CHAPTER VII

Summary, Conclusions & Major Findings
CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND MAJOR FINDINGS

The analytical presentation of the study entitled “Industrial Relations in Transport Sector - A Study in KSRTC” in the foregone chapters of this thesis is recapitulated and briefly summed up in this Chapter.

The principal objective of the present research is to understand the Industrial Relations scenario both at centre and at the state level. But the specific objectives are: (i) to examine the industrial relations in KSRTC based on secondary data pertaining to strikes; (ii) to assess the rate of Industrial Disputes in KSRTC; (iii) to know the perceptions of Stakeholders in KSRTC based on primary data. Finally on the basis of the findings of the study, the researcher has recommended some measures for strengthening the industrial relations machinery in KSRTC.

The data for the present study are drawn from both published and unpublished documents of KSRTC. The secondary data have been collected from the Trade Unions, management and the officials of the
labour department. The primary data have been collected from the workers, trade union leaders and management. For this purpose, three questionnaires were designed and the data were collected.

Research Methodology contains 'Karl Pearson's Correlation Technique' to assess the level of job satisfaction of the employees. Industrial Relations index has been constructed to know the industrial peace in the organisation. Breakdown Rate has been worked out through ratio analysis. Annual percentage growth rate has been worked out to know the growth of staff, strikes and industrial disputes etc., in the organisation.

I. Major Findings from the Secondary Data

1. An important finding of the study is that over a period of 10 years, the number of strikes was highest in 1993. During this year as many as 48 strikes took place in the organisation and the growth rate was also high to the tune of 300 per cent. This was due to the protest against the implementation of duty rotation system of crew in several depots. Thus the growth of strike activity shows ups and downs in the KSRTC during the period under study.
2. It is observed from table 5.1 that the KSRTC witnessed another intense strike activity during 1995 and 1998. During this period, there was a protest against Bifurcation of BTS and privitisation of KSRTC. The workers urged for the referendum to be held quickly, as the referendum was concluded on 15/16 of July 1996.

3. The major causes for strikes in KSRTC are internal causes leading to bad industrial relations and public causes external to KSRTC, such as exigencies and misbehaviour of conductors, quarrel between crew and passengers, etc.

4. The impact of strike is measured through average time loss, average revenue loss, average kilometer loss, and average schedule loss of the organisation for a period of 10 years. Annual average time loss was 3242.01 hours, Annual Average Revenue loss was Rs.537611.4, Annual Average kilometer loss was 137212.06 km. and Annual Average schedule loss was 261.12.

5. The index of Industrial Relations is calculated by dividing the total man days worked with the total man-days lost for the given year and multiplied by 100, compared to the similar figure for the base year (Nair, 1973). It gives an approximate idea about the Industrial relations
situation. A large index denotes a greater degree of industrial peace. It may be seen from the table 5.8 that in no year (except 1995-96), the index was larger than that of the base year. In 1995-96, the index was 174.35, this denotes that there were less number of strikes during that year and industrial peace was restored only in that year. Remaining years, the industrial relations situation in KSRTC is rather unsatisfactory.

b. The Breakdown rates refer to percentage of industrial disputes to total number of strikes (Nagaraju, 1981). The Breakdown Rate vary according to the years, ranging from 0.48 to 7.9. However, the average Breakdown Rate has worked out to 2.8 per year in our study. This indicates that there is a high rate of industrial unrest in KSRTC. This is due to the fact that the recognition of the Federation (KSRTC Staff and Workers) was in force from 1992-96. After 1996, the disputes and strikes had increased due to non-recognition of the Federation. It resulted in raising the break down rate from 1996 onwards in KSRTC.

II. Findings from the Primary Data

In order to promote workers' participation in management, KSRTC has constituted a number of Committees at Depot, Divisional
and at Corporate levels. The main objectives of these bipartite committees were to facilitate communication channels between management and workers, to encourage production and to secure and maintain cordial relations between workers and management. Despite these efforts the Industrial Relations in KSRTC has not improved. This is evident from the following findings:

1. It is observed from table 6.2 that, some of the committees are not working satisfactorily in the organisation. 44.7 per cent of the workers said that the Canteen Committee is useless, as it is not catering to the needs of the workers. According to them, food providing in these canteens is not good. 94.7 per cent of the workers expressed their opinion that the production cum enterprise committee is working inadequately. As it is constituted to deal with productivity and production planning and achievement of targets. It has to work satisfactorily in the organisation. Whereas the production cum Grievance Committee, Provident Fund Sub-Committee, Medical Committee, Editorial Committee, DRBF Committee etc., are working somewhat better than other Committees.
2. It is inferred from table 6.3 that the responses of workers about the Committees are not favourable. 16 per cent of the respondents are not aware of the decisions taken by the Committees. They complain that the Committee members do not take suggestions from the employees of the organisation. The number of meetings conducted by some of the Committees is not adequate. Further the respondents aspire that the management should consult trade unions before taking decisions. The Corporation has started conducting bipartite meetings at corporate level since 1993. The number of meetings are reducing from 1996 onwards. This shows that the industrial relations in KSRTC is not improving.

