CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Introduction

This concluding chapter presents synoptic view of the research findings on all three parameters Quality of Work Life, Leadership Style and Organisational Commitment of media professionals. The conclusions are also related to the theoretical concepts propounded for dimensions mentioned above. Recommendations have been included in this chapter for various agencies dealing with media professionals, their concerns and issues in India.

8.1.1 Findings Related to Media Professionals

Earlier in the theoretical framework chapter, the model of influences of hierarchy (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996) was mentioned citing five reasons that influence thinking of media persons. These include- individual factors, routine in the organisation, institutional factors, organisational factors and ideological factors. These factors influence the media content carried or published by the media persons. The current study deals with perception of media professionals about their own Quality of Work Life, Leadership Styles of their Editors or seniors and their Organisational Commitment. While this theory by Shoemaker and Reese (1996) originally evaluates reasons leading to media content, the current study deals with perception of media professionals about their own Quality of Work Life, the nature of their leader and their commitment levels. There is scope of further conceptualization of theories in this area, particularly concerning work environment for media professionals and issues in the organisation. Perception of Media Professionals needs to be studied in depth, consideration the unfathomable role that the Indian media is now playing in issues concerning the country and its policy making.

Demographics of the media professionals in this study revealed a skewed ratio of male and female accredited professionals, with more number of males in the list who eventually participated in the survey. Based on the nature of job and position in the hierarchy, maximum number of accredited employees were reporters, with nearly 52.7 percent of the whole sample comprising this category. A majority of these professionals were in the age group of 26-35 and 36-45 year old comprising nearly 70 percent collectively. These demographics coincide
with the study on work force stating that present working population in organisations is younger, better educated and technically trained (Sekaran, 1998).

Higher numbers were found for accredited media professionals working in English than language press. More than half of the respondents had monthly income of less than Rs 20,000 (nearly 55 percent). This is in consonance with the finding of Press Council of India (2010) related to stringers, contractual appointments and meagre incomes of media professionals.

Most of the respondents had an average work experience of 6 to 10 years in the media industry (as length of service) comprising 51.9 percent. On the basis of marital status, 65.8 percent of these professionals were married.

8.1.2 Findings of the Study Related to Quality of Work Life

The study on quality of work life of media professionals revealed that male respondents had higher perception of this factor than females. The most crucial factors contributing to the perception of males about their Quality of work life was related to organisational climate and sense of achievement. This observation is in consonance with a study by Mirvis & Lawler (1984) stating that Quality of Work Life was prominently related to work hours, wages and working conditions. On a similar note, it was found that media professionals with income between Rs.20,000-Rs.40,000 per month showed higher scores than those drawing less than Rs.20,000 per month.

Another observation was that younger media professionals perceived lower Quality of Work Life as compared to those belonging to older age group. Married media professionals and those who had an average work experience in the industry (11 to 15 years) perceived Quality of Work Life to be better than others.

Sinha (2012) indicated that Quality of work life reforms need to be taken more seriously by Indian organisations, even as considerable attention has been given by organisations in other countries to this aspect. Even as theoretical models have been propounded on Quality of Work life, for instance a model developed by Taylor (1979) that vouched for inclusion of additional components like work conditions, work hours, income, fairness among others in measuring Quality of Work Life and Hackman & Oldham (1976) model which connected psychological growth of employees with quality of work life. However, additional dimensions need to be included in a corresponding model designed specifically to the problems and concerns of the media industry in India. These may address issues like extreme
deadline pressures, health concerns due to high stress, uneven promotion policies and education opportunities.

8.1.3 Findings Related to Leadership Styles

Findings on leadership style in the present study explain how male media professionals had better perception of their leaders in comparison to females. However, on relationship orientation aspect, both male and female media professionals perceived their editors or leaders similarly. This finding is in contrast to the observation of Tannenbaum & Schmidt (1973) who stated that only those leaders who can understand people in their organisations much more effectively are successful leaders.

