CHAPTER – 8

CONCLUSIONS

&

RECOMMENDATIONS
8.1 CONCLUSIONS:

GSRTC – a State Transport Undertaking and the single largest Government Sector Employer in the State of Gujarat – has been constantly under criticisms for continual decrease in its operational efficiency parameters and incurring heavy losses year-by-year. This ironical situation was attributed to the non-participative employees and their indifferent and detached view to the operating and financial health of GSRTC. Thus, a high felt need of employees’ positive response and appropriate initiatives to the governmental and management interventions for the operational revival of GSRTC was signaled. Hence, employees of GSRTC are required to develop professional outlook, approach and act accordingly, rather than traditional or biased one.

Further, like in any other organization, in transport organization also, the quality of service as well as the customer satisfaction depends, to a large extent, on the interaction of the staff with the passengers. In other words, it is very important for a transport organization to have highly motivated, committed, dedicated employees at all levels in general, and at the operative level in particular, who are dedicated to providing better quality of service.

In case of GSRTC, if we apply the same logic, the Class-III – Operatives (Frontline) staff need to assume the central responsibility. In this cadre/category of employees also, the Drivers and Conductors are the ones who directly come into contact with the
passengers – the customers on daily basis; and thus their behaviour, courtesy, politeness, regularity and such other soft aspects become very important. Even the Mechanic Staff, who never come in face-to-face contact with the passengers, but they are the people who keep on ensuring that the duo of ‘driver and conductor’ on a particular bus would be able to justify the slogan of GSRTC “Salamat Savari, ST Amari”, meaning thereby “Safe Journey in Our ST”; by ensuring timely maintenance, up-keeping of the buses – a prime resource of GSRTC. So, these employees of GSRTC – the Drivers, Conductors and the Mechanic staff – are the real faces of GSRTC, as the customers (passengers) need to spend their active journey time relying on the commitment of these people only. So, it is very much necessary that this single largest cohort of GSRTC is motivated, dedicated and committed to the noble objectives of GSRTC. But, the motivation, commitment, dedication certainly depends on the experiences of employees regarding the quality of work life at the organization. Further, quality of work life can contribute to their job involvement, leading to better quality of service, which is a key organizational priority. So, there is a high felt need to take care of quality of work life and job involvement concerns of these employees of GSRTC.

So, we can say that in the light of this anticipated support and high participation of the employees, the concern regarding the level of job involvement among GSRTC employees, especially the Drivers, Conductors, Driver-cum-Conductors and the Mechanic Staff, becomes very important. Their level of job involvement is an indication of the extent to which they really care for the kind of job that they do and consequent continuous improvements in performance. Along with this, their level of expectations and the perceived availability of quality of work life attributes at the work take on greater importance. For this, assessment of various factors of importance of QWL, i.e., the expectations held by these employees, how these employees perceive the availability of these factors at GSRTC, their job involvement and consequent strategies has become the need of the hour. Further, out of the total staff strength of 40,670; the Class-III-Operatives – the 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 required a careful study.

Keeping in mind the aforesaid facts, a study has been carried out to assess the perceived QWL and the level of Job Involvement among the Drivers, Conductors, Driver-cum-Conductors and Mechanic Staff of GSRTC.

Based on the data analysis and the results obtained from various statistical tests, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Rejecting or throwing away the jaundiced popular myth or misperception about typical non-managerial employees in India, it can be concluded that the Class-III-Operative level employees (Drivers, Conductors, Driver-cum-Conductors and Mechanics) of a State Transport Undertaking like GSRTC, place greater importance on their higher order needs.
- The “Most Important QWL Component” is found to be Participation in Decision Making as the Number 1 important component, while the “Least Important QWL Component” is found to be Job Security.
- Overall status of QWL in GSRTC, as perceived by its Class-III-Operative level employees (Drivers, Conductors, Driver-cum-Conductors and Mechanics), is not poor. On the contrary, it is near to the average standard as indicated by the score of 3.2 on a Five-point scale. But it is far away from the ideal state. A lot needs to be done to foster a better QWL.
- Image of Organization in the Society has emerged as the highest contributing component to the existing state of QWL in GSRTC, while the component having the least contribution to existing QWL in GSRTC is Equity, Justice and Grievance Handling.
- There is wide gap between the perceived importance and perceived existence of various QWL components in GSRTC.
- Importance of Seven components out of Thirteen QWL components is found more than their existence in GSRTC. These include Adequate and Fair Compensation (Existence lagging behind by 5 ranks than Importance), Fringe Benefits and Employee
Welfare Measures (*Existence lagging behind by 3 ranks than Importance*), Safe and Healthy Work Environment (*Existence lagging behind by 2 ranks than Importance*), Opportunity for Continued Growth (*Existence lagging behind by 5 ranks than Importance*), Participation in Decision Making (*Existence lagging behind by 8 ranks than Importance*), Reward and Penalty System (*Existence lagging behind by 1 rank than Importance*), and Equity, Justice and Grievance Handling (*Existence lagging behind by 7 ranks than Importance*).

