DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY OF WOMEN IN IT SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

The study focused on how best we can understand the demographic and other factors (Job and Career Satisfaction, Working Time, Welfare, Career Prospectus and Remuneration and Training & Development) influencing Industrial Democracy of IT professionals. This study strives to assess the industrial democracy of women employees in IT sector. Data were collected through questionnaire from a sample of 1000. The results of the study revealed areas where the IT sector need to concentrate to bring about better Quality of Work Life and thereby satisfied women work force.

KEYWORDS


INTRODUCTION

The Indian industry poses baffling challenges that are outsourcing, international mobility, talent shortages, new labour laws, globalisation, shifting demographics and the ageing workforce. Determining the strength required for the near future is a very complex problem in an IT company. Demand for skilled workforce have encouraged and increased the opportunity for women in IT. To keep female employees quitting from the workforce has been a much-discussed topic across the globe. Females affix to work in large but very less number go to the higher positions. At every step after, they quit or been fired. The causes are well known, to take care of children, security, timings, gender discrimination at work, and unfair share of domestic chores and so on. Managing women employees’ issues and needs, providing quality work life thus achieving the work goals is one of the biggest challenges of IT industry in India.¹

The Human Resources Management is increasingly important to the business world. Tracking down the productivity and output of machines did not require HR whereas the service industry like IT where human is the capital and human resource management becomes significant. The foremost objective of Human resource management is to develop and maintain Industrial Democracy which makes employment in the organisation a desirable personal and social situation.²

The notion of Industrial Democracy also known as QWL has arisen from the constant research process. The term QWL also known as Industrial Democracy was introduced by Louis Davis (1972) at the first International Quality of Work Life Conference held in Toronto. It gave its way in India during 70s.

In 1984, Walton proposed eight dimensions. They are sufficient and fair remuneration, secured and clean environment, growth of human abilities, development and safety, the total life space and social relevance of work life. From the year 1980 onwards, Industrial Democracy (QWL) was given importance as organisations placed employee as their priority. Quality of work life actively gained its importance from mid-1990. Till today, there has been a rapid growth in the economy all over the world which led to the increase for the importance of Quality of work life. Introducing QWL program in an organisation is an attempt to capitalise the human assets of the organisation.

QWL has become one of the most valued discussions these days in every sector. Employees are the force that is behind every successful organisation. No organisation can become successful with technology only, because for the use of technology also organisations need to have strong human resources. Industrial Democracy (QWL) was the term actually introduced in the late 1960s. From that period till now the term is gaining more and more importance everywhere, at every work place. In the beginning, QWL gave importance on the impact of employment on the welfare and the health of the employees, but now its vision has been diversified. All companies in order to increase the productivity and to achieve the organisational goals they need to provide healthy premises to their workers including all monetary and non-monetary incentives so that they can hold back their workers for a prolonged time.

Workers need to give a quality output in a productive way, at the right cost, to make a profit. Employees need better employment relations to produce a better product in a productive way, at the right cost, to have an Industrial Democracy (QWL). Quality of Work Life is becoming a growingly familiar topic in modern days. Organisations have started to concentrate on all over growth, development and safety of the employee and minimising his/her anxiety without jeopardising the economic health of the organisation. Each organisation has its methodology of achieving this. Basically, companies talk about the method in which an organisation can ensure the welfare of a human resource instead of just focusing on work-related aspects.
It is a fact that an individual’s life can’t be compartmentalised and any interruption on the personal front will affect his/her professional life and vice-versa through which overall organisational development is possible.3

Review of Literature

Various secondary literatures were reviewed and summarised. It was found that past and recent researchers frequently base their studies on the work and theories of early 80s. For example Walton’s (1984) eight dimensions; adequate and secure and clean environment, fair compensation, growth of human capabilities, the total life space and social relevance of work life are often used by the researcher for study related to Quality of Work Life. Other factors relevant to current period were reviewed. At this stage, variables that are applicable to Quality of Work Life have been explored. It was endeavoured to identify a wide variety of criteria that have been proved to have impact on Quality of Work Life.

In a new perspective, Swapna & Gomathi (2013)4 propose six dimensions measuring Quality of Work Life which included job related factors and also employees’ growth related factors like career prospects and training and development. The author extracts the reciprocity between the assembly of Quality of Work life (QWL) in IT Industry. The relationship between age and work experience, gender with QWL were investigated in the study. Psychologically, quality work domain is one in which every employee needs are satisfied and that organisational employees experience industrial democracy that they regard as main are suggested. Jyothi and Ravindran (2012)5 did an empirical study on employee job satisfaction in IT units in Bangalore city.

