CHAPTER - V

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

AND

SUGGESTIONS
This chapter contains a summary of significant findings and a few suggestions for improvements.

5.1 FINDINGS:

(An overall appraisal of this study leads one to feel that women, at several levels, in the Life Insurance Corporation of Tirunelveli Division are able to contribute considerably and live up to the expectations. Women are able to keep pace with the modern trends and rational requirements of the present day. They seemed to have been endowed with the capabilities to function optimally. The required will and courage to act and interact properly are found available.)
If only the Life Insurance Corporation of India adopts a scientific method of proper exploration and utilization of talented and promising women aspirants, the future women as office staff, Development Officers and agents are found to be competent to discharge their duties and functions eminently in the Life Insurance Corporation of Tirunelveli Division during the study period. Opportunities seem to be bright and promising.

The Tirunelveli Division which enjoys the seventh place in the south zone has been following a consistently favourable policy of inducting more and more women staff at the office level and in field work. A highly encouraging profile is available.

The increasing number of women staff at all levels in Life Insurance Corporation of Tirunelveli Division presents an empowering and energetic syndrome of the Contribution of women towards Human Resource Development.

It is found that there is a high degree of integration and correlation between the employment of women and Human Resource Development. These become obvious from the possible services and benefits that become available for families and the society at large.
A very outstanding finding is that while there are a few all woman branches of Life Insurance Corporation at the all India level and in Madras division itself (south zone), there is no single such all woman branch in Tirunelveli Division. This aspect can not be treated as a mere lapse but it is a serious economic imbalance leading to certain critical minimum traps.

(The Tirunelveli headquarter branch had no women Development officer during the study period. Out of the two women Development Officers one was at the industrially busy Tuticorin district and another was in highly literate Kanyakumari district. The Tirunelveli district could not bring up a woman development officer during the study period.

At the same time it is encouraging that no branch has met with a closure. It shows the sound functional health and the optimum operational efficacy of the branches.)

The Tirunelveli Division with three southern districts—Tirunelveli, Tuticorin and Kanyakumari—came into existence in 1992. Administrative Viability, greater business concentration and more careful service to policyholders on modern lines seem to be the justifiable objectives for the ‘creation’ of this division. Naturally the
Tirunelveli Division is able to come up with a spirit of healthy competition in terms of branch expansion, business performance, staff strength and rendering of service to the public.

This division had 16 branch offices as in 1996-'97. Tirunelveli district had 8 branches and Tuticorin and Kanyakumari districts had four each. The branch expansion had a trend rate of just 0.6 but the compound growth rate was 4.50.

The sum assured by women presents an encouraging picture. It enjoyed a trend rate of 7.43 and compound growth rate of 20.10. The sum assured by women showed a steady increase without any fall in any year between 1987-'88 and 1996-'97 the sum assured by women works out an increase of 502.4 percent. But the corresponding percentage for the sum assured by men was only 238.68. Though the trend rate of the sum assured by men was 22.16 during the study period, the compound growth rate was only 11.38. It is curious to find while the trend rate of men is higher than the compound growth rate is lower than those of women.
It is heartening that a fairly consistent average productivity trend with slight slides is available as far as the Development officers are concerned. The year 1994-'95 witnessed the highest level of average productivity. It is an interesting coincidence that the first women development officer joined this division in that year. It is not too much to say that she gave a 'golden Touch' to the most reassuring and dazzling Jewell of humanity i.e. Life Insurance Corporation.

At the outset this division has provided employment opportunities for women out of a total 1005 office staff as found in 1996-'97. This works out a share of 18 percent.

The Tirunelveli Division did not possess even a single women development officer till 1994-'95. The first woman Development Officer 'appeared' only in 1994-'95. In the last year of the study period, 1996-97, there were two women Development Officers. It is inspiring that both of them achieved crorepathy status easily. This is an area achievement in a field predominantly dominated by men force.
The total women staff strength has steadily increased during the study period with a trend rate of 6.87 and a compound growth rate of 4.58. It is noteworthy that though the trend rate of men staff strength (12.76) is higher than that of women, the compound growth rate of men staff was just 1.67. The compound growth rate estimate for total staff strength in the study period was just 2.15.

The compound growth rate relating to women staff is the highest among the three during the study period which can be rated as a clear promise by the women staff in the future.

