Chapter V

Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion
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SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT FINDINGS

The main findings resulting from the analysis of women and work life harmony and the specific problems confronted by women employees in I.T. sector have been summarized in this chapter. The appropriate suggestions to overcome the problem are listed in this chapter. The conclusion drawn from the analysis is also given at the end of the report.

The findings have been grouped under the following heads:

- Findings on profile of women
- Work life balance
- Personal variables and work performance
- Level of employees and work life balance dimensions
- Work performance and work life balance dimensions
- Analysis of problems
- Association between personal variables and various dimensions of problems
FINDINGS

Profile of Women Respondents

1. Out of 517 samples, 355 women respondents accounting for 68.7 per cent are below the age of 30 years and therefore it is evident that the response category is predominantly composed of youngsters.

2. The respondents with PG and Professional qualification constitute 33.65 per cent and 39.46 per cent respectively while UG qualified respondents form 26.89 per cent. The absence of predominance of any of the above groups is noticeable among the women employees.

3. Marital status of women respondents surfaces the fact that the response category is more or less equally divided between married and unmarried groups.

4. Around 50 per cent of the population under study is falling under the income group of Rs. 20,000 and Rs. 40,000, 20.9 per cent falling below Rs. 20000 and 14.7 per cent earning more than Rs. 40,000.

5. The entry level respondents 270 in number form 52.20 per cent while middle level accounts for 40.6 per cent of the total response category. The higher level employees form a miniscule minority of 7.2 per cent and therefore it can be concluded that the entire response category is dominated by two groups of employees i.e., entry level and middle level.

6. Three-fourths of the response category 345 (66.7 per cent) is having an experience of 5 years which implies that most of women respondents are at the entry level.
WORK LIFE BALANCE

a. Personal qualities

7. Majority of the respondents across the cadre strongly state that they are punctual in their work, carrying out the work in a systematic manner, able to make sound judgment and courteous towards their fellow members. This is indicated by the mean score exceeding 4.00.

8. The overall response of majority of respondents reveals that there is sense of mutual help prevailing in the team to achieve the goal, no wastage of time and the women forces are very competent. The results of the Kruskal Wallis test also statistically confirm the absence of variation across the category.

9. As regards the women employees across the cadre, there is only a moderate level of emotional stability prevailing among them as evidenced by the mean score of 3.68. The Kruskal-Wallis Test also establishes the absence of statistically significant difference existing among the mean scores of different categories of the respondents.

10. Though there is some similarity in ranking the traits between entry level and higher level, there is no similarity noticeable among the other cadres. Therefore it can be concluded that personal traits vary according to cadre to a major extent.
b. Benefits received

11. The overall view of the women employees is largely positive towards the benefits offered like medical reimbursement, canteen facilities and fringe benefits as evidence by mean score of above 3.65.

12. There is a moderate level of satisfaction among the respondents with regard to transport facility, promotional policy and holiday home as evidenced by the mean score averaging around 3.6.

13. The entry level employees and middle level employees are satisfied with the crèche facility provided by the employer as the means score exceeds four in both the cases. As for higher level executives, complete satisfaction with the aforesaid facilities is observed. The result of Kruskal Wallis test establishes the fact that most of the employees have a similar opinion with regard to the crèche facility as the mean difference is not statistically significant.

14. The absence of similarity among the other combination shows that different cadres view the benefit scheme in different orders as the r value is 0.393 which is not significant. Therefore it can be concluded that the benefit schemes are witnessing similarity only between entry level and middle level to some extent (64 per cent).
c. **Organisational policies**

15. As regards the policies of the organization regarding leave facilities, there is a moderate level of satisfaction with casual leave (mean score 3.49) and higher level of satisfaction with leave for sabbaticals, sick leave and maternity leave as evidenced by the mean score crossing 4. Absence of significant variation among cadres is proved by the rejection of the hypothesis at 1 per cent significant level by Kruskal Wallis test.

16. Moderate level of satisfaction is found with regard to consideration of special concern shown towards expectant mothers by the employer. The results of Kruskal Wallis test point to the non-existence of statistically significant difference among the response groups as the p value is not significant at one per cent level.

17. The Overall means score of 3.78 signifies the moderate level of satisfaction experienced by the employees across the cadre on the perception on flexi timings and the Kruskal Wallis test also confirms the similarity of views in this regard as there is no statistically significant variation in the mean scores of the employee as a whole.

