CHAPTER – VIII
CONCLUSION

8.0 CONCLUSION:

The practice of flexible working has many options and its effects on organizational performance can be both opposing and complementary. The performance based flexible work practices are to be focused more so as to understand impacts of flexibility both positively and negatively. Precisely there is difference in effects of FWP in accordance with their nature of implementation. For example whether FWA is implemented in isolation, in group and also includes organizational circumstances. In modern working environment a HR manager’s job becomes complicated and deciding on the right proportion of FWP in an organization is crucial. Individual performance and FWP have a positive impact on each other according to a finding.

A large number of FWP workers, their colleagues and managers are of the opinion that individual performance is either positively affected or there no impact. This observation is true for both the quantity and quality of work produced. As seen, a better work-life balance can be achieved with FWP. Many employees agree that FWP has a positive effect on stress level management and reduction. On the contrary, there is also evidence suggesting that FWP can itself be the source of work stress for a few individual. A comparison of people who work flexible with others depicts the most important positive relationship. If there is increase in organizational commitment due to FWA it in turn leads to higher job satisfaction. The strategy which is considered to be competitive in the labor market is flexible working.

Flexible working was found to have faced some managerial resistance. Owing to the less amount of time flexible workers spend at workplace they were less likely to be delegated crucial or urgent work. Informal flexible working was found in high degree across organizations.

Regardless of personal circumstances if all employees were given the option of FWP then it was found to be an appropriate method of working and was culturally acceptable. When a certain type of employees, such as parents of young children, dominated the actual take up of FWP then a greater cultural resistance was found in organizations.

Since HR policies are generally framed around full time employees, a review of the policies need to be done in order to implement flexible working. Issues such as career progression, supervision and face time
are important in this regard. In a flexible working environment training in management of employees was highlighted. Stress levels, organizational commitment and job satisfaction are indirect factors which have an impact on performance. According to a research, if a choice is given to people to choose how and where they do their jobs then these factors are found to have a greater impact on people and performance relationship.

When FWP are encouraged in organizations then a positive attitude towards work increases and a certain discretionary behavior makes people work harder thus leading to better performance. On average, with FWP there was a positive relationship between working flexibly, organizational commitment and work-life balance.

This study recognizes that the society has thrown personal-professional life balance into the spotlight over the past few years. In the last one decade and more the press, scholarly journals, government, management and employee representatives have shown a growing interest in work-life balance. Reduced health, low performance from individuals, families and organizations which are the repercussions of unbalanced work-life relationships are the source of this increased interest.

In the recent times, a large number of people are finding it difficult to achieve the desired work-life balance due to their longer and harder working schedules. People experience a gap in work-life balance because of the conflict that arises from the incompatibility between the work and non-work demands. It is for sure that the youth of today give more importance to work-life balance than their predecessors. The benefits of work-life balance in organizations have been demonstrated in the study. Due recognition for work-life issues have grown to be salient features of the phenomenally changing workforce demography in developed and developing societies. It has grown to be certain that the demand for performing multiple roles in and out of the work environment is one of the escalating issues that many employees are facing. The type and extent of family friendly policies rolled out in workplaces have been investigated in the study. Such policies have resulted in positive outcomes from individuals and employers as expressed by scholars.
Since these benefits as well as programs exists, respondents tend to think that work life balance can be achieved through maternity/paid paternity/career leaves and breaks and even if firms offer flexible working times, such as, offsetting and flexi-time. Findings have proved that most respondents have issues in balancing the work and other personal responsibilities. Employees facing issues in the personal life and facing pressure at work is a very thin demarcation when calculated in percentage, as even studies of employees are impeded by work schedules. When considering family life, most of the respondents found it rather in balancing their family life, but there were some who said that it was not easy meeting family and work demands at the same time.

This study reveals that flexible human capital strategies have bought down health costs, particularly when employees experience a sense of control and have sufficient resources to stand up to the demands they face. The loss of productivity from stress and other underlying psycho-social work conditions are made up for by organizations paying about 5 – 15 % in salaries. This study reinforces the fact that health care costs can be reduced by working around these facets of work and FWP has shown a decrease in employee burnout percentage (39% to 28%) which has impacted job performance positively and is a strong predictor of turnover.