The study also confirmed the association among job satisfaction and organisation’s dedication of the work force. The study concluded that it is essential for IT companies to reduce the employee turnover it needs to address the needs of their employees to strengthen their motivations, commitment and satisfaction. Ify Diala, Neman, (2011)6 reviewed the key factors affecting job satisfaction of IT employees in Washington DC. The paper went through to find the working condition and most relevant Job Satisfaction Factors As Follows: Personality Trait, Values: Intrinsic and Extrinsic, Social Influence.

The outcome of the study says that intrinsic factors and general satisfaction is outstandingly associated with satisfaction levels regarding independence. Alireza, Rezaeean, Jafar, Sona, and Amir (2011)7 aimed to measure the relationship between some demographic factors and QWL and level of Quality of Work Life of IT staffs. The level of Quality of Work Life is average and needs managers’ observations to improve are the output of the study.

No remarkable relation was accepted between gender and industrial democracy, but relationships between industrial democracy and factors like income, age and work experience were shown. Anupama & Nidhi (2013)8 established an empirical investigation in the relationship between the entrepreneurial behaviour of employees and organisation culture in Indian software industry. The result of the study indicated that there was constructive and significant bond between culture and entrepreneurship in IT industry.

Rupa, Neogi & Vandana (2012)9 determined the components affecting the choice of IT life cycle models in the software industry. The study presents the components which are unfavourable to choice of IT life cycle model within IT industry. It was concluded that agile methodologies are the most famous models in the Indian IT industry even though the researchers presented 14 components which are considered for the study.

The growth of IT industry is exceptional in the last two decades and it is steady to be one of the rapid developing sectors in Indian economy. It has become one of the remarkable industries in terms of the total exports and national GDP. Women make up to 42% of India’s college graduates, More than 50% of female college graduates hold a PG degree, in comparison to 40% of men a figure that has grown steadily over the last two decades and is only expected to rise.

The International Labour Force recently reported that the rate of women participation in the total labour force in India has decreased from 37% in 2004-05 to 29% in 2009-10,10 leaving India at the 11th position out of 131 countries which is a lowest spot. In spite of these down fall rates, it was estimated that each year approximately 5.5 million Indian women are entering the ceremonial workforce. Since there is a vast difference in men and women entering workforce, women tend to face unique set of provocations in the workplace simply because of their gender. The research done by the Centre for Talent Innovation has found that 55% of Indian women work force routinely encounters such severe bias in the workplace that they disengage from their work or consider dropping out altogether.

According to Dataquest’s Best Employer Survey 2012, the percentage of females recruited in the software sector in India has decreased from 26% in 2010 to 22% in 2012,11 even though the number of jobs provided in this industry continues to rise yearly. Considering the importance of female workforce in IT industry, it is the responsibility of Management to create non-discriminatory and comfortable workplace environment. Although many of the organisations promote gender equality in the office and female in top positions of authority, the Indian software sphere pursues to be almost entirely male-dominated. Below is an example of 6 top IT companies’ women on board details.

There is a knowledge workforce escape in middle management cadres among females in their thirties. Marriage, children, family relocation and other personal reasons diminish women’s ability to reach the higher positions. Foundation systems are necessary for females at workplace. Current measures such as flexi-time, crèches, and refresher programmes, and orientation on company policies only look into the surface of the true issues. However, there is enlarging awareness of the benefit of women and the need to foster their flair at the workplace.

Sackey & Sanda, M (2011)12 studied the social support as a managerial stress reliever for female in growing economy. The dual roles played by women managers generate added stress to their organisational performances with detrimental consequences, not only to their physical and mental wellbeing, but also to their sustenance as resourceful human capital encouraging the installation of appropriate support coping mechanisms.
Shoba (2012) studied the level of job satisfaction among industrial women workers. The author concluded that gender discrimination existed in work place since men workers could earn a better wage than women workers. Since the wages of the women industrial workers were low, their living conditions were moderate. The author concluded that to improve the productivity and interest in work the wages provided to women workers should be reasonable and promotions should be based on work performance.