18. The absence of significant mean difference across the cadre also reinforces the absence of satisfaction in the functioning of counseling service as confirmed by Kruskal Wallis test as the p value is 0.115 not significant at one per cent level and five per cent level.

19. The employees across the cadre perceive they have to work for long shows and that the strain involved is so nerve racking and stressful that it causes a variety of health problems The compensation expected in
terms of quality medical care is not commensurate with the expectation of the employees across the board as the overall mean score of 3.17 indicates a moderate level of satisfaction experienced by the employees across the cadre.

20. The analysis of overall mean score of 3.08 highlights the moderate level of satisfaction among the employees across the levels on various unwinding programmes offered by the company.

21. The results of the Kruskal Wallis test confirm the absence of statistically significant variations in the mean scores of employees across the spectrum on the opinion of performance appraisal treatment with male employees and also on the principle of gender neutrality observed by the employer in the selection of right person for right overseas assignment.

22. The ranking of entry level as well as higher level and middle level as well as higher level is found to be similar to the extent of 51.8 per cent and 68.2 per cent significant at 5 per cent and 1 per cent level respectively. It can be concluded that there is a moderate level of similarity in the ranking of various organisational policies between entry level, higher level and middle level as well as higher level.

23. The positive chi square value among the different dimensions of work life balance is significant as the p value is 0.000 at one per cent level of significance which confirms the positive association between dimension of work life balance and levels of employees.
Personal variables and work performance

24. The personal variables such as age, marital status, compensation and experience of employees across the cadre influence the level of performance of the employees in terms of chi square results.

Level of employees and work life balance dimensions

25. The results of the chi-square test confirm the linkage between the level of personal traits and the level of employees across the cadre.

26. The chi-square results establish the disassociation between level of satisfaction of benefits and the different levels of employees. It implies that the level of satisfaction is independent of the level of employees. In other words, employees irrespective of cadre, experience satisfaction from the various benefit programs.

27. Entry level respondents are more or less equally divided into satisfied and dissatisfied groups. As for the middle cadre they are dissatisfied with the policies. Perhaps the increase in the size of responsibilities as one advances in the career might not allow them to experience the benefit out of the various organisational policies. On the contrary the higher level employees are highly satisfied with the various organizational policies. The access to more privileges by the higher level employees coupled with unburdening of responsibilities with the middle level executives might have enabled them to experience satisfaction out of organizational polices.
Work performance and work life balance dimensions

28. It is clear from the results of multiple regression analysis that the aforesaid three dimensions influence work performance to the extent of 67.56 per cent as the r square value is 0.6756. The ANOVA test shows that the f value of 151.514 is significant at 1 per cent level. In other words, the dependency of work performance on the aforesaid independent variables is statistically significant.

PROBLEMS OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES

a. Career Advancement Problems

29. The Overall mean score being below 3 across the cadres points to absence of any fear at the sight of the challenges, strong determination of the employees across the cadre to meet higher responsibilities and existence of challenges in the job. The acceptance of the hypothesis through the results of Kruskal Wallis test reinforces that the employees across the cadre do not differ in their opinion in this regard.

30. The lack of communication skill has been strongly denied by entry level and higher level employees as the mean score in both the cases is not crossing 3. Nonetheless, middle cadre agrees that poor communication skill hinders the performance effectiveness of the employees. Existence of inter-cadre difference is confirmed by Kruskal Wallis test at 1 per cent level of significance.

31. Kruskal wallis test confirms the divergence on the perception of separation from family, recognition practices put in place by the employer, relocation problems, inadequate promotional opportunities,
mental stress and strain, facing marital life related challenges and child and elder care. The magnitude of these problems varies across the cadres.

32. The results of rank correlation between the cadres brings to the fore that different set of factors are hindering entry level, middle level and higher level respondents. The statistical insignificance of the correlation results does not lead to any recommendation in this regard.

b. Problems faced as women employees

33. It can be deduced that the women employees could pay their undivided attention to the task; there is equitable work load given to employees without any gender discrimination; undesirable behaviour; gender bias free performance rating and gender discrimination. The acceptance of the null hypothesis implies the similarity of the perception of the response groups across the cadre in these issues.

34. The work pressure, attention distracted by children at home, frequent shift changes, mental stress due to running behind the target and in dealing with subordinates, higher ups and clients is a common feature across the cadre but the degree of such problems experienced is high for the middle level executives. The Kruskal wallis test also confirms the existence of different shades of opinion among the response category on the level of work pressure.

