CHAPTER - 2

Gender Neutrality at Entry Level to the Software Sector

2.1 Introduction

As software sector creating plenty of employment opportunities, the gender neutrality of these opportunities needs to be tested whether these opportunities are equally accessible to both male and female. Intention of the present chapter is to study the ‘gender neutrality’ of software employment opportunities at entry level.

Entering to any profession depends upon four important factors (Mitter 1997). Firstly, interest of an individual in the profession, second, educational factors, third, organizational factors and finally, socio-economic background. Personal interest in the profession is the basic influencing factor which makes an individual to move in the direction to fulfill aspirations. Along with interest, necessary skills are to be attained through proper education. Further organizational policies must be in tune with the easy accessibility to the job without any inherent bias. Further in India which has a deep-rooted traditional and cultural base socio-economic background becomes one of the important influencing factors for the accessibility of job and required education. Present chapter tries to comparatively analyze the above said four factors in the direction of assessing the equal accessibility to enter the software sector for both male and female.

This chapter has seven sections. After the first section of introduction and objectives, second section briefs the methodology, hypothesis and the variables under consideration. Section three explains the profile of the respondents. Fourth section provides results and discussion of the entry conditions. Section five provides the
significance of the difference between genders for various factors based on $\chi^2$ analyses. Sixth section highlights the major findings. Lastly seventh section gives some suggestions along with conclusion.

Objective of the chapter is to assess which are the important factors that affect the entry to the software profession. And to verify the existence of any gender based differentiation among those significant factors.

### 2.2. Methodology, Hypothesis and the variables

Qualitative analysis has been done on the basis of simple cross-tabulation and $\chi^2$ test has been used. Data has been presented through bar-diagrams, charts and tables using percentages and averages.

Prime hypothesis of the chapter is that “Entry conditions to the Indian software sector are gender neutral”.

Among the various entry conditions personal level, educational level, socio-economic level and organizational level conditions are included. ‘interest in the job’ has been studied as personal level factor, ‘social status of the software job’ ‘social acceptance of female in the software job’ and ‘possession of working relatives in the same sector’ were studied as social level factors. ‘Type of education’(Whether technically educated or non-technically qualified), ‘medium of education’ (English medium/vernacular) and ‘availability of career guidance and placement cells’ were analyzed as educational factors. Finally under organizational factors ‘method of recruitment’, structure of interview in terms of ‘presence of female member in the recruitment committee’ and ‘gender based questions during interview’ were verified.
Presumption is that both male and female employees aspiring to enter software sector should have interest in the profession, should have social acceptability in the profession and should possess working relatives in the same sector, needs to be technically and English medium educated, should get proper career guidance from their college guidance cells. And organizational factors i.e. method of recruitment; structure of interview equally allows them to enter the profession.

Profile of the respondents in terms of their socio-economic, educational, age and service information has been presented through various figures and tables along with the reasons for taking up the job.

2.3 Profile of the respondents

General findings regarding the socio-economic background, educational background, age, service, pattern of employment and reasons for taking up software job are as follows;

2.3(i) Socio-economic background

Most of the employees resist revealing their socio-economical background. According to them IT industry is purely ‘meritocratic industry’ and any issue relating to religion, caste, parental education and occupation is irrelevant. But as Upadhya (2005) explains, IT industry while employing, along with their educational and technical competence considers some of the social attributes which are influenced by the candidates’ socio-economic background.

Based on the observation and interaction method, more than 90% of the respondents were found to be Hindus, Muslim woman is nearly non-existent. Women
belonging to SC were few but ST candidates’ non-existent. Remaining belonged to dominating upper castes.

‘Medium of education’ is used as a proxy for economic background because cost of English medium education is not affordable to poor. Nearly 70% of the respondents studied in ‘English medium’. Hence can be argued that most of the women belong to upper middle class. Most of them were urban, supporting the argument of Chaddha(2004) who explained rural women’s inability and lag in education compared to urban women.