Thus, women at work are not equally distributed within the economy. Though the enrolment and literacy level have been showing very positive sign of growth trend, the drop out level after getting employed and not able to sustain employment has been a matter of concern. This drop out effect is because of the cultural and social barrier faced by even educated women today. This unequal distribution of women workforce in IT industry makes the study crucial. In spite of young skilled and talented women entering the work immediately after graduating, organisations find it difficult to retain them. Reason usually being marriage, maternity or simply someone in family decided.

According to a CTI survey, more than one-third (36 percent) of working Indian women quit their jobs to deal with family issues. Software companies provide cab facilities, work from home options, flexible time schedule, extended maternity leaves, and enhanced training programs to reconnect to work. Despite providing many supportive programs, it is difficult for women to sustain in the industry. More often women returning from maternity leaves are treated as less productive. Very few women fight their way to come up in the career graph, majority just quit. The company working on their families makes women on staff happier.

The increasing number of drop outs, the need for double income at home and the growing concern on health issues, corporate professional suicides, heart attacks at young age, increase in divorce rates, and safety of Indian women now makes this study more important than ever.

METHODOLOGY
The research design employs descriptive, explorative and analytical methods. The basic information is obtained through the survey method by administering a questionnaire and through personal enquiries. Certain analytical tools are applied for identifying factors affecting Quality of Work Life of women in IT sector. After reviewing national and international literature, the researcher identifies the crucial factors pertaining to Quality of Work Life of women executives in IT sector.

Scope of the Study
The present study aims at identifying and prevailing QWL of IT employees during the study period from 2011 and 2015 in Chennai city. It also aims to draw a comparison between the qualities of work life of women employees in five IT sectors only namely TCS, INFOSYS, WIPRO, HCL, and COGNIZANT. It proposes to study the influence of women employees’ personal and organisational profile on Quality of Work Life.

Data for the Study
The different sources of information used for the purpose of the study are given below:

Primary Data: The first hand information on work life quality was collected directly from the sample respondents working in IT industry.

Secondary Data: Secondary data sourcing is done from institutions, the reports of various organisations, research articles in various national, international journals, reports from daily papers and websites.

Sampling Size and Design
The sample for the study is drawn from women working in software companies. The primary data are managed through survey method. Survey is conducted using a constructive questionnaire. Multistage sampling is applied for rising of data. Samples for the purpose of the study are selected as shown. More than 1000 questionnaires are distributed to women employees working in 5 major IT companies, 850 questionnaires are returned of which 826 completed questionnaires are found usable.

Questionnaire Design
The questionnaire is framed on Quality of Work Life of women demographic factors with optional questions that are used to measure the Quality of Work Life. The other part of the questionnaire consists of the optional questions to be answered by the employees.

The Demographic Details of Employees in IT Companies
The term demographics refer to particular characteristics of a population. The researcher identified age, marital status, number of children, children age, and type of family and the organisation details designation, experience and timing after having a glance into the national and international literature which pertain to personal and organisational details.

In order to give a panoptic view, the researcher uses the percentage analysis to give the descriptive statistics, each segmentation in the personal and organisational details of the employees. In research, the predictors of Quality of work life are demographic variables which are used often. Independent effects are shown by demographic variables, thus they could not be deleted as contributors Almalki, FitzGerald and Clark (2012).

Previous researchers have utilised demographic variables (i.e. Age, Gender, Marital Status, Number Of Children, Children Age, Living Place, Work Experience, Timing) for studies related to the Quality of work life -OASW (2006), Meenakshi and Parul (2011), Sardzoska (2008), Davor (2008), Nghi and Yecenia (2007), Rana (2007), Kashani (2012), Pugalendhi, Umaselvi, Nakkeeran, and Senthil (2011). Almalki et al (2012). Industrial democracy is affected by work life factors as well as number of demographic factors leading either too high or low level of Quality of Work Life, which can result in critical changes in behavioural intentions.

The correlation between the level of industrial democracy (QWL) and the employee’s behaviour action can be affected by selected employee’s demographic factors. The level of Quality of Work Life of an employee is affected by employee’s demographic factors which have a significant impact. The demographic variables that are considered for this study are Age, Marital Status, and Number of children, Children age, Experience, Type of family in and Work timing.
The Respondents Age

The employee’s age is an important factor having a direct influence on the work life of an employee. Experience and maturity are always associated with age. In the younger age, workers are usually characterised by enthusiasm and hard work while elderly persons show much reluctance to take up new work and exhibit a more matured line of thinking and acting thoughts, through their experience, Chandra (2013). It is observed that the sample unit is dominated by 44.7% of employees in the age group 26 to 35. Female workforce are entitled best at the junior cadre, less at the middle cadre and are at least cadre entitled at the top position, which is accurate with the trends in developing and developed countries. When women quit the job at earlier phase, then it would be difficult to see the women who reach the higher positions.

