Chapter 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The accommodation industry on the boom worldwide. The more than billion tourists who are no travelling around the globe are using some or the form of accommodation to have an enjoyable stay at a destination. The accommodation sector now provides more than just shelter and a bed for the tourists to stay. It provides a number of services to make the guest feel at home at an unknown place. The key element of service in the accommodation sector is that it is provided by manpower and employees. Hence employees in a way become the A well-known saying goes “Happy workers make happy customers”. The core of this saying is therefore that Front Office Employees, who experience a Quality of Work Life, will ultimately deliver exceptional service and lead the accommodation establishment to be more productive and more profitable.

Quality of work life is a major issue for employees. Quality of work life has been explained as a philosophy or a set of principles, which holds that people are trustworthy, responsible and capable of making a valuable contribution to their organization. It is associated with job satisfaction, job involvement, job security, productivity, health, safety, competence development, professional skills, balance between work and non work life of the employee. The quality of work life is not only concerned with the monetary aspects but conditions of employment, interpersonal conflicts, job pressure, lack of freedom and absence of challenging work, etc. It also involves treating people with respect and relationship between employees ‘on’ and ‘off’ the job (Rose et al, 2006). Dissatisfaction with quality work of life is a problem that affects almost all workers regardless of position or status. The monitoring of employees perceptions about their quality of work life can help the senior management in organizations to get an insight into where improvements in an organization can be made to keep the employees, not only satisfied, but motivated, productive and loyal to the organization.

With particular relevance to the service industry that includes tourism and hospitality, QWL hold a lot of relevance. As services are [performed by people to
serve and make people (guests) happy, it is important that the QWL of service employees is good, that they themselves feel happy to satisfy customers. Nayar (2010) stresses about putting “employees first” and customers second, since it is through the employees that value is created within the organization. With respect to hotel industry this hold very true. As in the tourism industry it is the hotel sector that engages maximum service manpower, the study of QWL of hotel employees becomes very important.

5.1 Conclusions: Through this study the following conclusions are arrived at and are discussed under the various sections of the questionnaire.

5.1.1 Demographic and Work Profile of Respondents

The study shows that a near equal number of male and female employees are working in hotels. However not many females are found particularly in 3 star hotels in India, probably to the still negative image and taboos associated with women working in hotels, particularly lower Star category properties which are not thought to have good working environment and conditions. The respondents employees are both single and married across hotels, hence marital status is not a particular feature of hotel employment. All age group of employees are found in hotels, however 25-40 years of employees is the large segment. Largely graduates dominate the jobs in this industry in all star categories and the nature of employment is on contract in a high percentage across hotels. As for salary, only a limited percentage of employees form all star hotels are above the salary of more than Rs 20,000 a month. A large percentage of employees across the 3, 4, 5 star categories of hotels have been found to be working 2-3 years in the same property and the highest percentage report that they definitely work for 8 hours and more on a daily basis. This indicates that hotel jobs no doubt demand much from employees, offer less job security and are usually low paying in salaries.
5.1.2 General Well Being at Work

This subscale determines if the ‘spill-over’ of job satisfaction spills over into one’s ‘personal life’ and vice versa if personal well being, affect the perception of work life.

- **Most of 3, 4 and 5 Star hotel employees in the study report that they remain happy in their lives generally on a day to day basis, perhaps being satisfied on account of being gainfully employed and earning. They probably see their happiness in a wider context than relate it directly to their working in a hotel and attribute a wide variety of factors to their well being.**

- **Regardless, ironically a good percent of employees of all category hotels do not consider their life, next to ideal in this profession probably due to it being a 24/7 industry but characterized by relatively lower salaries compared to other profession.**

- **Employees from 5 Star hotels are ‘most positive’ about their organization relating it to contribute to their overall well being on account of probably higher salaries, richer and challenging working environment (in comparison to 3 and 4 star hotels). They are the ones who report having a high morale. However, they the only thing they are not happy about is the fact they do not get much time for their social and leisure life.**

- **Employees from 3 Star though they seem are satisfied with their life and well being in general, (perhaps also happy on account of being employed in the hotel) definitely do not have a very high morale.**

5.1.3 Home-Work Interface is linked to work-life balance which indicates a satisfactory level of involvement or ‘fit’ between the multiple roles in a person’s life,” and it linked with the concept of equilibrium, that “maintaining an overall sense of harmony in life” (Clarke, Koch & Hill, 2004). In this subscale statements
reflect whether the employee finds enough time from work to fulfill his personal life roles or not, whereby some form of dissatisfaction, guilt or stress can result leading to a situation of work and family conflict (Wong & Ko, 2009). The study concluded the following on this subscale:

- A large percentage of employees of all category hotels, 3, 4, and 5 Star, report negatively about their Home Work Interface. All report that they do not get much time to fulfill their family role and have to make adjustments to family life or chores, keeping work demands at priority. Hence most of the respondents from all hotels report their families are not happy with the time they get with the respondent who is working in a hotel.