An outcome of the present study was that the media professionals above 56 years of perceive their editors as better leaders. Monthly income and position in hierarchy of media professionals also had an impact on how they perceived their leader. However, the thought process and perception about their leader was not affected by the length of service in media industry by employees, nor does it depend on language of media in which they were employed.

8.1.4 Findings Related to Organisational Commitment

The present study deduces higher commitment levels of male media professionals in the media organisation. Employees above 56 years of age showed higher organisational commitment than their counterparts in the industry of lower age group. Married media professionals showed higher levels of commitment in print media industry of North India. For separated or divorced media professionals perceived continuous commitment was highest since they remain with organisation because they need to do so. Organisational Commitment did not depend on whether the media professionals are employed in English or language press.

On similar lines, a theoretical construct given by Vandenberghe et al. (2004) that investigated the impact of organisational commitment observed a strong correlation with turnover, intention to quit and job performance.

In the context of media industry in India, certain parameters specific to the industry need to be identified which affect employee’s organisational commitment and whether commitment had an impact on performance of the media’s circulation or popularity. Cohen (1998) had
pointed out that when employees lacked professional commitment, it can be assumed that they intend to leave.

Organisational Commitment of subordinates was found to be different from those of their supervisors. Commitment of subordinates was found more than their supervisors. This is in close agreement to a study done by US Merit System Protection Board (1994) which concluded that non-supervisors had lower satisfaction levels than supervisors. Based on the contentment of employees eventually leading to organisational commitment, a study done in past is in disagreement with these findings. Burke (1995) concluded that employees at higher levels are more satisfied with their jobs than those at lower levels.

In the context of media industry, Weaver & Wilhoit (1996) observed that a journalist who is willing to quit profession is looking for a new challenge.

Therefore commitment is a function of challenges that a media professional is willing to take.

Quality of work life perception too was not similar in case of subordinates and supervisors in the media industry. Supervisors were not found contended with their Quality of work life while subordinates and supervisors had similar perception of the leadership style of their senior.

8.1.5 Interrelationship between Quality of Work Life, Leadership Styles and Organisational Commitment

The present study shows a strong correlation of Quality of Work life among media professionals on their Organisational Commitment across different characteristics. A similar observation was given by Walton (1985) who suggested that Quality of Work Life comprised chance for employees to get involved and it requires commitment towards organisation and an atmosphere in which commitment can flourish.

This study on media professionals of North India print industry revealed a correlation between leadership style of editor and organisational commitment of employees. This is in close agreement with the work done by Simon (1994) who established that transformational leadership has a positive impact on organisational commitment, particularly normative and affective commitment. This result is a corroborations of similar finding by Bruning & Synder (1983) between leader communication and organisational commitment.
8.2 Salient findings of this study have been summarized below:

1. More number of male media professionals enjoy accreditation status than females in North India print media industry and most of these comprise reporters. A majority of respondents in this study were from the age group of 26-45 years. English press employees were higher in number among recognised media professionals by the official Public Relations Department of the state. 55 percent media professionals in North India continue to draw income less than Rs 20,000 per month.

2. Male media professionals expressed having better Quality of Work life than females. Those professionals who were 56 years and above showed significantly better Quality of Work Life compared to younger media professionals.

3. Media professionals with monthly income between Rs 20,001- Rs 40,000 had better Quality of Work Life than others. Effect on personal life plays a crucial role in better Quality of Work Life in the higher monthly income brackets. Those employees who were paid less than Rs 20,000 or those who had monthly income of Rs 1 lac and above, had less satisfactory Quality of Work Life than media professionals who earned monthly income between Rs 20,001- 1 Lac.

4. Married media professionals perceived their Quality of Work Life to be better than unmarried or separated ones. Media professionals who had 11-15 years of industry experience also perceive better Quality of work Life than others who are too new into the profession or those who have been in the industry for more than 16 years.