As far as women agents are concerned, the expansion during the study period was at 277.49 per cent. The women agents have shown considerable improvements between 1987-'88 and 1996-'97. The trend and growth rate estimates for women agents were considerable during the study period while the former was 60.38, the latter was 11.43 which are statistically highly significant.

(It is a proud fact that on number of policy basis a lady agent from Kanyakumari district had achieved the third rank at the entire south zone level in 1997.)
Training and orientation refresher schemes are vital inputs of improving efficiency and updating knowledge accordingly the Life Insurance Corporation of India has made arrangements for proper training of agents also.

A training center was started in 1987 at Courtallam in Tirunelveli district. Till the end of 1988, there was no woman agent who attended training there, while a good number of 133 men agents were trained at that center. In 1988-'89 33 women agents attended the training programme. They formed 8.5 per cent of the total then the number has been increasing year after year in this direction. It is encouraging that 142 out of 457 women agents i.e 31.1 per cent had the fortune of attending the training programme in 1996-'97.

It is explicit that the women agents are actively interested in getting themselves trained and improving their work culture. This can be treated that women have the dynamic spirit to innovate and invent along with the usual risks and uncertainties of the game. The courageously constructive character of woman is highlighted by this.
The picture presented by crorepathy agents also is positive and inspiring. In 1987-'88 there were a total of 27 crorepathy agents comprising 21 men and 6 women.

The share for women was 22.22 per cent then. In 1996-'97 there were 49 crorepathy agents totally. Among them 11 were women and the rest were men. Though it worked out a share of just 22.44 per cent in the total, a line of expansion for women is considerable. The increase in percentage was 183.33 over the study period. This is a considerable progression. Similarly the compound growth rate also (5.08) is statistically significant.

Another strong index which speaks louder in favour of woman is the average productivity. The average productivity for women agents has registered considerable increase. Comparatively it thanks the test of eminence. Membership in the clubs of chairman, Zonal Manager Divisional Manager and Branch manager is a matter of not just credit but one of pride and joy. It is the real recognition of the merit shown and the contribution made by the members. The eligibility for membership is decided only by objective norms i.e the level of business. As found in 1996-'97 one women agent out of a total of eight could become a member of the chairman club; 4 out of
19 in the Zonal Manager club; 21 out of 62 in the Divisional Manager club and 77 women agents out of the total of 214 members could enjoy membership in the Branch Manager club.

These data, whether high or low, are secondary. The prime importance should be given to the verve and vitality; the case and caution and the drive and determination of a so called weaker section who were long neglected and historically enslaved by a militant mass. After the ‘much ado’ and the din and dust for the struggle for due equality and supremacy, the contours have been rearranged and properly mapped historically. That aspect had taken a reflection in a micro level in the Life Insurance Corporation of Tirunelveli Division. What was a dream, not in the distant past has become true in the nearest past. Numbers do not lie they may be small but “small is Beautiful”. It is not too much to add that these membership honors generate waves of strength and throw death blows to the confusions conservative logic and derogatory and dangerous theories of pegging at the base with cruel chaos.

Similar lightening are followed by strong thunders which break open the ground for Human Resource Development.
Human Resource Development has to be initiated and accelerated in a country like India in a process of gradualism. Revolutionary speeches may be made but the evolutionary process can not be devised. Any small measure in any corner of the country for a better life for a woman is bound to become an epic of success of the entire humanity in the long run, because the journey of ten thousand miles should start with a small single step.

The society, field force, office staff and policyholders form beneficiaries. Women are found in all these sections. Between 1987-’88 and 1996-’97 considerable increase nearly 270 per cent has taken place in the number of women policyholders with a compound growth rate of 12.57.

The expansion in men policyholders during the study period was just 160 per cent and the corresponding compound growth rate is only 5.61. Women policyholders excel men policyholders in terms of percentage expansion and compound growth rate.

Even the total number of policyholders between the first and tenth years of the study period has registered less than 175 per cent. The corresponding compound growth rate stands at 6.41 only.
So the percentage and compound growth rate values are the highest for women policyholders. This is a remarkable feature.

This is an era of opinion. Opinions and views play a crucial role in every sphere these days. One has to attach due importance to them. The section on views and opinions in this research work has been light throwing and thought provoking. Usually views and opinions describe trends and tendencies and also prescribe measures and solutions.

The views and opinions collected by random sampling technique using suitable questionnaires and discussions are valuable. Though this exercise is simple and brief it enjoys meaningful depth.