Marital Status

In researches that are related to women, marital status is considered as an important variable. Women employment has a productive effect rather than obstructive marriage. Krishna, Vanda and Siddaramu (2010). Generally, male population in the researches is divided by a number of factors: Age, religion, and regional affiliation. Yet the women population is divided in one way that the man was not by marital status. Woman’s name was bent on both culturally and legally by marital status, James (2000). Over the years, attitude towards female education has drastically changed, reason being women income is now become important for a household. Change in lifestyle has forced the household to accept this fact. Married or unmarried, a working woman’s contribution to a family is vital and not deniable. For this study, woman professionals’ marital status is segmented into married and unmarried.

Maximum 62.3% of the sample units are unmarried and 37.7% of the employees are married. Thus, the sample unit is dominated by unmarried employees. Majority of the unmarried females show a friendly attitude towards employment. They do not have prior dedication to their work, but after marriage they are pulled to the job for employment in order to give support to their families, Riana and Tasnim (2007).20

Number of Children

Children are the major force deciding about the tenure and growth of a career mother in the organisation she works. A woman working during early years of child has piled up guilt for not giving enough for the child. Career mother is main earner in most of the families. There is has rationally been a concern that the working mothers comes at the expense of child growth as the percentage of mothers in work has increased and impact on children has decreased. Women these days make almost half of the workforce, but account for just a third of management because of childcare and balancing work and family, Joshi (2013).21

Research from the University of New South Wales specify that married women with children are less prosperous than ever before, which is why they are start off divorce in more numbers and having not more children. Many women in IT prefer to delay marriage or delay child birth for the sake of career growth.

Onsite opportunities for employees in IT are considered as a status by most of its employees and their family. Marriage or children are seen as a hindrance for these types of career opportunities by women in IT, although not all women employees think this way. Gone are those days where women of India get married at the age 21 to 24 and give birth before 26. There is an increasing trend now in Indian IT women that they delay their marriage or couples do not want to have a child, the most common trend is only one child.

Maximum of 68.4% of the sample unit do not have children which are followed by 25.3% of sample unit that has only one child. Very few respondents of this study have 2 children 6.2%, and 1% has more than 2 children which is not a common trend now in IT employees. Obviously, the senior employees who began their career in 80s have more children.

Children Age

Career tenure of working women is widely influenced by the age of the children. Researches on child behaviour have indicated that the children of working women who are employed full time reported behaviour problems by caregivers at the age of 4 ½ years and by teachers of first graders, whereas infants’ mothers who preferred to work part-time have reported fewer disruptive behavioural problems. Mothers who worked full-time were more likely to have symptoms of depression, David (2013).22 Parental demand is measured by the number of children and their age. Most women return to full time work while their children are still young because of financial needs.

In the process of prioritising child and work, women are not able to give their 100% to either child or the work as working women in India get only 3 months (90 days) of maternity leave to be with the new born which is not sufficient. The study reveals that the maximum sample unit of 74.9% belongs to infant child age group, followed by 9.9% of sample unit belong to 4 to 7 years age group, 7.9% of sample unit belong to 8 to 12 years age group and only 7.3% sample unit is teenage children.

Type of Family

In the process of modernisation, Indian families have to go through notable structural changes in the past two decades. The changing economic structure in India forces more and more women to live out of their homes for employment. The proportion of living alone in another city for job or nuclear family has doubled during the past years. Women once were not allowed to stay overnight for job reasons. Due to massive change in lifestyle and the opportunities and career growth, women these days do not find relocating as a hindrance. Women in joint family, nuclear or extended family, of orthodox and modern family, etc., have their own problems. Atmosphere in the place of work, distance of work-place from the house, etc. are important factors in the lives of working women.

It is found that the maximum of sample unit 55.9% belongs to the nuclear family, though there is disintegration about the joint family between working women, studies show that Indian women values and attitudes are still generally in favour of joint family. Women feel it is safe and easy for to get help from in-laws or parents especially for child upbringing. 29.2% of sample unit live in joint family.
One of the main difficulties faced by women staying away from family for job is the lack of safe and suitable accommodation, Walokar (2011). It has a very severe negative effect on the health (e.g., Learning and Memory Deficits, Loss of Attention and Vigilance). The major risk of developing obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and even decreasing of life span are add-on effects due to continuous night shifts.