5. Designers in print media organisations showed higher satisfaction with better Quality of Work Life perception than reporters, sub-editors, photo-journalists, designers and coordinators/editors. Media professionals employed in the English print media organisations perceived better Quality of Work Life than their counterparts employed in Language Press.

6. Male media professionals perceived their Editors to be better leaders than females and preferred their supervisors to be task oriented, implying fairness in work and providing better work atmosphere. Professionals in the media industry above 56 years of age perceived their supervisor to be better in terms of their leadership style.

7. Media professionals with average monthly income (between Rs 20,001-Rs 40,000) perceive their editor to be better leaders than those with lower income. This perception of leadership styles is higher than even those who had better pay package (above Rs 1 lac).
8. Marital status of the media professionals had an influence on the way they perceived their editor, with married professionals rating their supervisors better than those who are single or separated on Leadership Styles parameter.

9. Leadership style of editors is viewed differently by reporters, photo-journalists, sub-editors, designers and coordinators. Sub-Editors, who often do the job of editing news stories and suggesting headlines and page make up, showed high perception of Leadership Style of their editor. The length of service in media industry did not affect the perception of employees about their editors or leaders nor does the language of media in which they are employed affect it.

10. Male media professionals showed higher levels of organisational commitment compared to females. On the basis of age it was found that those who were above 56 years of age showed much higher levels of commitment than their younger counterparts in media industry.

11. Respondents with average monthly income between Rs 20,001- Rs 40,000 showed higher organisational commitment than those with lower income. On the basis of marital status, it was found that married media professionals showed higher levels of organisational commitment.

12. Professionals who had spent about 6 to 10 years in the media industry tend to have higher organisational commitment than others who were younger in the profession or those who had experience of more than 10 years. Among different positions in the hierarchy and the nature of job that they were involved with, sub-editors showed higher organisational commitment levels compared to reporters, photo-journalists, designers and coordinators/editors.

13. Organisational commitment among media professionals of North India was not affected by the language of media in which they are employed.

14. Subordinates and supervisors had different organisational commitment. Subordinates showed higher levels of organisational commitment than their supervisors in print media industry of North India. Subordinates in media industry also perceived their Quality of Work life to be better than their supervisors.

15. Both the subordinates (comprising reporters, sub-editors, designers and photo-journalists) and supervisors (comprising Editors and coordinators in the team) perceive their superior similarly on Leadership Style parameter.
16. Quality of Work Life of media professionals in North India had a significant impact on their Organisational Commitment. The correlation between these two variables is strong and positive. This aspect needs to be administered by the management of the print media organisations.

17. Leadership Style of editors or supervisors exerted an influence on the Organisational commitment of media professionals. The correlation is positive. the editorial staff has to develop strong bonding with their subordinates to enhance their effectiveness and efficiency.

18. The influence of Leadership Style and Quality of Work life among media professionals was found strong and positively correlated to their Organisational Commitment.

8.3 Recommendations of the Study

The sixth and last objective of the study deals with this area of suggesting suitable measures to the industry as well as other crucial bodies dealing with print media organisations in India.

The related objective was “To recommend suitable strategies for improving quality of work life and organisational commitment among media professionals in North India.”

Recommendations based on the findings of this study are listed below for segments of Indian media and other related functional bodies to improve Quality of Work Life, Leadership Styles and Organisational Commitment of the media professionals.

8.3.1 Recommendations for Media Organisations in India

1. Media Organisations in India need to give a serious consideration to ensuring better Quality of Work Life for media professionals employed in their organisation. Attempts must be made to create a better work environment to enable media professionals to perform to the best of their abilities. This can be done through various programmes and initiatives related to Quality of Work Life. Experiences from other industries all over the world who are following this path and ensuring good Quality of Work Life for their employees can be replicated.

2. Economic benefits, a dimension of Quality of Work Life, must be considered as a critical factor in retention of good employees with the organisation. Since the present study establishes a strong correlation between Quality of Work Life and Organisational Commitment, it can be inferred that if the employees are offered better
Quality of Work Life in media industry, there commitment towards organisation will be stronger.