Our research has observed that telecommuting employees and their managers have found that there are more distractions are workplace in the form of meetings and colleagues as against distractions at home. Jobs can be done at lower labor costs, profitability can be increased (employee output can be increased, efficiency among and across groups can be boosted) and non-productive time reduced (loss in work time, lack of concentration, errors, turnover, etc.). By raising managers to employee’s ratio and providing greater responsibility and rewards to employee’s overhead costs can be reduced.

The problems arising from employees feeling less respected or their interested getting deviated from individual and organizational goals such as costs of work slowdowns, strikes and they can be reduced by introducing flexible human capital values and practices. It has been seen through the study that where employees rated performance of company, cooperation, goals, management, objectives, employee attitude, among all above quality of organization was given priority. Satisfied and loyal customers leading to strong sales are a cascading effect of efficient and hard working employees.
In the short run profit and efficiency can be increased in organizations utilizing flexible strategies. Ability to innovate, continually improve and minimize overheads over a long term certain in such organizations. Future-oriented and constructive assets such as innovation, human capital and customer relationship are investments of these organizations which are the factors that stock analysts approximate to estimate stock price. In the evidence collected by the research the shareholder revenues of companies that implement flexible human capital practices have registered increase.

According to our study employees who are engaged and committed perform better. This is certainly useful: over a period of 3 years companies with high employee commitment return 112% to shareholders as against 90% for average committed and 76% for low committed companies. There is a significant shift in the manner in which employees are kept satisfied in recent times as compared with those a few years ago.

The reason why management should pull up their socks to manage dissatisfied employees is because it is easy to find a new job in recent times. The winners of tomorrow’s workplace are those managers and businesses that create a positive work environment. It is a challenge for today’s management to keep its workforce attracted and motivated. This is the job of all managers and supervisors at all levels of the organization. Conventional methods of running businesses need to diverge from their roles and comfort zones. The work environment should be such that employees enjoy their job, find a purpose in it, feel proud of their jobs and challenge their potentials.

The morale and motivation levels in workers are highly influenced by their managers and supervisors. The atmosphere in the workplace can be made positive or negative by them. Employee retention, motivation and other aspects of management are issues that are responsibilities of managers and supervisors for which they are selected, trained and held accountable for. The increasing realization of current shortage of skills and hunt for talent has generated a subtle shift in the work-life balance arguments where a broader business case is responded to over individual needs.

The driving force of the century to come and the tool which aids all round development of the world today is information technology. The IT industry in India is growing from strength to strength and ruling the roost of the information technology market.
The Indian economy is highly influenced by the Indian IT industry. The social, cultural, scientific, technological and economic aspects of the 21st century will be driven by information technology. IT is such an integral part of our lives that its impact and advantages cannot be ignored by anyone. Apart from the manifold implications it has had on our competitive world and global scenario newer horizons of applications are yet to be explored.

The new-age economy of our country saw the light of day with the IT sector. Since the late 1990s, a liberalized policy regime with reduced telecommunication costs and import duties on software and hardware have ably supported the high voltage growth attained by the economy which is because of the IT industry. India has emerged as the world leader in information technology and business outsourcing owing to the perceptible transformation since liberalization. Quality of service, availability of skilled manpower and cost advantage have given Indian IT companies an edge and established their superiority globally. The perfect combination of organic and inorganic growth initiatives has enhanced their global service delivery capabilities.

While policies devised for employee-driven flexibility have been focusing on caring responsibilities, in recent times there is an increasing trend in working around how flexibility can address various pressures of the labor market. Included in this is the inclination towards a life-cycle perspective of participation of labor force. While a few employees enjoy working and spending more time in workplace than at home there are a few others who give importance to the quality time spend at home, with family over professional life. In this age of technology there are a handful of organizations which offer flexible working hours. Jobs that give flexibility at work are the ones that are most sought after. Individuals are better prepared to face change through quality initiatives which is the outcome of a fine work-life balance that varies at different stages of life. Employees need to make adjustments to meet these varying demands.