- The existing level of overall Job Involvement among the Class-III-Operative level employees of GSRTC (Drivers, Conductors, Driver-cum-Conductors and Mechanic Staff) is not low or average. On the contrary, it is above average as represented by the Mean Score of 2.43 on a Five-point scale. But it is far away from the ideal state. A lot needs to be done to improve the job involvement of these employees.

- There is significant (though not very strong) association between the age of the employees and their overall QWL.

- There is significant (and strong) association between the experience of the employees and their overall QWL.

- There is significant (though not very strong) association between the education of the employees and their overall QWL.

- There is no significant association between the income of the employees and their overall QWL.

- There is significant (though not very strong) association between the age of the employees and their overall JI.

- There is significant (and strong) association between the age of the employees and their overall JI.

- There is significant (and strong) association between the education of the employees and their overall JI.
• There is no significant association between the income of the employees and their overall JI.

• There is significant (though not strong) association between the designation of the employees and their overall QWL. Thus, it can be concluded that there is significant difference in the perception of availability of QWL attributes among the Drivers, Conductors, Driver-cum-Conductors and Mechanic Staff of GSRTC.

• There is no significant association between the designation of the employees and their overall JI. Thus, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in the level of Job Involvement among the Drivers, Conductors, Driver-cum-Conductors and Mechanic Staff of GSRTC.

• There is no significant association between the division of the employees and their overall QWL. Thus, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in the perception of availability of QWL attributes among the employees of Large and Small Divisions of GSRTC.

• There is no significant association between the division of the employees and their overall JI. Thus, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in the level of Job Involvement among the employees of Large and Small Divisions of GSRTC.

• There is a linear positive association between the perceived QWL and the extent of Job Involvement among the employees of GSRTC. Thus, it can be concluded that higher the perceived QWL, higher will be the Job Involvement among the employees of GSRTC.
8.2 RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based on the data analysis and the findings obtained from various statistical tests, the following recommendations/suggestions are made to GSRTC. These suggestions, if implemented in the right spirit, will certainly improve the overall scenario in terms of fostering better Quality of Work Life (QWL) for these real revenue generators of GSRTC – the Drivers, Conductors, Driver-cum-Conductors, Mechanic Staff – and also in terms of improving their job involvement. In and all, these suggestions can have far reaching impact on the overall efficiency and effectiveness of GSRTC as a whole, as with better QWL and improved JI, this single largest cohort of Class-III-Operative level staff of GSRTC will not keep any stone unturned, and lead GSRTC to a respectable position.

(1) As it has been found that the Class-III-Operative level employees (Drivers, Conductors, Driver-cum-Conductors and Mechanics) of GSRTC, place greater importance on their higher order needs; the higher ups of GSRTC need to acknowledge this surprising, unpalatable; but certainly promising, positive and true finding. Usually, the higher level officials at GSRTC share the jaundiced perception about the Drivers, Conductors, Driver-cum-Conductors and Mechanic Staff that they always want material or financial gains. With changing times, even these employees’ mindset have undergone a change, and they increasingly look for satisfying their higher order needs like Esteem (Ego) needs, Growth needs, Actualization needs etc. So, gone are the days when the higher level officials (typically termed as “Adhikari Varg” by these employees) used to talk in rough abusive language with these employees. They want to be respected, to be seen as an important person making meaningful contribution to the ST Nigam and above all should be treated with human dignity. So, in the bread-and-butter issue, it can be recommended that these employees want more of butter now. This has been even confirmed in the open ended section of the Part-2 of the data collection instrument, wherein many of the respondents angrily indicated that “Depot ma amari koi ijjat nathi kartu” (Nobody respects us at the Depot level), “Amari sathe gala-gali thi j
vat thai chhe” (The superiors use abusive language while talking to us), “Ketlik var to evu lage chhe ke ame manas j nathi” (Sometimes, we feel that we are not human beings). So, the superior-subordinate relationships need to be made more harmonious. For this, a complete transformation of heart, in the real spirit, is required on the part of the higher cadre employees – the Adhikaris. If required, they can be trained. If required, they can be given clear instructions in this regard.

