CHAPTER- 7

Major findings, suggestions and Conclusion

7.1 Findings

Finally all the findings of the analysis at various levels can be summarized as follows;

With respect to the different features of the respondents, socio-economic profile shows existence of digital gap within female employees. Age and service features indicate relatively late entry of female to the sector and presence of gender segregation in work allocation due to their concentration in non-technical, entry level jobs. But companies are successful in making employees virtually happy and employees feel that they are at middle or higher managerial level in spite of the absence of any decision making authority.

Analysis of the entry conditions at personal level are unbiased and female friendly. Female employees are interested in the software sector and are confident about their competence. Socio-economic conditions too are gender unbiased. Social acceptance of female in software jobs encouraging parents to support their girls in persuasion of relevant education and job. Social concentration is evident due to the presence of working relatives in the same field but such concentration is more for even male employees. Hence possession of working relatives cannot be taken as a necessary or supportive condition for female entry to the software sector to female alone. Educational conditions are unbiased but rather less female friendly because number of female in the technical courses and English medium is relatively less but software sector prefers candidates with technical education and whose medium of education
was English. Career guidance cells availability at college is more relevant for female.
Company level conditions are biased to some extent in terms of recruitment method and the structure of the interview. Among various recruitment methods followed by the software companies, ‘campus recruitment’ method is more in favor of female. Structure of the interviews in terms of questions asked still poses some inconvenience to female as gender based questions persists during interview. On a positive note companies are appointing more and more female members in the recruitment committees.

Regarding working conditions, significant gender based salary differences found. Proportion of female in the high salary bracket is relatively less to male and they are concentrated at the middle level salary brackets. With respect to salary satisfaction, majority of the employees are somewhat satisfied. But among other work conditions there is rarely any evident difference found except work allocation, visibility, negotiation, participation in recreation activities and selection for on-site projects. Work allocation is significantly biased and proportion of female employees in non-technical work is relatively higher. Even if not significant, gender influences the project assignment. Irrespective of the gender employees frequently work for 8-10 hours per day and feel overloaded. Female significantly negotiate less with their higher management about the project deadlines and they face the problem of lack of visibility in spite of increasing awareness in this regard. Even if proportion of female benefitting with Flexible work hours facility is increasing still majority of the employees rarely avail this facility. Increasing career consciousness among female employees is noticed as they are working for longer hours frequently. Their informal interaction with colleagues too is on rise. Further female employees are participating more in the recreational facilities conducted by company. But selection for on-site project is highly male biased. Restructuring of the ‘gender sensitivity programmes’ is required as at
present such programmes effectiveness is less. But with overall job satisfaction female employees are relatively more satisfied.

Analysis of the career progression presents differences in the chance of getting promotion and number of promotions received supporting the argument of ‘glass ceiling’ for female in the sector. Among the various factors affecting the probability of being promoted, gender is not a significant factor in spite of the persistence of negative relationship. Qualification too is not significant. But service experience, on-site experience, strategy and visibility are significant. Among the significant factors, gender based variations were present in ‘total service’ and ‘on-site selection’. Companies and industry reports highlight the personal reasons for slower growth of the female employees but respondents considered socio-cultural and company environment too as restricting to some extent. Socio-cultural effect was evident as employees found difficulty in accepting female boss. But paradoxically this tendency was found relatively more among female employees themselves. Among company policies, method of appointment for higher positions, procedure of appraisal and evaluation of the performance, structure of the evaluation committee are important. To certain extent ‘appraisal system’ of the companies is biased towards male and do not consider the qualities of female employees properly. At positive side presence of female member in the Evaluation committee is increasing and female member’s presence positively affected both female and male employees.

Regarding attrition behavior of the employees, female are significantly stable employees compared to male. But slowly they too are becoming growth oriented and realizing that shift is necessary for faster growth. To curtail female attrition many gender inclusivity measures have been adopted by companies. Earlier such measures are considered to be the corporate social responsible activities but now these are
essential for their survival. Such measures are also used by companies to prevent government intervention. Large differences exist among companies regarding inclusivity measures. And these initiatives have yielded better retention only in very few instances. Lack of the effectiveness of these initiatives is due to the structure of the industry, individual company’s policies and employees own attitude.

7.2 Suggestions

Based on above analysis and findings suggestions are suggested to five important agents.

I. Society/Family
   a. Be supportive
   b. Be Understanding of their overloaded nature of work
   c. Encourage their pursuance for technical courses.

II. Educational institutions
   a. Add quantitative techniques to the courses
   b. Effectively establish career guidance cells
   c. Encourage team-based activities
   d. Encourage girls interaction during class
   e. Train students about quick adaptability

III. Government
   a. Provide technical education at concessional cost to female
   b. Avoid social concentration by making other groups competent to be employed.
c. Early introduction of English in the education as a language rather as a subject.

IV. Company

a. Maintain proportional equality from all the recruitment methods.
b. Restructure interviews with more female members in the committee and avoid sexist questions
c. Transparency in the salary fixation process
d. Maintain women ratio in teams
e. Encourage recreation activities
f. Restructure gender sensitization programmes
g. Open display of the gender based promotion chart
h. Arrange for regular meetings with female in higher positions
i. Selection for higher positions based upon promotion
j. Reshaping the appraisal system to be equally considerate
k. Appoint more number of female members in the evaluation committee
l. Put an option before female employees for on-site assignments
m. Proper propagation of the inclusivity measures.

V. Employees

a. Widen your network
b. Have professional role models
7.3 Conclusion

Overall analysis of the software job conditions at various levels i.e. entry, retention and growth nullifies the notion that Indian software sector is totally female friendly. Entry conditions even if gender unbiased are not female friendly as proportion of female studying technical courses and English medium is very less. Companies’ recruitments methods also differently affect their entry. Retention conditions even if gender unbiased, are not female friendly due to the work pressure that it creates. Career progression conditions are still male biased. Inspite of all such bias and pressurizing conditions relatively it is providing more satisfaction to the female due to the higher salary level and social recognition. Overall IT industry reports highlighted increasing female entry to the industry and presented a picture that whole industry with all it’s sector is equally encouraging female employment. But individual sectoral analysis indicates that study must be done separately for individual sector. In spite of increasing female at entry level much needs to be from social and educational side to increase the competitiveness of the female employees. Companies are following inclusivity measures but needs to be properly implemented. Expectation is that increased career consciousness, suitable policies of the companies and supportive attitude of the family and society will help female to get benefit from this sector. As ‘total service’ is a significant factor affecting career growth, more number of female at the base at present has the possibility of more female at higher manager level. Finally even if software sector is not cent percent female friendly, still it can lead the changes in other sectors for providing increased recruitment, better retention and faster growth for female. Already software sector being the front runner as such measures reflection is visible in other sectors.