Conducive environments trigger an individual to give their best e.g. students want to study and work simultaneously; parents want to balance work and children efficiently; employees nearing retirement can spend fewer hours at work. Organizational objectives take the front seat when employers and employees come together and thus it is on the shoulders of the employer to ensure work-life balance.

In order to retain today’s Gen Y, a combination of several retention strategies are to be adopted, one of the retention strategies is to expose an employee to a variety of experiences, which in turn would help
build up the capabilities of employees, their inter personal skills and make them comfortable for operating across cultures in a better and efficient manner.

The main goal of flexible work arrangement is not only decreasing the work family conflict and enhancing work life balance but also to give importance to organizational culture and fruitful outcomes. Many surveys proved that increased productivity is only due to flexibility solutions. These include business continuity benefits, reduced attrition, health care costs and facility cost of the employees. There is drastic decrease in work family conflict only due to flexi hours. This also includes positive results like lowering staff turnover and employees job satisfaction. [Baltes et, al.,1999] meta-analysis showed positive effects of FWA are on employee’s productivity and satisfaction of work schedule on a whole.

**Negative effects on absenteeism**

In the Indian Context, which is characterized by nuclear family’s it is desirable that the FWA must include some aspects like job sharing, compressed work week, career breaks, sabbatical, part-time, telecommute options, and phased return from leave (maternity, short term disability, long term disability). There is a need for more guidance to employees who are affected with these problems to encourage them to take up FWA’s. For Organizations fighting it out in this competitive market to hire and retain the best, FWA is certainly turning out to be trump card. There is a need for the creation of a psychologically and physically comfortable work environment as a precursor to employee retention. This can be brought about by laying emphasis on occupational safety, employee health and promoting a healthy work atmosphere also by propounding to be an attractive employer and maintaining an outstanding employer brand.

There is also a need to develop key strategic skills and capabilities in employees through training and continuing education at the highest level. It is observed that employees are on the look-out to be associated with organizations which promote a work atmosphere where an opportunity is afforded to the employee to test his/her potential to handle higher roles with ease and at the same time satiate their ego, hence corporate proactively should seek to develop such measures which helps boost employee morale and self esteem.

### 8.1 FORMAL vs. INFORMAL FLEXIBLE WORKING

The fact that has emerged out of this study is that there are a large number of employees who have turned to working flexibly but without formal policy procedures as an agreement. The positive and
negative impacts for both the employer and employee are for sure and the reasons for this are complex. A few employees view a formal request for flexible working as an open invitation to be scrutinized and should be achieved rather than asked for. Nobody wants to make a formal request for flexible working hours and compromise on their career prospects; however this fear may not be justified and certainly against organizational policies, but the label of ‘flexible worker’ is sure unwelcome in most cases.

For such informal arrangements to work a healthy manager/employee relationship is vital and vulnerable to change whereas it is not the case with formal arrangements. Informal flexibility paves way for more responsive and fluid approach to working which is a plus for employers and employees and is necessarily not a disadvantage. Employees take decisions on how and where to work while making sure that they are available for work when necessary and manage peaks at work and maintain a give-take equation for both sides. On the other hand it is the moral responsibility of both parties to stay within their limits. Many view such an arrangement to be more of a practical solution than a formal agreement.

The research revealed that there are a substantial number of employees who are working flexibly, but who have not used the formal policy procedures to agree such arrangements. The reasons for this are complex, and there are positive and negative factors for both the employer and employee. To a certain degree informal flexible working is seen by some employees as being ‘below the radar’, and more likely to be achievable than making a formal request.

There is also the element of not wanting to jeopardize career prospects through a formal request for flexible working; such a fear may be unfounded, and certainly contrary to organizational policy, but in some senses employees do not wish to be labeled as ‘the flexible worker’. Of course, such informal arrangements are vulnerable to change in a way that formal arrangements are not, as they often depend on a good employee/manager relationship to make them work.

This is not necessarily a disadvantage as there is a view that such informal flexibility provides a more responsive and fluid approach to working arrangements which benefits both employers and employees. Peaks in work are able to be managed, with a give-and-take approach from both sides, which allows employees to make decisions about how and where they work in return for making themselves available as much as they are able when required. Care must be taken that this relationship is not abused by either
side, but the numbers of people working in this way suggests that for many it is a more practical solution than a Formalized arrangement.