**Experience**

Work experience is any occurrence that an individual gains while working in a specific area or profession. Working in an organisation for more than 4 to 5 years is said to be consistent in IT industry. A consistent employee yields a first impression of reliability and trustworthiness. These types of employees are highly sort for. Years of working experience of women in IT is widely influencing by many factors. Apart from career growth, better job or better opportunity, personal issues like marriage, child or elder care influence the job tenure of women in IT industry. Obviously, there is high number of women entering the industry soon after graduation, but that number drastically decreased over the years. Unlike the government jobs or other industry jobs in IT, women tend to give up career in early stages itself prioritising other personal issues.

It is clear from study that 50% belongs to less than 5 years’ experience, followed by 43.1% sample unit in 6 to 15 years job experience and a very less sample unit 5.3% in 16 to 25 years and only 1.3% makes it to more than 25 years of work experience. This clearly shows that majority of women drop out between 16 to 25 years. The India Talent Survey 2012 conducted by Deloitte in collaboration with All-India Management Association (AIMA) points out that young talents expect foreign opportunities, flexible timing and fun working environment to stay in one organisation for a longer time whereas women specifically married prefers to stay in job that gives them flexi time options, work from home, long maternal leaves, etc. In most cases, women compromise on their personal career growth to the other perks which helps them to have better family relationships equally with work life.

**Timing**

Work timing in IT industry is not a 9 to 6 job. Usually, the work time is structured to make use of or provide service across 24 X 7. Most of the clients of Indian IT industry are foreign clients which require the work environment across 24 X 7 work time is structured to make use of or provide service around the clock. Work timing in IT industry is not a 9 to 6 job. Usually, the work time is structured to make use of or provide service across 24 X 7. Most of the clients of Indian IT industry are foreign clients which require the work environment across 24 X 7 work time is structured to make use of or provide service across 24 X 7.

It reveals that 85.1% the maximum of the sample unit belong to the general work timing followed by 5.9% of employee working in night shift. 3.6% working in afternoon shifts and 5.3% work in irregular shifts. In spite of onsite-offshore team co-ordinations, most of the employees work in general work timing. One of the reasons is women employees prefer to work in general shifts so as to keep a balance between the family and work, other reasons are safety concerns from family, to avoid conflict in family and health issues. Working in shift is considered as a danger sign for many health issues.

**Designation**

Designation in IT industry is a very important parameter in the entire IT industry where all the technical resources of an organisation are managed by management professionals in accordance with the organisations priorities and needs. The hierarchy in software companies pertains to the designation levels. The designation level is grouped into 3 main levels; operation level employees, Middle level managers and Top level Executives. Depending on the size of the organisation, the designation is increased, any level of designation falls in any one of the groups. Usually, the three lower level designations fall under the operation level employees. Any of the three that lead till the middle managers role is middle level managers, from there starts the leadership team. There is a difference between leadership team and management team like Unit Head, Country Head, VP, CIO, and CEO.

It is found that 55.9%, the maximum of the sample unit, belong to the operational level employees, followed by the middle level managers 29.2% and a very few top level executives 14.9%. The result shows that very few women professionals make it to the top level executives that is the decision making level. Jodi, Dali and Terry (2003) identified that due to early drop-outs and comprises of women does not reach to top levels of IT organisation, women are more filled in lower level management positions, have higher management turnover, and have lower average management salary levels, plays greater value on development and encouragement of workforce.

**CONCLUSION**

It is evident from the above findings that the demographic factors do influence quality of life of women employees and the level of job stress in IT sector and the background of these employees ultimately affect such IT companies’ environment. The quality life and job satisfaction in the organisation indirectly impact on effectiveness and profitability. It is finally suggested that workforce demographics should be identified and valued fully for their considerable output to affect organisational growth and development. IT sector should make sure that, as far as practically possible, there is sufficient scope for personal customisation of work content and performance appraisal structures, as well as attributes of the work environment, based on demographic profile. Therefore, the management of IT companies has to find out the reasons for moderate satisfaction and dissatisfaction prevailing among the women employees across the cadre and seek to address the issues. Above all, persistent attention to structural change is needed to bring more women in leadership positions.

**REFERENCES**