(2) Further, Participation in Decision Making component is perceived as the “Most Important QWL Component” by these Class-III-Operative level (non-managerial) employees of GSRTC. High relevance of Participation in Decision Making component for these employees can also be gauged from the suggestions of the employees in the open-ended section of the Pre-coded Interview Schedule’s 2nd part, wherein most of them have invariably reported that they know the roads, buses’ conditions, passengers’ mentality, route potential, route traffic pattern etc.; and therefore, the “Adhikaris” (the higher level officials – the decision making authorities) should consult them, involve them, take their opinions/suggestion/views before taking/initiating/implementing any new scheme. They even quoted the on-field implementation issues with real-life illustrations associated with GRSTC’s new schemes like ‘Raise your hand and take a ride initiative’, ‘Charging same fare in Express Bus (up to 30 Kms) as that of Local Bus’ and many more. These employees even commented that the “Adhikari Varg” (the higher level officials – the decision making authorities) keep on introducing new schemes by sitting in their chairs in AC cabins, without consulting us; and that has been the main reason for the fact that most of these new schemes do not get sounding success, as it is expected. So, it warrants increasing attention of the higher-ups of GSRTC to consider this fact and signals the need for fostering participative management practices even at the lower levels of the hierarchy, So, there is a high felt need to provide ample opportunities to these employees to participate in the decision making process, if not all the decisions, then at least in decisions affecting their work life. They are the people, who regularly come into contact with the end users – the customers – the passengers, and their opinions
must be valued. Participative/collaborative bodies should be formed at the Depot level as well as Division level, but must be in the right spirit, on voluntary basis; through which these employees can be involved in the decision making process at various levels. It will certainly lead to increased commitment of these employees, and ultimately ST Nigam would be benefited.

(3) Overall status of QWL in GSRTC, as perceived by its Class-III-Operative level employees (Drivers, Conductors, Driver-cum-Conductors and Mechanics), is just near to the average standard as indicated by the score of 3.2 on a Five-point scale. So, a lot needs to be done to foster a better QWL for these employees. Out of 13 QWL components, 2 components are near to the position of “Good” QWL, 6 components are either average or above average, while the remaining 5 components are indicating “Below Average” existence of QWL. The higher ups of GSRTC must understand the gravity of this issue of not-so-good QWL for these employees, even though GSRTC is the single largest Government Sector employer in the State.

(4) The real concern areas are the “Below Average” existence of 5 components of QWL in GSRTC. These 5 QWL components, perceived “Below Average” include Adequate and Fair Compensation (Mean Score 3.27), Fringe Benefits and Employee Welfare Measures (Mean Score 3.43), Safe and Healthy Work Environment (Mean Score 3.45), Participation in Decision Making (Mean Score 3.26), and Equity, Justice and Grievance Handling (Mean Score 3.48) components. So, the lower order need satisfiers which are usually very important components at the lower levels of organizational hierarchy, like Adequate and Fair Compensation (Mean Score 3.27), Fringe Benefits and Employee Welfare Measures (Mean Score 3.43), and Safe and Healthy Work Environment (Mean Score 3.45) are also perceived “Below Average”. If the management feels that this is misperception, they must communicate with the employees and make them understand how hard GSRTC has been trying to provide them the best compensation, fringe benefits and welfare measures as well as the safest working conditions. But, if the situation is really alarming one, GSRTC must immediately take appropriate steps to improve
these dimensions, as these components are the minimum necessities of employees. This will certainly reduce the pro-union attitude among the employees, and consequently the hassles created by these unions.

(5) Further, “Below Average” – much less than desirable existence of the crucial component of Equity, Justice and Grievance Handling \textit{(Mean Score 3.48)}, indicates that the basic constitutional rights are not respected in GSRTC. It also reflects that the working culture in GSRTC itself encourages the culture of unionism. In absence of such open, non-threatening mechanism to ventilate out their feelings at the work place or to express any sort of inequity, injustice or grievance; it is likely that these lower level employees resort to unions for solving their issues. Long term and very strong visible existence of three powerful unions in GSRTC is certainly indicative of this. So, GSRTC has to establish sound HR department with a clear mission and vision of doing good to the employees and taking care of their concerns. Then, they must come up with people oriented policies in regard to Performance Appraisal, Promotion matters, Open-non-threatening Grievance handling mechanisms etc. If this component of Equity, Justice and Grievance Handling is not taken care of, it may lead to severe consequences, as the employees will ventilate their accumulated ill feelings somewhere, may be on passengers with odd behaviour, may be through rash driving, may be by damaging organizational property, may be by developing detached/unconcerned attitude towards GSRTC, or may be through the most dangerous and negative consequence of verbal or physical fight with the superiors. So, a clear, concise, unambiguous, prompt, open and employee friendly grievance handling system must be initiated at the earliest. Added to this, all the personnel policies must be clear, unambiguous, transparent, unbiased and its implementation must also be without any sort of favoritism. Union influence in personnel decisions should also be minimized, so that these employees do not develop the misperception that those who are in the ‘good book’ of unions are ‘the first son’ of the management, and they will be protected and pleased in any circumstances whatsoever it may be.
(6) Further, a lot of ill feelings have been reported with respect to undue favor to some employees in terms of putting them on the choicest routes only, that too with excellent condition buses only. So, a transparent, unbiased, rotating scheme/system of route and bus allocation must be devised and communicate to all.