8.1.1. Formal Arrangements: Pet Protection Agreement
The ASPCA has recently teamed up with Legal Zoom to provide an affordable and easy vehicle by which to provide continuing care for your pet. The Pet Protection Agreement was created by animal law attorney Rachel Hirschfield. It is possible to provide a provision for the care of your pet in your will; however, the ASPCA does not recommend this option for the following reasons:

A direction in a will only takes effect if and when the estate is administered. This can take time, particularly if there is a conflict among beneficiaries, and the provision for the care of your pet may not be implemented until the conflict is resolved.

Once your estate is closed, if for some reason your designated caregiver does not work out, the court has no responsibility to find another home for your pet. This would be an unfortunate outcome.

8.1.2. Pet Trust
A pet trust is a legally sanctioned arrangement providing for the care and maintenance of your pet in the event of your disability and/or death.

Limited Imperishable Power of Attorney
A limited imperishable power of attorney can be used to designate someone to make decisions regarding the care of your pet should you become unable. This person will only have the ability to make decisions about your pet during your lifetime. Consequently, you still need to consider a permanent arrangement for your pet’s future care.

Letter of Instruction

A Letter of Instruction can be used to designate a future caregiver for your pet and to leave specific guidelines for your pets care when you are gone. It is a flexible way to arrange for the care of your pet but it too has its limitations.

For example, it does not have the same effect as other legal documents and if included as a supplement to a will, its implementation only takes effect upon actual administration of the estate.

8.1.3. Informal work
205 – Family care, voluntary work, and undeclared or unregulated work – are critical forms of labor in today’s economy, yet remain under analyzed and examined. This volume develops a comprehensive conceptual framework of informal work and analyses systematically the relationship of formal and informal work. Using a coherent theoretical and methodological approach, this volume explores informal and formal work in six countries and contributes to our empirical knowledge of informal work and its different interrelations with formal work in various societies. A landmark study in the analysis of work, the book demonstrates how the relationship of formal and informal work is developing, how this can be explained in the specific context of the arrangement of work and welfare, and in which ways informal work possibly contributes to social integration and social cohesion.

**Informal Arrangements**

Generally, informal arrangements include all arrangements for the care of a pet that are not legally enforceable. They can be oral or written agreements made with family, friends, veterinarians, dog walkers, day-care/kennel staff, animal trainers and others. They can also be made with breed rescue groups and local humane groups. These arrangements usually do not involve the assistance of an attorney. If you do decide to use an informal arrangement, it is important that you keep the following in mind:

- You should NOT assume that the caretakers you have chosen, including rescue organizations, will accept the responsibility of care. We strongly recommend that you speak with each individual and/or organization about this commitment in order to ensure they are willing and able to act as a potential guardian for your pet.
- It is best to have a few successive and/or temporary guardians in place for the future care of your pet, should the need arise. This way, if the primary guardian you’ve selected is unable to accept the responsibility at the time it arises, your pet will not be left without a home. Circumstances change, so it is always best to have a back-up plan.
- Since informal arrangements are generally unenforceable agreements made with family members or friends, you are relying entirely upon the integrity of the person or organization chosen. Thus, it is important to choose wisely!

**8.2 ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT**

This research made it possible for us to identify the fact that flexible employees committed themselves more to work than non-flexible working employees. This aspect needs to be brought to the forefront since it works in contrary to the notion that employees working part time or in remote modes do
not have enough commitment. Often, damage caused by such notions to careers and effective management is high and indicates that evaluation of performance of flexibly working employees is compromised.

Organization commitment (chapter VI) an organization will be designated as Flexible Workplace Employer with the privilege of displaying the Flexible Workplace Employer logo on the organization's website and in promotional materials. Organizations will also be listed as a Flexible Workplace Employer on our website.