- A large percent of all the Star category hotel employees in the study have experienced a clash between family and work life, many a times.

- Largely 3 Star hotels employees however, on account of less work pressure do manage to get leave from work at times of family emergency.

- A high percent of hotel; employees form all start categories also disagree with the view that their employer understand their personal and family needs or even enquires about them. This is perhaps on account of the nature of hectic work in the hotel industry that demands excessive work from employees.

5.1.4 Job and Career Satisfaction: is associated with aspects like and clear and defined job profile, expectations and performance level required from employees that is clearly conveyed to the employees, without ambiguity. It also includes open communication channels within the organization, a realization of appreciation for the good work of employees and being rewarded on good performance. The subscale also included the evaluation of nature of training and skill enhancement provided to employees at work, if any, assistance provided by supervisors to juniors and equal opportunity for all to progress up the career ladder without any bias of caste creed religion or color. On this subscale the study concluded the following.
- 3 Star hotel employees are largely undecided about most aspects of JCS. They seem to simply happy with the fact they are employed but do not feel motivated at work.

- A good percentage of 4 and 5 Star hotel employees largely agree and are satisfied with aspects of JCS. They acknowledge that in the nature of work in the hotel there is job clarity, there questions are answered satisfactorily by their supervisors, there is team work in the working environment and that they are imparted adequate training, knowledge and skill enhancement to be keep abreast of the latest in the nature of their work and to perform the duties assigned to them.

- As for turnover intention it is seen that it is largely 3 Star hotels employees that are considering switching to some other organization, however 4 and 5 Star employees largely report that they see themselves working with the same hotel in the near foreseeable future. This reflects that 4 and 5 Star hotel employees have more job and career satisfaction than 3 Star hotel employees.

5.1.5 Control at Work: This subscale centers around aspects at work which contribute in making an employee to feel like his own master, influence his tasks, make his own decisions at work, use his ingenuity at his tasks and feel in control, rather then be directed and ordered by others all the time about what to do. The following are concluded about this sub scale with respect to the various Star category hotels.

- It is seen around all the category of hotels (3, 4 and 5) that in the employees feel that participative management is lacking and decisions are taken by the senior management without the lower level employees being consulted or approached for seeking their opinion. All employees are directed to do as they are told be the senior management.

- Regular training and orientation is a key feature of 4 and 5 star hotels and makes the employees feel good whereby it also raises the confidence
of employees of 4 and 5 star employees. 4 and 5 star hotel employees find their work challenging and engaging

- Particularly the 5 start hotel employees agree the work they perform is very valuable and contributes to the success of the organization and for this reason they consider their worth for the organization.

- 3 Star hotels do not engage much in providing for employees regular orientation and skill / knowledge enhancement. Challenges in the work environment are lacking and 3 star hotel employees are passive about their work.

5.1.6 Working Conditions

This aspect of quality of work life deals with the pay, physical working conditions, work timings, work days, infrastructure provided and the feeling of cooperation or non cooperation between employees. The results of this study conclude the following:

- It is seen that 4 and 5 star hotel employees are most satisfied with their working environment and physical working conditions. It is understandable from the fact that 4 and 5 star properties invest a lot in procuring the required equipment and facilities for the employees to do their work in a professional manner to further lead to satisfaction of the guests with best facilities and standards. 4 and 5 Star hotels also aim at providing a quality and clean working environment for the employees to keep them satisfied and motivated. 3 star hotels often compromise on these aspects for the employees.

- While a high percent of 5 Star hotel employees remain happy with their salary package, and report they get fringe benefits in their employment the least happy with the pay are a maximum percent of employees of 3 star hotel properties who do not get any fringe benefits while most 4 Star hotels employees are unsure and remain undecided.
- Major percentage of 4, and 5 Star hotel employees are not too happy with their long working hour shifts that often overstretch while most from all categories agree that do not get any extra pay for doing over time.