Overall socio-economic features suits the argument of Mitter (2008) and Pillai(2009) that IT jobs are bringing differences among women themselves. Women with higher socio-economic, urban background and good education are employed in better paying IT jobs whereas women without these attributes are concentrated in low paying unorganized sector jobs.

2.3(ii) Educational background

As table-2.1 reveals 76% of the male and female employees had technical qualification, 7.5% professional and 16.5% had ‘other’ qualifications including general graduation and post graduation.
Table-2.1 Educational background of the respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Technical:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.E, B.Tech, M.E, M.Tech, MCA, PGDCA, BCA, BCS, Dip</td>
<td>57 (80.28%)</td>
<td>95 (73.64%)</td>
<td>152 (76%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Professional:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.F.A., BBA, MBA, BBM</td>
<td>5 (7.04%)</td>
<td>10 (7.75%)</td>
<td>15 (7.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Others:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.A., B.Com., B.Sc., M.Com., M.Sc., M.A., P.U.</td>
<td>9 (12.68%)</td>
<td>24 (18.60%)</td>
<td>33 (16.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Field Survey)

(Nota: figures in the parenthesis are the averages)

There is no considerable gender-based difference in the educational profile of the respondents. Female education profile supports Madeshwaran and Shroff (2000) argument that women opt for different disciplines compared to men.

2.3(iii) Age Profile

41.90% female respondents were in the age bracket of up to 25 years, 51.20% were in the range of 26-30 years. 5.40% were in the range of 31-35 years and only 1.60% above 35 years. Respective proportion of male respondents in these age groups is, 32.40%, 49.30%, 16.90% and 1.40%. Mean age of female employees is 26.33 years which is comparatively little bit lower than male mean age i.e. 27.75 years.

As figure-2.1 indicates, number of female employees, comparatively more in the first and second age group i.e. upto 25 years and between 26 to 30 years. Above 30 years male proportion is considerably more than female proportion.
Around 90% of the female employees are below the age of 30. This phenomenon represents two contradictory pictures. One indicates the comparatively late entry of female to the sector and another indicates the present increasing trend of female employees in the software occupations. In India software sector yet has to reach maturity stage hence as the industry itself was in its nascent stage, before the year 2000 proportion of women was only 20% of the overall IT work force according to NASSCOM reports. But 2010 NASSCOM-PWC reports increasing number of women at entry level i.e. 35% of the total recruitment.

2.3 (iv) Service Profile

Among female respondents 31.8% had less than 2 years of experience, 48.1% service is between 2-5 years, 19.4% service is in the group of 5-10 years and 0.8% had the service experience of more than 10 years. Whereas respective proportion of male in these service groups is 32.4%, 35.2%, 26.8% and 5.6%. Average service of female is lesser than male i.e. 3.57 years compared to 4.79 years.

As per figure 2.2, upto 5 years of service proportion of female is greater than male. Beyond 5 years male domination is witnessed.
Fig. 2.2 Male-female proportion among service groups

Source: Field Survey

Again figure-2.2 supports late entry of female compared to male to the software sector. Since last 5 years proportion of women is increasing which is a positive development.

2.3(v) Pattern of employment

Generally software sector reminds only software engineers but within software sector there are many technical and non-technical positions with their own different hierarchy and positions and functions. Gaio(1995) describes Brazilian women as occupational losers as they were concentrated more in the lower levels of every job category in software firms. But Saloma Akpedonu(2005) doesn’t find such devaluation of women’s labour in Philippines IT industry. Again in Vietnam’s software sector Lee(2007) finds such bias and Kelkar (2005) finds concentration of women at lower levels in the Indian software work. Pande(2007), Mitter(2004) and Neetha(2008) argued that in IT industry women are concentrated at lower rungs and in non-technical positions. NASSCOM Reports too supported this.
In present data, 67% of the female respondents are working in the technical field, 21.35% in Finance, 5.47% in administrative section and only 2.34% in HR. Whereas proportion of male in the HR and marketing is nil, in technical field 64.91%, in other departments is 24.56%, in finance 7.02%, in sales and administration department 1.75%. That indicates that the number of women is increasing in the technical positions and their concentration in HR department is declining. NASSCOM-Mercer (2009) finds the same.