8.2.1. Does Your Organization Qualify?
Qualifying organizations are those who have demonstrated a sustainable commitment to flexible work options and meet the following criteria:

Have an established business case for flexible work options

- 35% or more of the organization's management team is knowledgeable about flexible work options and how-to leverage the advantages and mitigate the disadvantages inherent to flexing.
- 75% or more of the organization's jobs have been evaluated for suitability with flexible work options.
- 80% of the organization's employees understand the flexible work options that are available to them.
- 40% or more of the organization's employees eligible to flex are participating in a flexible work option.
- Periodic evaluations of the flexible work options with revisions to the program based on the results of the evaluation.

Four main types of flexibilities as suggested by Atkinson (1984)
1. **Functional flexibility**: It lets employees to combine competencies and skills in order to increase their quality to move across various ways of production. Functional flexibility trusts on extensive training and thus should be engaged relationship between organization and employees weakens.

2. **Numerical flexibility**: It refers to varying in the number of employees required according to the time and those employees should be able to adapt. If required the number can be obtained from temporary agencies on fixed term contracts. Numerical flexibility is often related with limited employment security rights.

3. **Temporal flexibility**: It is about varying working hours which will satisfy the production demands. Depending on fluctuations in production the working hours can be overtime or extra time. Part-time employment also might be used by the organization to face even tougher peaks in demand.

4. **Flexibility**: It is linked with efforts on behalf of the organization to reduce labor costs in order to protect profitability. It requires partial use of temporal flexibility along with cost savings that come from using the adjustment of wage levels to reflect performance on individual, group or organizational levels.

Conway and Guest (2004) have provided a useful model of the psychological contract (PC) which has started from its ancestors. At this point/stage, the PC includes individual characteristics, the organizational specific HR policies and climate. The combination of these components produces the content of the psychological contract based on trust and fairness. PC pretends like tool to gauge which can measure the feeling of Employees towards the organization. The result of PC directly shows the employee satisfaction and commitment towards the work. This also directly affects the performance and productivity.

Violation (Rousseau, 1995) is the next phenomenon due to occurrence of changes in the content of PC or cause of renegotiated ER. This phenomenon arises due to the organizations failing to meet employee’s needs and expectations. This could directly affect their overall dedication and performance toward the company. To avoid this violation we should able to understand the state of violation. If the organization fails to meet their expectations, organization should make employees to know the impossibility to fail the condition of contract.

Thus the reaction might be mild in light of a `perceived breach`. On the other hand, ‘violation’ produces a much emotional and stronger response (Morinson and Robinson et, al., 1997). Emotional
response and way it activates the employees acts as the factor which can show its effect on PC violation. Possible combinations of age, past experiences and education will also act as the factors which could create differential inclusions about the employment relationship and decides the degree of violation. Due to the immanent nature of employees' expectations, the reactions in the event of a violation could differ, leaving a portion of the employees with a strong sense of injustice from the organization and another portion feeling less damaged (Deery, Iverson & alsh et, al., 2003).

As the PC is context or related to trust and commitment, cause of the backwash of a violation, loyalty to the organization is put under pressure due to the new rules, agreements and demands. Organizations form their part try to restyle the workplace by implementing different methods. These can range from superfluous nesses to decentralizing and delaying structure “finally to run their businesses with half the human effort and in the half the person space and the production time, they believe the cause for flexibility will also provide workers with a sense of empowerment, transition to a lean production will lead to a win situation” (Hudson et, al., 2002).

Even with the high-road approach diverges when applied practically for the problem mentioned above. Unfortunately, it becomes focused again on cost-cutting and promoting labor flexibility with little attention paid to employees. If we Summarize briefly, on one hand, the commotion of the old PC as sensed by employees and on the other hand, the assures for employability and increased attainments in return for increased commitment and performance the second is often prevented by the inability of the system itself, the involuntariness of management to engage such long term strategies and the negative feelings of employees towards this climate of change.

8.2.2. Formal Organizational Initiatives and Informal Workplace Practices
Many organizations have implemented a variety of initiatives to address work-family conflict issues. This study investigates the impact of formal and informal work-family practices on both work-to-family and family-to-work conflict (WFC, FWC) and a broad set of job-related outcomes. We utilized structural equation modeling to analyze data from the 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce (NSCW). Results showed negative career that consequences and lack of managerial support were significantly related to work-to-family conflict.

