job level, age, length of service, and technical qualifications. They found that in general, JI increases with a rise in job level. Even age and job involvement are found positively related. So, higher the age of the person, higher would be his/her job involvement. The finding is consistent with earlier researches like Schwyhart & Smith (1972) on a sample of middle managers, Jones et al. (1975) on military engineering employees, Hall & Mansfield (1975) and McKelvey & Sekaran (1977) on scientists and engineers. It seems that job becomes more important to the self-image of a person as he/she grows in terms of age. The length of service and education were also found to be positively related with job involvement.

In general, it can be concluded from the studies cited earlier that the issue of the relationship of various demographic variables and job involvement is wide open in both - western and Indian settings.

5.4. RESEARCH GAP – NEED FOR THE STUDY:

The basic objective of doing extensive literature review is to get insight about what research has been done in the domain of QWL and Job Involvement in India and abroad; so as to define the research problem statement more specifically, by finding out the research gap.
Compared to North America and Europe, the organizations in Asia have not emphasized QWL concerns to a major extent. Hence, it is not surprising to find very few Indian organizations operating QWL programmes. Consequently, it’s equally difficult to find published QWL research papers in India. As a result, very little information is available at the micro level to comprehend what QWL means in the Indian context and what its implications for research are (Gani, 1993; Gani & Ahmad, 1995). Even there is no consensus regarding the meaning of QWL (Karrir & Khurana, 1997) and there is no single reliable and valid questionnaire to assess QWL (Brooks & Anderson, 2005). As a result of the same, systematic evaluation of QWL in the context of Indian organizations has always remained an interest area for the researchers.

However, off late also, the increasing concern for QWL, considering its anticipated positive correlation with the three primary work related attitudes namely job satisfaction, job involvement and organizational commitment; has resulted in a plethora of literature in this area. While going through the same, it was found that many researchers have studied the concept of Quality of Work Life and Job Involvement separately in different industries, but mostly in foreign context. Further, in most of these studies, the focus is on high status executive and managerial level employees. Studies highlighting the opinions of people working at the lower levels of organizational hierarchy are very rare. In this era of increased competition, contribution of the lower level employees in achieving organizational objectives can’t be ignored, as they are the people who are actually responsible for the execution of various policy decisions at the operative level. In a way, we can say that the bottom line employees are actually taking care of the bottom line of the organization.

Further, very few studies have focused on the Quality of Work Life among the employees of Transportation Industry, and out of these studies also, the studies focusing on the relationship between Perceived Quality of Work Life and Job Involvement are very rare. Specifically, none of them have been in any of the State Transport Undertakings (STUs) in India.
Gujarat State Road Transport Corporation (GSRTC) - a state owned passenger transport organization – a State Transport Undertaking (STU), being in existence for more than 52 years as of now, is continuously expanding its operations and increasing its rich and depth. But, in contrast to this operational expansion, GSRTC’s financial performance has been less spectacular, and even more frustrating (Basu & Ravichandran, 2010). GSRTC is continuously making huge losses [Published Cumulative Costing Results and the Cumulative Operational Results of GSRTC for the period of last 12 years – 1999-2000 (March, 2000) to 2010-2011 (March, 2011)].

The losses seem to be the result of a combination of factors – both internal and external in nature and origin (Basu & Ravichandran, 2010). Further, amongst a list of factors responsible for GSRTC’s declining operational performance, identified by Ravichandran & Surya Prasad (2007) in their study entitled “Reviving Gujarat State Road Transport Corporation (GSRTC): An Agenda for Action”; one major factor has been quoted as the non-participative employees and their indifferent and detached view to the operating and financial health of GSRTC as a major concern. Such non-participation and indifferent and detached view basically signal concerns of job involvement level among the employees of GSRTC. And the level of job involvement is basically an outcome of how much the employee is satisfied with his various aspects of his work life, that is, quality of work life.

In such a situation, it makes every sense to study the Quality of Work Life and Job Involvement of the Class-III-Operative (Frontline) staff of GSRTC – the Drivers, Conductors, Driver-cum-Conductors and Mechanics (Workshop & Maintenance staff), as they are the real revenue generators by executing various schemes, policies and decisions in the best possible way. Added to this, out of the total staff strength of 40,670; these categories – Drivers, Conductors, Driver-cum-Conductors and Mechanics occupy nearly 87% (35200). So, QWL concerns and Job Involvement extent among this single largest cohort in GSRTC requires a careful study.

Considering this, I have undertaken a study on perceived QWL and Job Involvement among Employees, to be precise the Drivers, Conductors, Driver-cum-Conductors and
Mechanics (Workshop & Maintenance staff), of selected two divisions – Nadiad and Bharuch of GSRTC.

This study presents the holistic picture of the prevailing scenario of Quality of Work Life in GSRTC in terms of its important constituents and the perceived availability Quality of Work Life attributes at the work place. It also provides insights into the level of Job Involvement among the Drivers, Conductors, Driver-cum-Conductors and Mechanics (Workshop & Maintenance staff) of GSRTC. The recommendations made based on data analysis would help GSRTC to foster a better quality of work life for these employees by taking various progressive initiatives and overcoming obstacles. It also helps to know the present level of job involvement – one of the deciding work attitudes – and lead to a set of steps to be taken at various levels to improve the job involvement of these employees and consequently the organizational well being. As no research has been done earlier in the area of QWL & Job Involvement of Class-III Operatives (frontline) employees in a State Transport Undertaking, this study unearths some of the concern areas regarding fostering a better QWL & increased Job Involvement among the employees.