Following figure 2.3 support the earlier argument of concentration of female in non-technical positions but to a lesser extent. Because 77.5% female compared to 87.3% male are in the technical positions. But proportion of female in non-technical positions is considerably greater than male i.e. 22.5% against 12.7%

**Fig.2.3 Male-female proportion in technical and non-technical positions.**

Source: Field survey

NASSCOM report finds concentration of women at entry level and slowly their proportion is increasing in middle management but at top level growth is static.
NASSCOM considered employees with less than 5 years of service as entry level employees. To observe the perception of the employees about their hierarchical status, information regarding their level was collected. And in present analysis for female 3.1% at top level, 77.5% at middle level and 19.4% were at lower level positions. Respective proportion of male at various levels is, 2.8%, 74.6% and 22.5%.

As figure 2.4 indicates majority of both male and female employees are concentrated at middle level. And number of female finding themselves at top positions is relatively greater than male employees.

**Fig-2.4 Proportion of male and female employees at different levels**

![Proportion of male and female employees at different levels](image)

Source: Field Survey

Respondents’ perception indicates that they are viewing their positions as superior positions and deriving satisfaction. But as Pande(2006) explains IT companies for the psychological satisfaction of the employees maintain different grades, positions and promotion levels which in reality may not carry any increased authority. Hence it can be argued that companies are successful in creating ‘illusive’ upward movement in
the minds of the employees. In reality none of the either male or female respondents was in top level management because top level management includes board members and above managerial level personnel. But in present study those who viewed themselves as top level employees were the team leads and associate HR managers. And one of the female employees directly opines that her higher position is without any authority.

2.3(vi) Reasons for taking up an IT profession

Interest, growth opportunities, lucrative salary, international exposure were the important quoted reasons by both male and female respondents. But Preference for the international exposure was less among female. Along with these reasons female respondents gave some peculiar female-oriented reasons. For example, one of the female respondents said that as her spouse is working in the software she too entered software field. And another who had civil engineering degree said that there was no option for women in civil engineering hence she opted for software profession. Although it indicates that any engineering degree holder can enter software profession at one side, but at another side is this indicates a negative trend that women engineer means only in IT profession? Is this leading to the male takeover of all other non-IT engineering professions?

2.4 Gender based analysis of the factors influencing entry to the sector

There are several factors that influence the entry of female to the industry. Those determining factors can be classified as personal, socio-economical, educational and organizational factors. And following are the findings of the present study about
the existing difference on the level of influence of these factors for male and female and women-friendliness of those factors;

2.4(i) Personal factor

Personal interest and ability basically influence an individual’s career choice. But ability further depends upon the educational and socio-economic factors hence at personal level study compared only the personal interest of both male and female employees in the software profession. Because in Indian society unlike several traditional societies job/profession of female will be decided by family rather her own interest. Some of the studies conducted at Europe and U.S.A. found lack of interest among female themselves in engineering professions and education as Bali (2004) explains.

In Indian context whether such lack of interest exists among female employees, to assess their interest respondents were asked about the decision making person about their profession and figure 2.5 clearly reveals that majority of the female respondents did opt for the software job with their own intention.

Fig.2.5- Did you decide to enter the profession?

![Graph showing decision to enter the profession by gender](image)

Source: Field Survey
As 78.3% female compared to 76.1% male on their own decided about entering this particular profession, that indicates that female are equally interested in the software job. Further ‘self decision making ability’ is an important attribute required for the software job.

2.4(ii) Socio-economical factors

‘Social conditions’ in typical traditional societies specifically influence the career prospects of not only female even of male. But these customary controls will be more rigid for female. Hence ‘social status’ of a job and ‘social acceptance of female in that particular job’ helps female aspirants to get essential supportive environment.