These were significant predictors of conflict even when accounting for the effects of work schedule flexibility. Work-to-family conflict was linked to job dissatisfaction, turnover intentions and stress, while family-to-work conflict was linked to stress and absenteeism. There were no apparent differences between women and men in terms of the observed relationships.

8.2.3. High performance working systems

Economic growth to achieve a return on investments needs a matching workplace creation strategy and workforce improvement. Marks used to describe research on this include high-commitment, high-involvement, high-performance work systems and high-performance HRM (human resource management). According to Appelbaum, Gittell and Leana (2011), common thread within these forms of workplace innovation, is “For the eminent levels of performance it requires a positive workplace environment that can confirm and accomplish. For the ability to create value, it requires the practices that develop and leverage employees’ knowledge. While the specific practices need to be tailored and are most effective while implementing and to fit different industries and occupations, they include training, selection, incentives, mentoring, partnership based, knowledge sharing” [Appelbaum et, al., 2010].

Researchers have authenticated the affect of high performance work practices on efficient outcomes such as manufacturing quality, worker productivity, customer service, profitability, and financial performance. (e.g. Huselid et, al., 1995; Appelbaum, Bailey, Berg & Kalleberg et, al., 2000; Michie & Sheehan et, al., 2005; Kleinknecht et, al., 2006; De Menezes et, al., 2010; Gittell & Bamber et, al., 2010; Vergeer & Kleinknecht et, al., 2011; Zhou, Dekker & Kleinknecht et, al., 2011).

By studies, it has analyzed that, these work practices gave mixed results regarding performance among various industries. (Combs, et, al., 2006; Boxall et, al., 2012). “The evidence is trenchant, acquiring and sustaining world-beating levels of performance needs an integrated approach to introduction of new
technologies, capital investment, and implementation of high performance, practices to be tailored for a specific industry and a technology. Policy-makers have the ability to support the development and widespread adoption of practices by linking them directly to the technological investments or economic those are made to support a confirming way for economic growth.” (Appelbaum et, al., 2010).

8.2.4. Rendition

Pot (2011) discusses 3 studies on the convinced relationship between performance and workplace from the Netherlands. A 1st research report of 664 Dutch SMEs showed that companies which followed or implemented FWA has increased both the productivity and financial results when compared to other companies, but quality of working life have not been measured which had increased in most cases. Another study, by 955 Dutch companies of different sizes in different private business sectors, had compared to nonsocial work place companies the social work place companies – covering activities related to either dynamic management, flexible organization, working smarter or external cooperation - perform better, regarding their increase in turnover, profit and market share, and regarding innovation, productivity, new clients and reputation.

The third study concerns the “Netherlands Employers Work Survey” (in Dutch: Werkgevers Enquête Arbeid) (NEWS) 2008, which looked into four aspects of workplace - strategic orientation, product-market improvement, working flexibly and smart organizing – among 3468 employers with 10 or more employees (Oeij, Dhondt & Korver et, al, 2011). Organizational performance, measured as a combination of an increase in turnover, profit and labour productivity during the last two years, was significantly better in organizations with more activities in workplace. This is also the case for the four different aspects of social work place. Employers in workplace companies were more content with the terms of employment and HR practices in their organizations, compared to those in non-innovative organizations (Pot et, al., 2011).

Pot (2011) states that this research indicates that workplace may positively affect organizational performance, and that simultaneous improvement in quality of working life and productivity is possible, in particular in the case of strong employee participation.
The contribution made by FWP employees is not regarded on par with the rest which is a major risk. The higher levels of commitment and dedication in FWP workers need to be recognized and valued by organizations and reflected as tangible rewards.

A review of the goals and methods of HR policies is imperative for FWP to be considered as more than just additional. For people to be managed effectively all employees irrespective of their working arrangements need to be brought under the same HR policies. Career progression, supervision and face time are vital factors in this regard. For instance, observations have proved that promotion, allocation of prestigious projects and important issues are risk factors for people working in the FWP in spite of policies not laying importance to visibility at workplace for growth. Policies need to be framed such that they aide and do not unintentionally affect flexible working practices. This is the policy-work balance that needs to be stuck.