3. Media Organisations must give a careful consideration to evaluating their leaders, who are Editors, Coordinators or Supervisors, from time to time. Feedback of employees must be taken into account concerning the leadership style of their editor. Since a positive correlation has been found in the present study between leadership style and organisational commitment, hence media organisations must not overlook the acceptability of the editor as leaders in their organisation.

4. Leaders or Editors in the media organisations must understand the work and personal life balance of the subordinates and facilitate an amicable and better work atmosphere. Leaders have a strong influence on the work and personal life of subordinates, hence leaders must consider a path of self-introspection. Media organisations too must consider training of the editors from time to time to keep their knowledge updated on the latest practices in their field as well as harnessing human resources.

5. A systematic approach must be followed by the media organisation concerning the promotion and elevation of employees and also ensure support system to take care of family in case of emergent situations. Human resource executives in media organisations must ensure even policies for elevation of professionals and make provisions for their training and educational upgradation from time to time.

6. According to the present study since a majority of employees fall under the category of young professionals (nearly 70 percent fall in 26-45 years age group) media organisations must keep this factor into consideration that the work force they are dealing with is primarily young. Their needs and aspirations must be properly understood and policies designed keeping in mind the demographic characteristics of media professionals.

7. The present study revealed that the organisational commitment of younger media professionals is lower in comparison to older age groups. Media organisations must keep a watch on the contentment levels and motivation provided to these young professionals, since they comprise a crucial proportion of the work force.

8. Media organisations need to put in place a grievance cell to resolve organisational issues and concerns. This process could be anonymous or dealt through a feedback system to improve work environment and eventually parameters like quality of work life and organisational commitment of media professionals.
Since subordinates have better Quality of Work Life score in the present study than the supervisors, media organisations should ideally evaluate the work load given to the supervisors. Are the Editors being put under pressure of deadlines and performance? The media organisations need to design reporting relationship accordingly.

**8.3.2 Recommendations for Press Council of India**

1. Despite the repeated concerns mentioned by the Press Council of India in its reports, the most recent one being a **press release issued for general elections 2014** where the council urged media organisations to ensure decision making ability of the Editor and also mentioned its concerns on paid news, little has been done on ground to make these guidelines effective in the past. Some measures must be taken to hold regular interactions with media organisations and journalists to ensure that the guidelines are followed and appreciated.

2. There has been repeated concerns over the appointment of contractual reporters and stringers in various media organisations but it has had a little impact on the actual recruitment process of media organisations, who in a bid to cut costs hire stringers and contract staff on lesser income. This eventually casts a shadow on the overall Quality of Work Life of professionals in this field. PCI must expand its horizon and interact with media organisations from time to time to address this concern or find strategies to deal with the situation effectively.

3. In the modern times, PCI must connect to young media professionals and others in the industry through social media to enable them to discuss their concerns at a common portal without fear of being punished by their organisation since a majority of professionals considered under the present study were young media professionals.

4. To keep a tab on the Quality of Work life, Organisational Commitment and ensure better leaders in the media industry PCI must facilitate research projects in this field of media research. This will ensure commercial interests do not give a lopsided picture of the media industry in India and enable free, fair and high standards of research.

5. PCI must ensure a system in place that enables it to find out the number of journalism students graduating from Indian universities and colleges every year and the actual need of professionals in the industry. Management of human resources must form an integral part of the course curriculum.
8.3.3 For Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in India

1. Stricter laws need to be put in place to ensure that media organisations are dealing with employees working in their organisations with empathy. To ensure better Quality of Work Life for media professionals in India, the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting can connect to the media organisations effectively to urge them to self-evaluate their mechanism of hiring employees and dealing with them. Grievance redressal systems need to be developed to provide psychological support.

2. Media research and healthy discussions and debates need to be facilitated by the Ministry in a big way to deal with the growing concerns of this huge industry in India, which is expected to grow exponentially in coming years.