3. It can be observed from table 6.5, that the management is not encouraging workers' participation in the management. 76.6 per cent of the workers opined that the management is not encouraging this due to apathy towards workers.

4. One of the important findings of this study is that all the trade union leaders are of the opinion that the workers in general are desired to participate in decision making. Whereas 88.9 per cent of the managerial personnel (interviewed) accepted the idea of workers' participation in management. But there was a difference of opinion
among themselves with regard to form and degree of such participation. From the managerial perception, it is observed that most of them wish to introduce at Depot level rather than at corporate level.

5. It can be observed from table 6.7, that 95.3 per cent of workers, 74 per cent of union leaders and 53.3 per cent of managerial personnel wish to include workers' representatives in the Board of Directors. This will restore peace, reduce strikes and contribute more for cordial industrial relations in KSRTC. Whereas remaining respondents do not agree to include the workers representatives in the Board of Directors. As they felt, it leads to internal dissensions among the workers and spoils the working atmosphere of the organisation.

6. Another important finding of the study is that though there are 78 registered trade unions and 4 Federations, still non-members are existing in KSRTC, to the extent of 54 per cent among 150 sample employees. This is due to multiplicity of unions, domination of unions by politicians.

7. Yet another observation is that the recognised unions are conducting 'Gate Meetings' in all the divisions of the labour unions in KSRTC from the past. This should have helped the unions to bargain
with the management and to develop unity among the employees of the organisation. But actually it has failed in actuality. It means ‘Gate Meetings’ have failed to fulfill the purpose and its mission.

3. It is inferred that regarding the member or a non-member, there is difference in treatment by the leaders and accordingly majority of the respondents (58.7 per cent) felt that the members are benefitted more than the non-members.

9. It is observed from the field study that 46 per cent of the workers are willing to have one union to maintain cordial relations. 53 per cent have opposed single union structure and one per cent have expressed mixed opinion. It is feasible to have minimum 2 unions than multiplicity of unions or a single union.

10. Table 6.13 reveals an important conclusion that, on the whole, the workers in KSRTC are dissatisfied with the wage level, welfare facilities, working conditions, promotion, apathetic and rude attitude of supervisors, which often result in most severe conflict between labour and management.

11. Another important finding of the study is that majority of the workers (out of 150, 117) have shown a lower degree of job satisfaction.
This is due to the nature and condition of job. They felt it as drudgery and monotonous in their work. However, the level of job satisfaction varied according to workplace and nature of work.

12. Very important finding of the study is that, the correlation between the job satisfaction of the employees, marital status, education, length of service, number of earners in the family are not significant (at 0.01 per cent level). But there is a significant correlation between the job satisfaction and the number of dependents (.787) of the employees. As the number of dependents increases, job satisfaction also increases. It is due to the fact that to feed the dependents, the job is essential for them. So by performing their duties the employees are highly satisfied. Thus there is positive relationship between these two variables.

13. Job tiredness comprises physical and mental tiredness due to job performance, within the sample respondents, conductors are highly tired due to complex situation they are facing in the buses. They have to manage heterogeneous people and their attitude. Hence conductors feel more tired.

14. It is inferred from table 6.25, that very few workers are creating problem in KSRTC and ransacking the whole system. 35.3 per cent of
the workers participate in strikes to fulfill their demands. Whereas 64 per cent of the workers do not participate in strikes due to fear of victimization, illegal strikes, strikes by other unions, etc.

15. From the table 6.27 it can be inferred that the management has vindictive attitude towards the employees of the organisation and the employees are afraid of this. Due to this the strike participation is also low in KSRTC.

16. Regarding the opinion of the trade union leaders and management, the causes for disputes, maximum number of respondents opined that wage, bonus and allowances are the major causes for the disputes in KSRTC. This is also true in case of findings from secondary data. Thus it indicates that monetary benefits mostly cause the disputes.

17. From the table 6.35, it can be inferred that there is high inter-union and intra-union rivalry in the KSRTC as it is in the case of other organisations. Nearly 60 per cent of the respondents from the management and 56 per cent from the trade union leaders opined that multiplicity of union has become a bane for the weak bargaining capacity of the unions. Majority have agreed that this has spoiled the peaceful atmosphere and provided an upper hand to the management.
Therefore most of the respondents preferred single or two union structures.

18. The role of external leaders in the union is still recognised. They believe that external leaders can influence through political pressures. Nearly 78 per cent of the respondents felt that the role of external leaders is required as an internal leader can not be furious to get the things done.