(7) In addition to this, efficient administration of a system enforcing discipline strictly is probably of high relevance in the context of the suggestions of most of these employees that in GSRTC, the disciplinary norms and such other rules and regulations are not equally followed for all. So, such biasness or prejudices in favor of some people should be strictly removed / avoided. Dress Code, Attendance, Punctuality, Leave Rules and associated Approvals etc. should be enforced uniformly.

(8) Ironically, “Below Average” existence of the Participation in Decision Making component (Mean Score 3.26) is indicative of limited nature of the scope, these lower level employees have, for influencing decisions affecting their service conditions, monetary gains and other important aspects of work life. Even though the high felt importance of this component has been acknowledged by almost all the employees (99.75%), this component is found missing with only below average perceived availability of the same. So, please for God’s sake, the officials in higher cadres must device mechanisms to involve these employees in the decision making process. The higher level officials must come out of their Theory-X mentality and encourage the participation of these employees at various levels, as they can be potential source of excellent suggestions. Even, suggestion box scheme can also be initiated, with a guarantee that good suggestions would be rewarded. Prior to that, these employees need to be trained about how to give constructive suggestions, how to participate etc.; so that there would be participation in its real sense.

(9) Combined view of the importance of various components of QWL to these employees and the perceived existence of these QWL components in GSRTC reveals wide gaps in a number of areas. So, there appears considerable scope for improvement in the QWL of these employees as the ‘importance’ has been found to
be more than ‘existence’ in the case of 7 out of 13 QWL Components. These include Adequate and Fair Compensation (*Existence lagging behind by 5 ranks than Importance*), Fringe Benefits and Employee Welfare Measures (*Existence lagging behind by 3 ranks than Importance*), Safe and Healthy Work Environment (*Existence lagging behind by 2 ranks than Importance*), Opportunity for Continued Growth (*Existence lagging behind by 5 ranks than Importance*), Participation in Decision Making (*Existence lagging behind by 8 ranks than Importance*), Reward and Penalty System (*Existence lagging behind by 1 rank than Importance*), and Equity, Justice and Grievance Handling (*Existence lagging behind by 7 ranks than Importance*). As is clear from this list of components, despite the less importance of some components related to ‘job context’ and lower order needs, as well as the high importance of some components related to ‘job content’ and higher order needs; as perceived by these employees, these components seem to be falling short of employee expectations as indicated by their perceived availability in their work life at GSRTC. In and all, planned and systematic efforts must be initiated to remove the annoying gap between these 7 components’ importance and existence, in order to improve the perceived availability of QWL for these employees in GSRTC.

(10) To take care of many other associated concern areas as well as to foster the participation of these employees in decision making process, GSRTC may think of initiating “Quality Circles” on voluntary basis, on experiment basis at the Depot and Division level. A well-planned, well-monitored and jointly managed QC is a sure-shot mechanism for multiple gains in terms of improved employee relations, coordinal and healthy superior-subordinate relationships, better working environment, organizational image building, participative decision making etc. This will even give them a chance to share their on and off the job related perceptions with others. Successful application of QCs in Transportation Sector has been reported to generate promising gains (Curtis, 1984). This will even help to curb the unnecessary hassles of the very strong union forces.
(11) Burden of excessive work load in terms of doing double duty, staying at work beyond stipulated work hours etc. is basically the result of under staffed manpower position of GSRTC. Unlike many of the PSUs in our country, being overstaffed, GSRTC, even though a State Government Undertaking, is an understaffed organization. This dearth of staff in various categories is adversely affecting the operational efficiency of GSRTC in variety of ways, which is elaborated with exact facts and figures in the earlier sections. In addition to lowering the operational efficiency of GSRTC, this shortage of staff in various categories, is adversely affecting the perceived availability of QWL for these employees in GSRTC. So, systematic Manpower Planning Process must be initiated by GSRTC to ensure the availability of the right number and right types of people at the right places to perform the right duties, and thereby not only taking care of the operational efficiency of GSRTC; but also relieving these employees of the unnecessary burden of additional duties. This will even have positive impact on passengers’ satisfaction as the instances of cancellation of routes due to non-availability of Driver &/or Conductor, or frequent breakdown of buses due to poor maintenance, would reduce significantly.