2.4(ii)(a) Social status and social acceptance

Among different IT industry jobs software jobs carry high social status and increased social acceptance of female employees too is observed. 83% of both male and female respondents agreed that their job has given them a social status and 95% of the male and female said that their families are supportive to them.

Obviously this social acceptance allows parents to help their daughters to study IT courses and join IT sector. But this ‘social acceptance’ cannot be taken with all IT industry jobs. For example ITES jobs still are not acceptable in spite of increasing number of female employees. And as found by Neetha (2008) and Babu(2006) due to their BPO jobs some of the female employees are not finding grooms. Further researcher herself observed that in spite of being selected in the campus selection many parents are not allowing their daughters to join ITES sector.

Anyhow software sector jobs are well accepted for female and to a greater extent branded as female friendly jobs. Due to this social status and acceptance of the job more and more female are attracted towards software field and education courses.
2.4(ii) (b) Possession of working relatives in the same sector

During interview a senior faculty member of an engineering college seriously argued that to enter and sustain in the IT profession ‘relatives working in the same industry’ is essential for female. The idea is, Possession of relatives in the same sector helps people to get idea and knowledge about the profession and the ways through which entry can be made and about the adjustments and skills required to sustain in the job. Especially for female it may help as their parents comparatively feel relaxed about the profession and may accept to send their daughters to the job.

Further ‘Employee referral’ is one of the recruitment method followed by the software companies where persons easily refer their relatives. When this statement was tested with the employees’ perception and their actual possession of such relatives there was a contradiction.

93% of male and 96% of female respondents disagreed with the statement as evident in figure 2.6(a). But the actual possession of relatives in the same sector is 59.7% for female and 66.12% for male as presented in figure 2.6(b).

Fig.2.6 (a) perception about the necessity of relatives

Source: Field Survey
As per figure 2.6(b) comparatively more male respondents had working relatives in the same sector. Hence the notion doesn’t carry only female-specific significance rather for both male and female it applies.

Even if the point needs much more clarification, it obviously indicates increasing social concentration among software employees. Further the recent trend is that in most of the MNC’s and private company interviews with the intention of collecting information about candidate’s socio-economic background and familiarity with the industry, questions are asked about having working relatives in the same industry. (See Box-2.1)

**Box-2.1, Influence of working relatives in the same sector**  
Researcher herself faced such questions during her own recruitment interview with a prestigious monetary institution in the year 2000. For selection to the junior officer post members of the recruitment committee repeatedly asked to give at least one family member working in any of the financial institution.
Obviously ‘having relatives in the IT profession’ is not an essential factor but it will be an advantage to enter the industry for both male and female. But further it has the danger of increasing ‘digital divide’ within women employees as women belonging to certain societal groups, having network through the working relatives may dominate the profession.

2.4(iii) Educational factors

According to Judith Glover, first stage of female career analysis is the analysis of access to necessary education and then access to job. Wajcman and Lobb (2007) observed gender gap in IT education at university and college levels as one of the reasons for female under representation in the Vietnam. In India, Carol (2007) explains that Software engineer’s position and career prospects in the industry are largely determined by educational background. But as Pande (2006) explains, Since most women lack literacy and basic education, more advanced or specialized IT education is out of reach of poor women and only a reality for those middle class and elite women who can afford it. At all India level engineering accounts for 1% of the women students. Even that found to be socially dangerous field for women both for the virtually all-male environment in which it is learned and stereotypically practiced by Mukhopadhya (2005). In spite of all this, number of women in engineering education is increasing as per the findings of Parikh and Sukhatme (2004). And one of the important reasons for this increasing number of women in the engineering education is according to Parikh and Sukhatme (2004) and Jain (2008) is ‘development of IT industry’. Because most of the women are enrolled in IT related engineering courses.

But IT companies have not restricted their employment to engineering graduates. Even if general graduates are employed by IT companies which seems favorable to
female needs further verification. In educational background the type of education, medium of education, availability of the information regarding career paths at suitable time are crucial. Hence in education related factors ‘type of education’, ‘medium of education’ and availability of career guidance at colleges has been analyzed.