35. The impact of long hours of work on health is severe on the part of higher level executives as evidenced by a high mean score of 4.08. But middle level executives too, though not experiencing the stress of late
sitting to the extent suffered by higher level executives, experience moderately higher level of stress and strains in this issue in terms of mean score of 3.86. As for entry level, the stress of late sitting and long sitting impacts their health only to a moderate extent according to the mean score of 3.32.

36. It can be concluded that the problems faced by the respondents in their status as working women in entry and middle level are more or less same. Comparison of ranks of entry level and higher level illustrates the sameness of ranking order to the extent of 78.3 per cent significant at 1 per cent level. Therefore it can be said that the problems of entry level and higher level are same to more than a moderate extent. Ranking by middle and higher level is same to the extent of 75 per cent significant at 5 per cent level. In the light of the above finding, it can be summed up that the problems exclusive to women folk are more or less same across the category.

c. Socio cultural problems

37. It is patent from the table that the incidence of inter-caste/inter-religious marriage is more in the case of middle level executives (mean score 4.05) and higher level executives (mean score 4.11). The presence of single/bachelor and spinsters is more in the case of entry level. Therefore the incidence of inter-caste marriage is standing at more than moderate level (mean score 3.66) in the case of entry level employees. The overall mean score of 3.80 testifies that the inter caste/ inter religious marriage is prevalent to a moderately higher level.
38. It is very much inspiring to note that the employees across the cadre are experiencing higher economic empowerment as evidenced by the overall mean score of 3.98. The mean scores of middle level executives (mean score 4.16) and higher level executives (mean score 4.13) bear testimony to women experiencing higher economic empowerment. As for entry level, they experience a moderately higher level of economic empowerment.

39. The rate of divorce is below moderate (mean score 2.69) in the case of entry level employees. Nonetheless, the incidence of divorce is found to be more than moderate in the case of middle level respondents (mean score 3.42) and higher level executives (mean score 3.68). But the analysis of overall means score of 2.96 shows that the rate of divorce is close to moderate level.

40. The inter-group comparison of ranks of mean scores between entry level and middle level on social and cultural front illumines the existence of correlation to a higher order of 95.1 per cent significant at 1 per cent level. Nonetheless the ranking order between entry level and higher level and middle level and higher level is similar to the extent of 50 per cent.

41. The overall ranking across the cadre on varied dimensions of work life balance surfaces the fact that entry level and middle level are major sufferers on career advancement problems and unique problems faced as women while entry level employees are less affected on the above
Association between personal variables and various dimensions of problems

a. Different Cadres

42. Employees, irrespective of cadre, experience different level of career advancement problems and problems as women folk. Socio-cultural problem is low in the case of entry level employees while it is more or less mixed in the case of middle level executives. The problem is perceptibly high in the case of higher level employees.

b. Experience

43. Except employees with less than 5 years of experience, all other experience groups are under constant pressure to prove themselves and to make themselves eligible for higher end jobs. The problems of socio-cultural dimension hit hard the respondents whose experience ranges from 1 to 10.

44. Those subjects with less than 5 years of experience are facing relatively lesser magnitude of problems as career women. In the case of those respondents with 5-10 years experience, the response is mixed. As for those subjects with 10-15 years experience and those with more than 15 years of experience, they struggle from problems in their status as women.
c. Marital status

45. The marital status has potential to aggravate the factors hindering career advancement and socio-economic problems of women employees.

46. One’s marital status has no bearing on the magnitude of the problem faced as women employees. The percentage analysis proves beyond any doubt the absence of significant variation in the problem faced by status groups.

d. Age

47. An analysis of overall response across the category brings to light that they are equally divided between high and low career advancement problem facers. The respondents below 30 are facing lesser problems peculiar to women, the rest of the age groups are experiencing higher level of problems unique to women folk. As far as socio-cultural problems are concerned, respondents of below 30 age group face comparatively more socio-cultural problems than the rest of the age groups.

Work performance and various dimensions of problems

48. It is evident from the r square value (0.598) that the work performance is influenced by the independent variables to the extent of 59.8 per cent. The coefficients worked out for various independent variables indicate that the socio-cultural problems (beta value -0.190) top the problems. The negative beta value signifies that the lesser the socio-cultural problems, the more the work performance. It can be summed up that a combination of career advancement problem and socio-cultural problems influences the work performance greater.
RESEARCH BASED SUGGESTIONS

1. As most of the employees across the cadre are experiencing emotional imbalance, a special training targeted at fostering emotional balance need to be introduced in tie up with personality development institutions.