(12) The Mechanic Staff in GSRTC is particularly facing the issue of shortage of raw materials, latest and good condition equipments to carry out timely and effective repair work; so the higher level officials at the Depot and Division level should take care of this crucial issue. It is very much frustrating for an employee when he is able and willing to perform a task, but unable due to non-availability of required amenities/equipments to perform the task.

(13) With reference to the appointment of IAS officials as the top level officials of GSRTC, political interference should be avoided. Only criteria should be their expertise, inner urge, passion, comfort zone and missionary zeal to work in such a State Owned and Operated Road Transportation Corporation, primarily with a societal orientation. Even, a sufficient long their tenure can also be guaranteed, so
that the concerned official can think of implementing some path breaking initiatives.

(14) Social get-togethers should be organized to involve the family members of these employees, as many employees have indicated the complete absence and the high felt need of having such schemes/initiatives. This will certainly improve the social relevance of their job environment. This will improve the sense of belongingness and emotional attachment of these employees with GSRTC – the employing organization, with their jobs as well as their co-workers; and may have positive impact on the job involvement of these employees. This was also signaled by George Elton Mayo (1960), as the much talked about set of outcomes of the pioneering Hawthorne Experiment, by indicating that the workers/employees should not only have positive attitude towards their work/job; but also have positive attitude towards their organization as well as their co-workers. This will have positive impact on their job satisfaction, job involvement and organizational commitment – the three primary work/job related attitudes.

(15) Opportunity for Continued Growth and Opportunity to Use and Develop Human Capacities are also found problematic in case of these employees. So, regular training programmes, not necessarily on technical areas, may be organized, wherein eventually these employees may be invited with their family members as well. Even, the superiors should immediately start career counseling, may not be in formal terms, but at least informally, at departmental levels; so that the employees feel a sense of value-addition and this will further improve superior-subordinate relationships, as they may start viewing their superiors as ‘coach-mentor-counselor’ instead of typical ‘judge-evaluator’.

(16) QWL initiatives should not be taken on piece-meal basis or ad hoc basis by one or two divisions only, as it happened in the past with Surat division. So, recognizing the need for it, and appreciating the success of the first ever QWL initiative started by the Surat division of GSRTC; of rewarding these employees with “Best Driver of the Month & Year”, “Best Conductor of the Month & Year”
and “Best Mechanic of the Month & Year”, such initiatives should be implemented in all the divisions of GSRTC. Union involvement should be fostered in such schemes right from the initiation stage to implementation stage to ensure overwhelming success. The higher level officials who pioneered such landmark initiative should be entrusted with the responsibility of duplicating the success in other divisions also.

(17) The existing level of overall Job Involvement among these Drivers, Conductors, Driver-cum-Conductors and Mechanic Staff is only above average as represented by the Mean Score of 2.43 on a Five-point scale. So, it is far away from the ideal state. A lot needs to be done to improve the job involvement of these employees. This lower JI may be attributed to absence of clear, unambiguous system to appraise the performance of these employees. In absence of such a sound system of Performance Appraisal, who contributed what and how much remains a mystery and this leads to a situation wherein no one is really interested in putting superior efforts. Everyone’s job becomes no one’s job. So, a clear, well communicated performance appraisal system is the need-of-the-hour of GSRTC.

(18) Further, performance linked pay or at least additional rewards/incentives for superior performance can be initiated. Right now, in absence of such incentives, the Drivers, Conductors, Driver-cum-Conductors and Mechanic Staff have developed an impersonal detached view and are not really inclined to achieve benchmark results in terms of increased route income, reduced accident and breakdown rates, higher KMPL, higher EPKM, lower CPKM etc. So, appropriate scheme for rewarding their efforts with monetary incentives must be initiated. This has been indicated by many respondents in the open ended section of the data collection instrument.

(19) A linear positive association is found between the perceived QWL and the extent of Job Involvement among the employees of GSRTC. Thus, it can be concluded that higher the perceived QWL, higher will be the Job Involvement among the employees of GSRTC. So, if GSRTC work out on some of these recommendations
and improve the availability of QWL attributes for these employees, it would certainly take care of their Job Involvement also.