2.4(ii)(a) Type of education

Normal presumption is that people with technical education can enter the software industry. But Pande(2006) explains that IT industry employs people with any formal education whom it can mend easily for the industry’s requirement. But figure-2.7 presents that even if professional and general graduates are employed, there is a clear bias towards technical personnel.

Fig.2.7 Gender based category of education

![Gender based category of education](image)

81.7% of the male and 72.1% of the female were technically qualified. But proportion of non-technically qualified too is considerably more for female employees i.e. 27.9% against 18.3% for male. Still majority of them are technically qualified. There seems no significant gender based discrepancy.
Overall IT industry is highlighted for employing non-technically educated candidates too. But the reason for increased number of general graduates and non-technical personnel seems to be due to the ITES-BPO segment rather due to the software sector. So still there is preference for technical personnel from software companies.

This preference for technical personnel has its own implication for female as their enrollment in the technical courses whether at higher, much costlier engineering courses to less dear diploma courses is very much constrained. Among general graduates companies prefer personnel with mathematics and statistical background which further indicates the required changes in the subject preferences of the aspirants. But such bias towards technical personnel is not female friendly as still proportion of female enrolled in technical courses is very less.

2.4(iii) (b) Medium of education

Software companies require personnel having proficiency in English language. Even if there are several other ways to acquire that proficiency, generally known method is ‘the medium of education’. In spite of the employment of non-English medium people still there seems bias towards English medium educated candidates.

Respondent’s perception about the necessity of English medium education and their actual medium of Education there seems to be gender based difference. Because in figure 2.8(a) 70% of the male against 45% female opined that English medium of education is not necessary. In figure 2.8(b) 70% of female against 56% men actually studied in English medium.
Hence for male the medium of education may doesn’t carry much influence but for female it seems to influence more. The reason is other than ‘medium of education’
male have the opportunity, liberty and mobility to get language proficiency through attending other language courses whereas for female there are constraints. Hence ‘medium of education’ becomes more relevant for women compared men in entering the IT profession. But affording English medium of education is difficult for rural and poor urban female. If government adds ‘English’ as a subject from the early education stages it may help not only female but male belonging to rural and urban poor.

2.4 (iii) (c) Availability of career guidance cell at collage

As Parikh and Sukhatme(2008) explains, finding first employment is the main problem for female engineer graduates. Hence career guidance available at college campus becomes more essential as female mobility and exposure to practical experience is restricted due to social barriers. Nowadays in all technical and non-technical colleges Career guidance cell is available. These cells not only provide information but arrange for campus selection recruitment which is the highlighted route through which female take entry to the employment. Figure 2.9 shows that 67.4% of the female respondents utilized available career guidance at collage compared to 56.3% male respondents.

Fig. 2.9 Availability of career guidance at collage

Source: Field Survey
Obviously compared to men more women are dependent on the career guidance cells of the collage to enter the IT field.

Another observable thing is among the 32.6% who responded as ‘not available’ includes female from engineering colleges. This indicates that even today in all engineering collages proper career guidance is not assured. As Parikh and Sukhatme (2008) explain, most of the female engineering students are in the rural areas and small towns which lack development and infrastructure. Their enrollment in IITs, and REC is very less. Hence due care has to be taken for developing proper career guidance cells at engineering collages situated in small cities and towns.

2.4(iv) Organisational factors

Western studies observed by Katherine (2005) organizational restrictions for female entry to the profession. Recruitment method was biased towards male and gender specific questions were asked during interview. And interview committee may involve only male members. Therefore such organizational factors like recruitment method, structure of recruitment in terms of recruitment committee members and questions asked during interview were verified. 2.4(d)

2.4(iv)(a) Recruitment method

Vaasavi and Upadhya (2006) explains four major method of recruitment followed by the Indian IT industry. They are ‘campus selection’, ‘Employee Referral’, ‘Open Advertisement’ and ‘Direct interview’. Researcher tried to analyse whether all these four methods equally allow female aspirants to join the industry. But as per figure 2.10, 39.5% of the female got their job through ‘campus selection’, 25.6 through ‘direct interview’, 17.8% through ‘open advertisement’ and 17.1 through ‘employee referral’ method. Respective male proportion is 26.8%, 16.9%, 14.1% and 42.3%.
Figure 2.10, Gender and mode of recruitment