At the outset no sample has given the 'not satisfactory' view. The corresponding percentages with the highly satisfactory view of the office staff, development officer, agents and beneficiaries are 90, 100, 97.14 and 100. These are both statistically and analytically very significant.

The comments reserved category is comparatively small. In the same manner the satisfactory group also is small on the whole the
opinions and views are considerably in favour of the induction of more and more women at several levels in Life Insurance Corporation of India.

(In the same manner, the women members associating at different levels with Life Insurance Corporation also do not cut any depressing note at all.)

They have job satisfaction and job ambition. This is yet another creditworthy feature enjoyed by Life Insurance Corporation of India.

The opportunities for women in Life Insurance Corporation particularly in the cadre of agents seemed to be very bright. In these days of increasing educated unemployment, these bright employment opportunities are a boom and a lifesaver.

A general comparison between men and women who come under the cardinal coverage of the Life Insurance Corporation of India reveals that there is no gender bias at all. In other words no type of discrimination is found as men and women.

In terms of placement, transfer, promotion and incentives a high degree of merit oriented generality is found. This becomes
more significant in a country where political intervention, favoritism and nepotism are very common.

As far as the working hours or areas of work are concerned no specific problem was reported by the women folk. Similarly no male chauvinism or teasing also is reported.

In sum efficiency seems to be the only sine-quo-non and has been properly recognized. A few cases of maternity leave problems and transfer delays are reported.

Life Insurance Corporation is a welfare oriented movement marching towards egalitarianism and multi-structuralism. Its wealth of contribution towards Human Resource Development is immensely valuable. The ever-increasing benefits like providing security, promoting savings advancing loans, giving employment opportunities, encouraging mutual fund schemes and sharing the government’s burden of investments are rare in character and injecting a sense of confidence in effect. These benefits and potentials paved the way for the enrichment of the mental make up, physical fitness, psychological attitudes and environmental condition which are the pillars of Human Resource Development.
No other organisation is able to generate so much benefits with ease and elegance at such a very low cost. Even the people below the poverty line and other weaker sections are provided with the opportunities to grow with Life Insurance Corporation.

The women staff of Life Insurance Corporation are found to contribute towards the Human Resource Development in an inspiring manner with their capabilities such as efficiency in work, pleasing attitudes, concentrating capacity, honest transactions, calm and composed caliber, well balanced demurrer, attractive earnings and other desirable qualities of head and heart.

A non-political and non-section team of women is essentially imperative for the upliftment of Human Resource Development to higher optimum levels.

Mention should be made that the Life Insurance Corporation has offered a key to prosperity to a number of women in the study area.
5.2 SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS:

The Life Insurance Corporation of India has been functioning in a praiseworthy manner in Tirunelveli division. Most of the findings speak louder clear in this tone. But there is always something better than the best in every sphere. In the light of such an inspired ambition the researcher prepares to make the following suggestions. If these suggestions are well received and carried out further improvements become easily possible. The following are the leading suggestions:

1. At the outset it is recommended that an 'All woman branch' can be considered in each district of Tirunelveli division. So far, no such branch exists. One can find even an all women police station or All women health center. So it is the high time that the Life Insurance Corporation comes forward to start all woman branches in a balanced manner in this division. That will introduce greater responsibility and encourage healthy competition leading to higher efficiency levels.
2. A more urgent requirement for the side of women in 33 per cent reservation for women in each category of Life Insurance Corporation in this division. Such a reservation has to be arranged through proper macro level reforms. It can not be done for this division alone. But concerned authorities of this division can play a pioneering role in this direction. Constructive efforts are needed at the all India level to achieve this provision.

3. The recruitment policy is to be more liberally reformulated in favour of women. A number of differentiating merits of women are listed in chapter IV then and there, considering all of them, anyone will agree that more opportunities for women could be right and proper.

4. Similarly the weaker section ie. the women staff may be given quicker and easier promotion opportunities atleast in the cases of distinction. This is a sensitive suggestion which may appear to introduce elements of discrimination but a small concession may be considered without discrimination.
5. A system of more incentives or a package of incentives may be considered exclusively meant for women. This suggestion is made in order to attract more educated girls from certain conservative strong hopes in urban areas and the superstition ridden rural parts of the country. Even after 50 years of independence the shackles of the past and the chains of the ghost have not been shattered into pieces as far as the status and role of women are concerned in India. Hence this suggestion is made. Moreover this will strengthen the empowerment theory and promote the vital inputs associated with Human Resource Development.