2. Since the sizable majority is moderately satisfied and a minority is dissatisfied on the various benefits offered by their employer, the latter have to qualitize the benefits like medical reimbursement, transport, canteen and fringe benefits. In this connection, it is advisable for the employer to conduct satisfaction survey on these aspects and to note down the areas of dissatisfaction. Accordingly they have to take appropriate measures to bridge the satisfaction gap.

3. The queing for booking the holiday homes is reported to be a problem. Hence, the employer has to increase the number of holiday homes to enable more to avail themselves of this facility. The frequency of get-togethers and party may be increased in order to cement the relationship among the employees across the cadre.

4. The employer may make special arrangement for giving special seminars for expectant mothers on their contact during pre-natal and post-natal phases.

5. A special counseling to women employees across the cadre may be given to boost their morale. Since most of the women employees are vulnerable to emotional disturbances on account of various problems both on work and home fronts, a special counseling program covering the various issues faced by women employees may be instituted.
6. The employer has to consider the work home, flexi time, job sharing, part time, etc. for select employees in various cadres in view of their contribution to the value addition to the company. It has to evolve clear cut conditions for availing the aforesaid privileges.

7. In view of increasing presence of women employees in the I.T. sector, a special awareness program should be run to create consciousness about nutrition, physical exercise, dietary habits, yogas, meditation, etc. to combat the various occupational diseases. A session should be created for the women employees to attend compulsorily a physical exercise, yoga and meditation during the office hours. The company should give health tips to employees through mail.

8. Out of the three cadres surveyed, the middle cadre is found to be experiencing more problems on the organisational policy and benefits received. A special counseling and mentoring need to be imparted to the aforesaid group. Besides this group being sandwiched between entry level and higher level need to be given a special training to overcome the problems peculiar to middle level executives.

9. Since the middle level has to interact with both entry level and higher level, a separate soft skill training catering to the various needs of middle cadre need to be initiated. In other words, the training agenda need to be evolved keeping in view of various types of communication methods and devices used by this cadre. Presentation skill, convening meetings, report making skill, negotiation skill, inter- personal relation skill, listening skill, etc. need to be nurtured among this group in particular. The training agenda has to accommodate the development of these skills.
CONCLUSION

The present study undertaken among the women folk across the cadre in the I.T. sector in Chennai city has surfaced the fact of absence of gender bias in work allotment, performance evaluation, remuneration, deputation, etc. and the absence of exploitation of women folk owing to their innate character like submissiveness, tolerance, patience, etc. The women employees in general have expressed satisfaction over the employer provided benefits, organisational policies and work performance across the category. They in general pride themselves to be possessing positive traits to perform work efficiently; to encounter the challenges emerging in the work place and to build and maintain the relationship with others. All these positivities position them as a mightier force to reckon with on par with male counterparts.

However, the study has thrown up certain dark spots in the otherwise brighter horizon. The study has found that the magnitude of the problem faced by the employees in the middle care is higher than those of entry level and higher level employees. A very marginal presence of women executives is found at the top echelons of the software companies. There is a significant presence of women employees at the entry level. But the initial strength is thinning down when they advance to higher cadres in the organisational hierarchy. The problems like inability to balance between work and home responsibilities, stress involved in relocation, matrimonial responsibilities, child rearing responsibilities, obligation towards elders, the problem of burn out, etc. are found to be hindering more the middle cadre in their professional journey. These challenges check the career advancement of women to a larger
extent. The initial enthusiasm to climb the career ladder faster is evaporating in the thin air thanks to the formidable problems encountered en route to their destination in their professional journey. Therefore if a separate program targeted at middle level employees to address the various problems encountered during this phase is evolved and implemented, it would expand their presence in the higher end jobs too.

Further if a separate leadership development program intended to hone leadership skills is put in place in real earnest in consultation with H.R. experts, it would produce a sea change in increasing phenomenally the presence of women in the leadership roles in the mid segment. Besides an exclusive counseling for those in the entry level and middle level in particular to address the challenges emanating from matrimonial responsibilities would stand them in good stead not only in fixing work life conflict satisfactorily but also in facilitating their climbing faster the steps in the career ladder. Work-life conflict is indeed a formidable problem. Once this is reduced, nothing will stop the women employees from slotting into top cadres as their capacity for hard work and challenge acceptance can never be called in question.