Source: Field Survey

Obviously ‘campus selection’ is the major source of employment for female. ‘lack of mobility’, ‘networking’ and ‘lack of practical exposure’ added with the parents hesitation to send their girls outside, female’s scope for search for first job is very much limited. As companies themselves are moving towards educational institutions for recruitment definitely it is helping female more.

2.4(iv)(b) Structure of the interview

Frame work of questions and presence of only male members found to be favorable to male in European studies. International studies revealed that at the time of interview itself gender based questions were asked presuming the instability of female candidates after having family or child. In Indian context Indiresan(2005) observes anecdotal reports of such questions.
2.4(iv) (b.i) Gender based questions

Indiresan (2005) “There are anecdotal reports available saying that some companies do not even allow women graduates to appear in the campus interviews denying them entry into the profession. At times the interviews are sexist in nature putting women graduates at a disadvantage”. Regarding gender based questions asked during interview, as per figure 2.11, only 8.5% female and 10% male respondents accepted the fact.

**Fig.2.11, Did you face gender based questions during interview?**

![Gender based questions chart](image)

Source: Field Survey

In spite of the fact that proportion is less, it indicates the ‘presence of such problem’. Further even if majority of the female replied negatively still as Rodgers(2005) explain most of the female doesn’t like to respond such questions or they may not be that much ‘gender sensitized’ so as to understand the gender specific nature of the questions asked. Another point to be noted here is that such gender based questions are not female specific even male faced such gender based questions.
2.4(iv) (b.ii) Presence of women member in the recruitment committee

Parikh and Sukhatme(2008), Indiresan(2008) recommend the inclusion of female members in the recruitment committee to increase female entry to the engineering profession. Logic behind the suggestions is that, female members in the recruitment committee without showing any extra favoritism simply with their presence among female candidates can reveal a psychological relaxation. Further according to the situation they may help candidates not to get tensed during interview. And due to their presence in the committee ‘gender based questions may be avoided”.

To verify this benefit of presence of female member in the recruitment committee respondents were asked whether when they faced interview there was any female member. If yes, did it help them?

According to figure 2.12(a) 58.59% female and 39% male said that while facing interview there were female members in the recruitment committee

Fig.2.12(a) Was there female member in the recruitment committee?

Source: Field Survey
40.8% male and 57.4% female respondents said that during interview, in recruitment committee female members were present. This is an indication of increasing ‘gender awareness’ in the software companies and as a policy measure or gender inclusivity practice many companies are appointing women members in the Recruitment Committees.

Regarding its benefit as indicated in figure 2.12 (b) about 31% of male and 24% female who had female member in the recruitment committee accepted that they were benefitted by the presence of female member in the recruitment committee.

**Fig. 2.12(b) If yes, did it help you?**

![Bar chart showing the percentage of male and female respondents who felt benefitted by the presence of a female member in the recruitment committee.](chart)

Source: Field Survey

Even if in percentage terms it is not a considerable impact but neither it is possible to ignore. Another observable point is that, the benefit is not only for female candidates’ but even male candidates experienced it to some extent greater than female.
Probably female employees hesitate to realize their impact or they couldn’t perceived the effect of female members in the recruitment committee.

2.4 Significance of the gender based difference of the factors

Following table 3 provides the respective $\chi^2$ values and their significance level.