Constraints/Problems identified from the study

1. The Problem of Duty Rotation and its Repercussion

Since the inception of KSRTC, there is one or other type of Duty Rotation System. For some time routes were fixed to crew based on seniority with their option in order to improve revenue, regularity and good behaviour with the public. According to the corporation authorities this system has failed as the crew developed intimacy with regular commuters resulting in high pilferage. It is further held by them that the attendance of the crew even with fixed duties was not satisfactory. Therefore the Corporation introduced a new system of crew Duty Rotation for every depot to ensure proper distribution of duties and incentive to watch performance of different conductors on a
route and avoid favouritism in allotment of duties. In this new system duties of conductors are changed every week and those of drivers every month. No conductor or driver is given duty on the same route within a period of six months or until he exhausted all the routes operated by the depots whichever is earlier.

After the introduction of this system, absenteeism has increased on a large scale. Many services cancelled or there were delayed operations and the passengers were put to great inconvenience. Therefore in 1994, P.G.R. Sindhia Committee recommended to scrap the system. After that the old system has been continued and the old problem of pilferage also has continued.

2. The Problem of Non-Implementation of Memorandum of Settlement on Time

It is one of the burning problems of KSRTC. As the Corporation was conducting Memorandum of settlements regularly once in 4 to 5 years. The last memorandum of settlement (MOS) was held in 1989. It was in force up to 1.1.1992. The management introduced some changes in the referendum. This was not agreed upon by the KSRTC Staff and Workers Federation and filed a Writ Petition in High Court praying for
quashing the changes incorporated in the KSRTC Servants (Conduct and Discipline) Regulations, 1971. The High Court of Karnataka has delivered a favourable judgement and recognition was continued to the KSRTC Staff and workers Federation. After this there is no new memorandum of settlement held in KSRTC. There are delays in implementing the Memorandum of Settlement and sometimes the management fails to implement all the demands agreed under Memorandum of Settlement.

3. Problem of Unrest

There is problem of unrest in KSRTC due to both internal and external causes. In case of internal causes the monetary factor dominates mainly for wages, bonus and allowances, etc. This was followed by dismissal of the workers for various reasons, protest against prosecution of crew, misbehaviour, assault on conductor, for not sanctioning leave by the higher officials to pay extra wages for the paid holidays etc.

In case of external causes it is the exigencies and misbehaviour of conductors, quarrel between crew and passengers, assault on the crew
by police and public during various bundhs etc., which lead to frequent unrest in the organisation.

4. Problem of loss of Revenue, Time, Kilometer and Schedule due to Strikes

The impact of strike is measured with the man-days lost, workers involved etc. Similarly due to strike there was an enormous loss of revenue, time loss, kilometer loss and schedule loss. It is evident from the earlier discussion.

5. Problem of High Break down Rate

This problem is a big headache to the management as breakdown rate is increasing after 1996. This is due to the non-recognition of the Federation. The Industrial disputes and strikes are increasing. It has resulted in industrial unrest and bad industrial relations between employees and management in the KSRTC.

6. Problem of ineffective committees

There are several committees in the organisation. Many of them are ineffective. The most ineffective Bipartite Committees working in KSRTC is the "Product-cum-Enterprise committee" and 'Canteen
Committee' (as per the responses of the workers). Therefore there is need for activating these committees.

7. **Problem of misunderstanding between the management and trade unions and attitudes towards each others**

The attitude and approaches between management and trade unions are not healthy. There is a big gap between them and it is enlarging over a period of time. This has resulted in bad industrial relations in KSRTC.

8. **Problem of Workers Participation at Corporate Level**

Workers' participation at corporate level did not yield good results due to dominance of few leaders at the corporate level. Management is of the opinion that, the workers participation in management may be introduced at depot level rather than corporate level. Their perception is that, the problems should be examined in the initial stages at the depot level, so that problems can be solved at that level and industrial relations can be improved.

9. **Problem of apathy and inactiveness of the non-members in KSRTC**
As observed from the field study, out of 150 workers interviewed 54 per cent are non-members of the trade unions. Their inactiveness and apathy towards union is a benefit for the management and hence the non-membership is growing by leaps and bounds.

10. **Problem of Monotony and Drudgery felt by workers**

Problem of low level of job satisfaction due to drudgery, monotonous work and no improvement in the working conditions have been responded by many. Workers have shown low level of job satisfaction. This is due to lack of training facilities and poor upgradation facilities, less promotional avenues. Further there are no departmental examinations as such to identify the talents of the workers.

11. **Problem of few dominant leaders and followers ransacking the system**

The number of strikes initiated by few leaders are increasing. If their personal demands are not fulfilled, they suddenly resorted to strikes and ransacking the system.
12. **Problem of victimization of the workers in time of illegal strikes and illegal bribes.**

Due to number of illegal strikes, many of the employees are victimized and some of them are reinstated through courts. But majority of them could not get the court order due to their illegal activities and hence many pending cases of suspension are still existing.