6. As far as Human Resource Development is concerned more lip service is found in India. Relevant schemes with right emphasis have not been originated. Certain specialised programs are needed. The Life Insurance Corporation of India can take the lead in the direction.

7. In certain categories a fixed quota system for women may be followed. That will improve more women into the Life Insurance Corporation fold. Everywhere in the world obtaining the right transfer at the right times is a rarity. The
Tirunelveli division of Life Insurance Corporation is not an
exemption to this general trend. It is a great problem very
often separation of spouse and children happen. Serious
domestic dislocations occur. So a rationalised transfer
policy to provide the highest welfare for the largest number
may be formulated. Even marriages are solemnized on the
basis of transfer feasibility. A personal transformation need
not be halted or delayed by official transfers. Though
administrative norms and feasibility are to be given
importance, the Life Insurance Corporation can try to
reform the policies relating to transfer also. Lot of mental
agony will be caused by unfavourable transfers. So the
most acceptable transfer procedures atleast in favour of
women may be given top priority by the Life Insurance
Corporation. Necessary steps may be taken by the
authorities of this division towards that goal. There can
not be any criticism when the weak and the meek are a little
helped.
Another sensational issue is with respect to leave rules. Equal pay can be followed only by equal rules. No doubt. But a suffering syndrome based on nature is found in the world of women. That has to be viewed a little sympathetically. Nothing will be lost if mercy and sympathy is shown to one section without disturbing the interests of another section. The maternity leave is a real problem. To have a child at a time of one's choice is a birth right. Birthrights can not be compromised with bread struggles. So a system of self-availing maternity leave may be introduced. Necessary substitutes may be appointed. The threads of transfer in this connection should be totally removed. These may sound a little ideal but they are really needed. The modern new welfare theorems support such changes on innovative lines. So it is better if maternity leaves are granted without any inconvenience. Another strong point that this researcher wish to advance is that modern woman and particularly the employed women have been alert enough to accept the small family norm. A woman wishes to have at the most two children only and
many stop with a single child as numerously stated, in a race between a car and a child the car wins the race very often. Accordingly one need not get scared that maternity leaves will disturb the standards and efficiency of any organisation.

These are days of loans. There are a number of loan schemes for Life Insurance Corporation staff. Still certain special loans schemes for women may be introduced. More number of installments for repayment of loans may be given to women considering the extraordinary family burdens.

The Tirunelveli division of Life Insurance Corporation authorities may try to appoint one or more women development officers in Tirunelveli district. Tuticorin and Kanyakumari districts possess each development officer but there is no women development officer for Tirunelveli district so far. It is high time that this gap or lapse may be removed to restore balance.
11. Considerable number of women agents are there in Tirunelveli division. Steps may be taken to increase the number in future.

12. The number of women agents who received training at Courtrallam Training Center seems to be small. Necessary encouragement may be given to increase the number of trained agents.

13. Similarly a preferential or liberal standard may be thought of for making more women agents as members of the several clubs in Life Insurance Corporation.

14. The Life Insurance Corporation of India may work out more encouraging bonus, loan and gift schemes for women policyholders. So that they are persuaded to come forward to take multiple policies.

15. As far as the Tirunelveli division is concerned just 25 percent of the total population has been covered by the Life Insurance Corporation and a large 71 percent is left untapped as found in 1996 – 97. This sounds a seriously disturbing tune something is wrong or missing somewhere.
The researcher feels that more publicity through present platform may be given. Small but attractively designed booklets, write ups and pamphlets may be prepared in simple English and Tamil and distributed properly in order to enlarge the area of coverage. Such an expansion generates more income to Life Insurance Corporation, employment opportunities for men and women and incentives for the workforce. So necessary attention must be directed towards this particular area of rewards.

16. Employment opportunities serve as a very powerful catalyst as far as Human Resource Development is concerned. Skills and wills are a function of jobs. Any educational pursuit has a job target. So increasing employment opportunities is a direct method of enriching Human Resource Development. There is a high degree of correlation between education and employment. There is a struggle for survival. The fittest along can survive. One can not just have a 'vici, vini, vidi' (went, saw, won)
fortune these days. Neck to neck and bone breaking competition is there. So a job created tantamount to the prosperity of a family or families. Enrichment of human resources also is a function of enlarged employment opportunities.