Table 2.2, Significance of the gender based difference of the factors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanatory variables</th>
<th>$\chi^2$ values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Personal Level conditions;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Interest in the profession</td>
<td>0.132 (.717)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Socio-economic conditions;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Religion</td>
<td>0.171 (.679)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Caste</td>
<td>2.691 (.260)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Place of origin</td>
<td>1.482 (.224)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Economic Status</td>
<td>1.19 (.121)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Possession of relatives working in the same industry</td>
<td>0.823 (.364)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Educational Conditions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Type of education</td>
<td>2.280 (.131)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Medium of education (perception)</td>
<td>9.351 (0.002)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Medium of education (Actual)</td>
<td>1.187 (.276)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Availability of career guidance</td>
<td>2.436 (.119)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Company Recruitment conditions;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Mode of the recruitment under which got entry to the profession</td>
<td>6.566 (.087)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Presence of Women member in Recruitment Committee</td>
<td>5.003 (.025)**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey
Note: Figures in the parenthesis are the respective significance values and * presents significance at 1%, ** at 5% and *** at 10%

As per above table 2.3 there is no significant gender based differences among personal, socio-economic and educational conditions. Among educational conditions significantly female consider ‘English medium education is necessary’ but actual medium of education does not reveal any significant variation. Most of them were from English medium of education.

But company recruitment method and presence of female member in recruitment committee differs significantly. Relatively majority of the female employees joined their jobs through recruitment method whereas male employment is not significantly affected by the recruitment method. Presence of female member in recruitment committee is highly significant.

2.6. Findings

Following are the important findings.

1. General observations presents increasing digital gap within women employees as most of them belong to Hindu religion, upper and dominating castes and upper middle class. Age profile and service information represents late entry of women to the sector compared to men. Pattern of employment indicates increasing number of women in the ‘technical’ areas compared to non-technical positions. Most of them are at the entry level. But they perceive themselves to be at middle and higher level.

2. At personal level, women finding interest in the software profession and their confidence about the technical competence is increasing.
3. Socio-economic conditions present increasing social acceptance of women in the software profession. Parents and families are supportive to the women software employees. But social concentration is observed as most of them had working relatives in the same sector. But the benefit of having such relatives is not limited to female only rather male too are benefitted.

4. Educational information indicates bias towards technical personnel in spite of the increasing employment of non-technical personnel. Again bias is observed towards those who studied in ‘English medium’. Further most of the women are benefitted by the availability of career guidance cells at colleges.

5. Organizational ‘campus recruitment’ procedure is in favor of women compared to other recruitment methods. Gender based questions still persist during interview in spite of their reduction. Companies are appointing more and more women members in the recruitment committees which not only benefits female rather male too get the benefit.

2.7 Suggestions and Conclusion

Following are the important suggestions based upon the findings;

1. Increasing social concentration of female belonging to certain socio-economic background is evident that needs to be controlled or else it will enlarge the digital divide within female employees.

2. Provision of ‘technical education’ at concessional cost to female will be beneficial.

3. As companies are also employing women with non-technical education due changes in the usual course curricula may increase their employability. If female study quantitative techniques as a part of their course probability of
employment in software sector increase. Hence in general graduation courses such quantitative techniques needs to be added.

4. There is a clear bias towards English medium students but cost of affording English medium education is difficult for most of the rural, poor middle class female. Hence early introduction of English as one of the language in the education will help them.

5. Availability of career guidance at collages is very much necessary for female entry to the job market such cells effectiveness needs to be improved.

6. Organizations are of course adopting several measures to increase women’s entry still their policies needs to be properly implemented. Gender based proportional recruitment from all the four methods may improve further number of female in the industry.

7. Structure of the interview in terms of members and questions asked during interview needs to be formulated with proper attention. Presence of female member in recruitment committee needs to be increased more. And strictly directions to be given to the members to avoid any sexist questions.

In conclusion majority of ‘Entry conditions’ seems to be gender neutral for female entry to the software profession. Social conditions are favorable, personal interest and aspirations about software employment among women too are increasing. Further organizations are upfront to take up any positive measures that ease the entry of the women to the industry. Still But at educational level bias towards technical personnel and ‘English medium students’ may pose problem because in India proportion of women in the technical education is very less and most of the women doesn’t have the capacity to afford ‘English medium education’. Here with respect to the provision of education government initiatives are needed.
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