13. **Multiplicity of Unions**

It is one of the major problems hindering the industrial relations in KSRTC. Due to multiplicity of unions, the workers are not willing to take union membership. This has resulted in the loss of the strength of the union as well as monetary benefits.

**VERIFICATION OF HYPOTHESES**

1) One of the hypotheses mentioned in the Chapter I, relates to job satisfaction. From our study it is revealed that, there is low level of job satisfaction among the workers in KSRTC. This is due to various factors and we have worked out the correlation between the dependents and employees' job satisfaction. There is a positive relation between them. We have also worked out the correlation between the job satisfaction
and the age, marital status and higher education. There is negative
correlation between them. Therefore the hypothesis, "There is a
positive correlation between the job satisfaction and the number of
dependents. On the other hand, there is a negative correlation between
the age, marital status and higher education" is partly justified.

2) Since most of the strikes and disputes are pertaining to wage, bonus
and allowances, the hypothesis "Monetary factors tend to dominate
over non-monetary factors in causing industrial disputes" is also
justified.

3) The hypothesis relating to labour management relations through
various bipartite committees and meetings revealed that there is no
cordial relation among the stakeholders. Hence the hypothesis "Better
the labour management relations, greater the efficiency in the operation
of the KSRTC" is not justified.

ii) SUGGESTIONS

In this section, suggestions are offered for policy purpose. Most
of them are emanating from the problems identified in the preceding
chapter. These suggestions are only the direction in which the
organisation can move for smooth working of the KSRTC. The following are some of them.

1) KSRTC has adopted different Duty Rotation systems during the last ten years period. Some time they followed old system based on seniority with option. Some time they followed the new system of duty rotation. However again it has rolled back to old system. It indicates that there is still a dilemma regarding the duty rotation system. This dilemma can be resolved by combining the good features of both the systems.

2) One of the lapses on the part of the management is the non-implementation of the Memorandum of Settlement (M.O.S.) on specified date. There will be delay in implementing the Memorandum of Settlement (M.O.S.). Sometimes they may not implement all the demands agreed under M.O.S. These should not happen in the organisation, because agreements are usually based on mutual understanding. The breach of agreement will lead to, once again unrest in the organisation.

3) The problem of unrest in KSRTC is mostly due to internal monetary causes and as well as external exigencies. The internal causes can be
mitigated by way of implementation of Memorandum of Settlement (M.O.S.). However external causes such as misbehaviour of conductors, quarrel between crew and passenger, etc., can be reduced by way of small training programmes through psychological counselling in recognised counselling centres either in the research institutes or in the universities.

4) Due to strike, there is a great amount of loss of time, revenue, kilometer and schedules. This loss can be reverted, perhaps if the management takes precautionary steps. "Precaution is better than cure", especially in the industrial relations.

5) From the study it is revealed that, there is a high breakdown rate leading to large number of disputes and strikes. Mostly this has happened after 1996, due to non-recognition of the Federation and therefore, immediately the organisation should recognise the Federation based on a set of criteria. There is a need to provide statute for recognition of one union at each corporation level, totally 4 unions in the entire state and affiliate to one Federation.

6) One of the problems identified in the study was ineffective working of bipartite committees and meetings. These will have to be
reactivised by the management for a smooth working of KSRTC. This will not only mitigate the misunderstandings, but also there is a possibility of improving the attitude of workers, leaders and management. Therefore, strongly recommend for healthy approaches among the different stakeholders in achieving the industrial peace in the organisation.

7) Workers' participation at the corporation level has not given a good result, due to dominance of few leaders. Therefore the workers' participation should be made at the department/division level rather than corporate level. Even the opinion of the management is favourable to this recommendation.

8) The problem of non-members in KSRTC is growing at an alarming rate. From our study it is found that nearly 54 per cent of the sample respondents were not at all members of any union. This is not a good trend. An organisation should involve almost all members as far as possible.

9) We find that there is a high amount of monotonous work and drudgery felt by the employees. As a result, it is revealed that there is low level of job satisfaction. So in order to increase the level of job satisfaction, there is a need to upgrade the facilities and open more
avenues for promotion and give them chances for active participation and welcome suggestions for the working of the organisation, so that industrial relations can be improved.

10) One of the major problems hindering the industrial relations in KSRTC is the multiplicity of unions and inter-union and intra-union rivalries. This has led to weak bargaining capacity of the unions and frustration among the employees. Even the management has felt that it is a headache to deal with so many unions. Hence for a smooth working of KSRTC, it is absolutely necessary to have one union at each division. Each union should represent at the Federation. So that there will be 4 unions, one federation in the KSRTC. This will go a long way in maintaining the peace in KSRTC.