In many cases there is a difference between a man’s earnings and a woman’s earnings. A woman’s earning has more saving and investment potential than a man’s earning. The marginal efficiency of capital (MEC) of a female income is higher than the income of a male. Thus when women are employed the spectrum of joy is enlarged and the spread effect becomes widened.

Further more Duessenburry’s demonstration effect works real wonders. The economic prudence and capabilities of women send serious ways of warning to the ideal and inspiration to the already initiated.
19. In the longrun, in the Tirunelveli division of Life Insurance Corporation also should try to provide furnished staff quarters. If possible the women staff may be given priority in such a scheme because women have to engage themselves busily in the morning at home and also attend to office or fieldwork promptly. The availability of quarters will enable the avoidance of travel at peak hours and also will reduce unnecessary tension for the women staff. Their health conditions will not be affected then. Naturally the Human Resource Development trend will be well guarded and improved.

20. Another area to be considered is the recreational facilities for women. Certain recreational facilities may be provided with privacy for women. That will encourage better understanding and co-operation.

21. Even annual sports with attractive prizes may be arranged for men and women staff separately.
22. Such games and sports items throw joyous thrills and infuses the baler to loose prizes but win hearts. As commonly said a sound mind in a sound body can pave the way for better Human Resource Development.

23. Regular monthly stock taking in-house meetings may be arranged for office and field staff members. Such occasions of get together enable mutual exchange of views and news and lead to corrective steps spontaneously or voluntarily.

24. Family get together opportunities may also be considered, for those in Life Insurance Corporation. They will promote good friendship and mutual assistance which are very much needed these days. Friends are the real source of strength and inspiration. In may cases, the friendly fragrance excells even the bondage of relationship.

25. The Life Insurance Corporation may think of arranging short tours to places of interest which are far away from the madding crowd. The dim and dust of the thickly populated urban life may change for a while and
energetically revitalised the body and mind. Travel and tours are said to be great panacea for many human ills. They prevent even aging up normally. They lend a healing touch to the taxed body and soul. So such travel and tours are recommended in order to enhance efficiency and accelerate Human Resource Development.

26. Certain sophisticated types of medical facilities may be provided to women staff considering their genetic, natural traits and problems.

27. In order to encourage women office and field staff a special list of honor may be prominently displayed in each branch. This will kindle the fire of more action and achievements.

28. If possible the Life Insurance Corporation of Tirunelveli division may try to initiate a proposal of some age relaxation for the recruitment of women staff. That will certainly help more women to join the Life Insurance Corporation and enrich the dictum of co-operation “each for all and all for each”.
29. This researcher wishes to advance a strong suggestion to the Life Insurance Corporation of India to work out some type of easily repayable marriage loans to the women staff and work force. This carries socio-economic weight. It is said that poverty is cruel but curable. One of the steps of curing poverty and militating the cruelty of poverty is to make marriages for girls less costly and more feasible. Hence this suggestion is made. A step forward, such marriage loans may be made more available for inter-caste and widow remarriages. A social evil and an economic burden can be killed with one stroke of a marriage loan. It is not too much or too bad to suggest that the Life Insurance Corporation can think of conducting a liberally subsidised mass marriages. These ideas may sound even odd. But it is one of the central factors which influence Human Resource Development. Justice delayed is justice denied; credit delayed is credit denied and marriage delayed is almost marriage denied. Marriage is a strong social institution next only to the caste system.
The growth and development of human resources are much determined by the institutional marriage. That is why this suggestion is made for active consideration.

30. Some arrangements must be made for the redressal of grievances of women staff and field force confidentially with authorities. A woman may have a few problems which may be too peculiar to be reveal vocally so a system of counselling and consoling may be made available exclusively for women. In every branch a small grievance box may be kept which may be used by the women staff with closing their identity to make problems known to the higher authorities.

31. The researcher wishes to recommend more handicapped women to be appointed in Life Insurance Corporation who may be denied by the society.

32. The researcher also wishes to have some special schemes from Life Insurance Corporation of Tirunelveli Division for the disabled and handicapped women folk.
Human Resource Development, as already stated is not a mere economic problem, it is more a social, psychological and even spiritual problem. It needs a holistic or integrated approach. The employment and earning capacity of women offers a major share in such a comprehensive approach. So if women are encouraged on the basis of their merit and hard work, the Human Resource Development problem can easily be solved with greater success.