3. Instead of taking punitive measures against media organisations, the Ministry needs to empower local level unions or advisory bodies or federations of journalist, who can stay in close contact with media professionals and address their concerns. These local units can convey these concerns effectively to the Ministry. Periodic workshops on stress management, personal effectiveness, motivational talks and on developing interpersonal relationships need to be organised on regular basis.

4. Even though media organisations function independently in India, the Ministry can regulate policies at a national level and make amendments in law to ensure job security of media professionals, ideating on their pension scheme, just wages, ensuring permissible work hours and similar factors that affect work life in organisations.

5. The Ministry can offer opportunities to provide education and training facilities to the young media professionals who have begun their career, offer midterm refresher courses for those who have been in the industry for substantial number of years and provide a platform for the seniors in the media industry to share their experience and network with younger professionals. Such training and development program helps harness true potential of media professionals.

8.3.4 Recommendations for Unions and Journalists Federations in India

1. Unions must proactively innovate methods and participate in ensuring better Quality of Work Life for media professionals in organisations by engaging dialogues with the Editors and owners of media organisations.
2. An initiative that could possibly go a long way in strengthening the movement of better work life for media professionals in India, is the facilitation provided to journalists and media professionals to join unions and federation and actively participate in their proceedings. A host of these media professionals are contractual employees who fear losing their job in case they associate themselves with unions and federations as a popular notion.

3. Journalist Unions must come forward and expand their base in media organisations all over the country to connect with media professionals was to better understand their needs and aspirations and eventually convey them to the authorities or the government in the appropriate manner. Role of Unions as intermediaries between employees and the management needs to be strengthened.

4. With a host of virtual movements started online through social media, federation of journalists must connect to all professionals in this field using better technology. This will reduce the gap between media professionals from different sectors and strata of media in India.

8.4 Limitations of the Study

The present growth of the media and entertainment sector in India has been significantly driven by expansion in the digital media, social media and films. Hence there is a dire need to investigate and study at length the management aspects of various media organisations across all sectors and segments in the media and entertainment industry. Present study is however limited to the print media professionals in North India.

Secondly, the accreditation by a state in India is usually given to limited number of media professionals hailing from a particular media organisation. These could possibly be senior officials or Editors in certain media organisations. Hence a large proportion of media employees who are working on contract basis and are handling day to day affairs related to news, do not get covered in accredited media professionals category.

Their lack of attention given to media academics coupled with tight deadlines of media professionals in news rooms made it an uphill task to get questionnaire filled by them or interview them.
8.5 Scope for Further Research

The findings of the present study investigated the relationship between Quality of Work Life and Leadership styles with organisational commitment among media professionals of North India. The generalizability of the present results can be further confirmed by extending this research to other segments of media industry in India including social and digital media, electronic media, films and radio.

There is a huge gap in the existing studies on media professionals. Very few researchers have shown keen interest in the work life of media professionals in India. Even the movement of unions or federations of journalists in India needs strengthening. Press Council of India, has been expressing its strong disapproval on appointment of stringers and contractual staff, but has done little to ensure effective human resource policies for media professionals or even consider punitive measures against those who fail to provide congenial working environment and justice at workplace in media organisations.

Hanitzsch & Mellado (2011) in their research work surveying 1700 journalists have highlighted economic influences have direct consequences for news organisations. Media companies expect profit and there are several advertising considerations. In this context, there is a greater need to study the factors that affect various aspects of management in a news organisation.

Such studies assume importance in the context of Indian media, where newspapers have played a significant role during the country’s independence in 1947 and continued to disburse information during emergency days in 1975, there is a greater need to study the working environment in the Indian media industry.

Kohli-Khandekar (2010) has projected exceptional growth in the Indian media and entertainment industry. Hence, there is a need to take media academics more seriously and disseminate research findings further and evaluate other factors affecting work environment. Since, this study is limited to North Indian states of Jammu & Kashmir, Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand.

Researchers, in future, can compare the findings related to media professionals across different segments of media and conduct a pan-India study as well.