5.1.7 Stress at Work: This aspect of quality of work life has dealt with situations that might produce physical and mental stress for hotel employees. Stress related situations are associated with a conflict between personal values, and ethics with that of the organizations ethics and ways of operation. They also deals with excessive work load that might have adverse consequences on the physical health of employees. Besides, mental stress may be a result of fear of not coming up to the mark of performance expected by the management, or fear of loss job insecurity on non performance, or the concern of constantly being watched over by other employees or superiors. On this subscale the results conclude the following:

- It is apparent that the least stress at work is felt by 3 Star hotel employees. This may be due to the fact that there is not very high performance demanded by employees and even probably the customers seeking services of 3 star hotels are not very fussy, but rather accommodating. Besides, in 3 start properties it is seen that there is a relatively close and better interpersonal relationship between employees and management and not strict enough to be the cause of any stress for employees.

- The majority of employees of all star category hotels (3, 4, and 5) report that work is performed ethically in their hotels and ethical operations are not a cause of stress. As Business ethics become a major concern for both providers and consumers, and cannot escape the scrutiny of law, most businesses have adopted and are constantly adopting ethical practices to remain in the competition itself and even to be included in the best practices list of business firms to enhance their credibility.
- Majority of employees of all 4 and 5 star category hotels report that they experience mental stress, not physical stress. This is on account of the fact that high performance is demanded from them all the time that they are at work and they have to be under constant pressure to do handle all work assigned to them, without any room for mistakes as the service has to be perfect for the guests. Besides they are feel unsettled and anxious when any supervisor is around for the fear of being pointed out for anything wrong.

- It is seen that 5 star hotels have started providing for their employees counseling facilities, human resource managers and physicians in case the employees need to seek any personal assistance. This comes in the form of a benefit besides salary that these hotels provide for employee welfare. This kind of welfare is often seen lacking in 3 and 4 star hotels.

- The study also concludes that on account of work pressure and stress, it is largely the 4 and 5 star hotels employees that are seen to express the desire to switch over to some other job, whereas such a concern is not evident of 3 Star hotel employees, who seem rather content with their hotel employment.

In essence the study concludes in case of 3 Star Hotels Quality of Work life for employees is good terms of Interpersonal relationships at work, and relatively less work pressure and less stress. However quality of work life is lacking in term of good working conditions and meeting the growth and development needs of employees.

In case of 4 and 5 star category hotels the quality of work life of employees is good in terms of pay package, working conditions and job and career satisfaction but diverse in terms of stress at work due to excessive work pressure.

For all category of hotels in the study (representing North India) 3 4 and 5 Star, quality of work life is not good in terms of Home Work Interface.
Therefore, in light of these conclusions, the following recommendations are given for management in hotels to address the areas where the quality of work life is lacking.

5.2 Recommendations

In light of the conclusion arrived at in the present research, various recommendations are given below for various categories of hotels in order to pay more attention to the quality of work life of their employees.

5.2.1 General recommendations for 3, 4, and 5 Star Category Hotels

- Participative management: The study has shown that what is seriously lacking in all hotels, as perceived by employees, is participative management. In this context, it is suggested that the senior management in the hotels should provide a degree of autonomy to its employees and devise a mechanism in which the employees can be consulted in decision making regarding their work. This can encourage the confidence of employees and also make them feel appreciated, raising their self-esteem.

- Flexi benefits scheme: It is suggested to all categories of hotels that they must introduce a flexi benefit scheme that includes, besides salary, a choice from other benefits/privileges that an employee can choose as his/her package. Flexi benefits can include, paid leave, facilities for childcare, healthcare, housing, education of children, etc. As different employees may value different rewards or motivators, this is a good offer that an organization can introduce to meet individual needs. As most hotels offer contract employment, these should consider offering slightly longer term contracts to experienced and skilled employees.

- Flexi time scheme: In view of providing a work-life balance, and personal space to the employees, hotels can consider offering more flexible work schedule and workdays options, that during week days and day working hours, employees can avail holiday from work or a few hours from work (perhaps half day work) that they can attend to their other family and
personal chores in office hours and working days at other organizations or
attend to their family needs as and when required.

- **Morale Boosting and Pride Enhancement:** The management on the
  hotels should be more interactive with the employees to make them feel to
  be a part of the whole family of the organization. The management can
decide to have interactive days with employees from various departments
from time to time in a more informal manner to get to know each other
better and can also have family days with employees through outings or
recreational events. This can help the employees feel loved, acknowledged
and their families asked after by the management.

- **Changing the Image of Hotel Jobs:** The management of hotels should
  make a conscious attempt to interact with their hotel employees and try to
  inculcate a degree of pride in doing their jobs. This should be done in the
view that particularly in a country like India, there still are taboos attached
to working in the hotel industry, and particularly women working on hotels
are not looked upon with respect. Besides, the tourism industry itself
should portray a dignified image of all hotel employees in all its
advertising.

- **Regular feedback from employees:** The management of all hotels
  should not treat the employees with a gap as of management and labor,
but needs to introduce some mechanism to continuously seek feedback
from its employees on their assessment of their quality of work life. This
can provide good insight for their management to enhance the working
environment and physical environment of the workplace to keep the
employees satisfied, motivated and happy.

- **Exit interviews** - The management of all category hotels should have
  some form of feedback or exit interviews of employees who choose to
leave the job, on order to identify the reasons of the employee for quitting
his job. In case the voluntary turnover is on account of any aspect of the
QWL, the organization should address the concern and introduce
corrective measures that experienced employees do not leave the
organization from time to time increasing the employee recruitment and training costs for the organizations.

5.2.2 Recommendations for 3 Star Hotels

- **Salary and employee benefits**: The study concluded that 3 star properties perhaps as they do not employ highly skilled professionals, do not offer attractive salary or any other benefits to their employees, which makes the employees have a casual attitude towards work. The 3 Star hotels cannot offer much salary to their employees, these should try to introduce benefits in 'kind' for their employees besides the 'adequate compensation' that employees do not consider leaving the job and serve in the organization for a long term. This can be beneficial for the hotel organizations, as the longer the employees stay, more will they gain in experience and become proficient, but will also save the cost of regular recruitment and training of new employees cutting down on costs.

- **Training and skill enhancement**: The 3 Star hotel management seems to be lacking in providing adequate skills and training to its employees. These hotels also tend to employ lower qualified or unqualified employees as these hotels are not good pay masters. Hence employees in these hotels are passive and uninterested in performing their job. Regardless, these hotels need to provide training to their employees, to improve their performance and increase the confidence level of employees, also motivating them through enhancement of their abilities.

- **Improvisation of working environment / infrastructure**: 3 Star hotels due to lesser expectations from them on account of their Star category are often slack in providing a good infrastructure and working environment for their employees, which may lead to dissatisfaction of employees. These hotels need to invest more in providing good facilities, equipment and working infrastructure for their employees that the employees do not have concerns of safety, health, hygiene or a feeling of lack of facilities.
5.2.3 Recommendations for 4 and 5 Star hotels

- **Interpersonal relationship management:** In view of 4 and 5 Star hotels the results show that these high Star category hotels on account of their large size and employment of a large number of personnel, lack in fostering good and informal relationships between management and employees. QWL with view these hotels need to introduce better communication channels between hierarchies and employee friendly programs that foster open and friendly communication that reduced mental stress for employees in front of senior management, open door policy that employees can walk up t the management to talk about anything. Hence the strict protocol of communication should be allowed to become slightly liberal that the communication gap can be reduced.

- **Stress management:** Due to excessive work pressure and high performance expectations, particularly 4 and 5 Star hotel employees are subject to a lot of mental stress. Hence 4-5 Star hotels should make a conscious effort to diffuse the stressful environment by hiring facilities of psychological counselors. These hotels should also provide occasional de-stressor by having ‘open days’ of interaction between employees and the senior management that relieves stress from time to time.

In view of these recommendations and the fact that hotel employment is subject to a high and frequent turnover it is hoped that the hotel industry can seriously address the issue to quality of work life for its employees and take conscious measure to create a ‘happy manpower’ (Nayar, 2010) to achieve business success by making ‘customers happy’.

5.3 Direction for Future Research

- Future research can be conducted on the studying the quality of work life of hotels employees using a wider sample and a wider area of study to cross validate the findings of this study.
Future research can also be initiated in carrying out a comparison of quality of work life of employees of private sector and public sectors hotels.

Studies should also take a gender angle and address and compare the quality of work life of male and female hotel employees as both males and females may perceive it differently.

Comparative studies can also be carried out to assess and compare the quality of work life of hotels in India with those in other countries.

It is hoped that such further research in the area of Quality of Work life of hotels employees in the tourism industry will provide valuable insight to the management of organizations to introduce organizational policies that will be beneficial for the employees and will help retain a happy workforce which will be instrumental in making the customers happy and thereby ensure the success of the hotel industry that rests on the pillars of manpower, in the service industry.

References


