

Work-Family life of women Working in BPO Sector: A case study of Noida

Thesis

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CHAPTER: 8 CONCLUSIONS

‘....we’ve begun to raise our daughters more like our sons, but it will never work until we raise our sons more like our daughters’.

[Gloria Steinem, American-Feminist, Journalist]

8.1 Introduction

This study focuses on the experiences of women working in BPO sectors in India. The remarkable objective of this study is to find out how the interplay of caste, class, culture, religion, gender, socio-economic status and family structure influences the work-family life experiences of women working in BPO sectors in India in manners that are one of a kind to that unique context. The principle reason for this concluding chapter is to highlight the original contribution of this study on Work-Family Life (WFL) experiences of women working in a masculinized industry within the Indian patriarchal society. This chapter discusses the context and concepts of BPO sectors and the challenges of women employees in India from the previous chapters and highlights to their most significant aspects. This chapter coordinates the bits of knowledge from the findings to bring up to date this feminist, multi-level and intersectional perspective of WFL. The chapter exhibits the theoretical and empirical contributions of the multi-dimensionality of work-family life presented in this study. Research limitations, implications for policy and practice as well as major relevant areas for future research are discussed.

As Desai argues that Globalization has ‘reduced the ability of women... [in developing nations]...to find paid work that offers security and dignity’ (Desai 2002). There are empirical cases of women gaining more self-sufficiency over their own earnings and a feeling of freedom from customary gender roles in society- practically in marriage and childrearing. Women are additionally turning into the wage-earners in most of the family in light of the absence male obligation in the family. Young women are monetarily supporting their parents and fellow siblings, while mothers (married or single) are looking for informal work to afford for their children. Globalization has changed the intra-household duties for males and females, where females are given greater obligation over the endurance of the family. Males are no longer the breadwinners- but they have more opportunities for financial and social development in society.

Although female responsibilities have increased but to a limited extent. The restricted advancement of women in the formal sector shows a great disregard for their social and economic obligations within developing nations. Female work is not compensated comparable to the effect they have on society. Accordingly, women's work keeps on being criticized as inferior, in contrast with men's work, regardless of their expanded duties in society. The foundation of different NGOs around the globe and the community-oriented endeavors of these associations have improved the lives of women in developing countries. The U.N. Decade perceived the significance of female work in developing countries and the way that economic policies neglect to address the necessities of females. Representatives from NGOs concurred that global feminism ought to be set up to diminish the disparity confronting women in these countries and to improve the advancement of women in society. Because of The U.N. Decade, NGOs in all through the developing world have reached out to women to address their issues in farming, healthcare, social insurance, domestic issues, work conditions, and to lessen the economic strains in their everyday lives. The collective organization of women's groups all through the world has also created the consideration of the media, which is fundamental in educating the general public about the current issues confronting women in developing countries. The continued endeavors of these groups and the financial acknowledgment of the significance of women's work will in the long run make more noteworthy social awareness about the imbalances confronting women in these countries. The economic policies and structural adjustments related with globalization create the most negative impact on women in the developing world. The refusal of social and economic rights is the most inhumane perspective related with the formal and informal sectors. Economists and policy makers who execute these adjustments need to consider the impact of the current policies on women's lives and the disparities that exist between men and women. Empowering the advancement of opportunities for female employees and ensuring them more rights will increase the personal satisfaction and make a more sustainable living standard for women and their families in the developing nation. Without these changes, women will keep on enduring in their subordinate situations within the economic market.

8.2 General conclusions: Today at the beginning of the twenty first century and the turn of the millennium, women in India, have the chance to participate in a world – 'the universe of work'- that recently barred them. They take an interest in any and each sort of occupations, undertakings, roles and performance. They travel nations and continents far and wide.

Organizations and firms select women from their thorough selection process. Women have substantiated themselves and there are numerous examples where women assume the role of leaders in the realm of work, for example, PM, president, lok sabha speaker and so forth. Women today are very much equipped for dealing with any profession paying little mind to all the problems throughout everyday life. They are similarly talented as men and are satisfied and effective with their way of life. Professionalism today doesn't differentiate between men and women. It requires a position of mind and appropriate inspiration upheld by friendly external conditions. The origin of the current research lay in the understanding that however an ever increasing number of women are taking to 'dual role' in Delhi and that a couple among them are exceeding expectations in their specific fields, the careers of successful mother and professional do not allow a smooth sail. Studies unveil that the significant sections of the working women is battling to adjust these two most significant forces in their lives. Numerous professional women stress over being acceptable wives, mothers, girls and young daughters-in-law. They convey the aches of guilt about motherhood of a customary society, even while living in a globalized modern society. The unavoidable trends have contacted them in their dreams about turning out to be but then they stay intact in their social roles. So what is available for the women of today? What are their observations and experiences in their undertakings to consolidate family with career? This study makes a modest endeavor to place in context issues concerning what happens when women commit themselves to their work, that is, the effect of work on their personal, familial and social life. The focus of this study is women in the professions. Women professionals can be considered as a distinct category in the sense that they are educated and working in highly globalised sectors that is BPO sectors. This professions demand an enormous dedication of time, energy and emotions, and, as such professionals are bound to develop a life style of their own, with a distinctive set of ideologies and values. Women professionals in ten international and ten national BPOs constituted the sample for the study.

Taking a reflective approach, Chapter 1 provided the rationale to study the work-family experiences of women working in BPO sectors India. Chapter 2 introduced the historical and contemporary context of women's work in India drawing on a large number of multidisciplinary literature. In spite of the fact the society is heterogeneous and experiencing transformation, so the women's paid employment in the service sectors has increased exponentially. Night shift job is one of the essential requirements of transnational BPO sectors but the social desirability of

spatial and temporal mobility of women persist in the society because of honour related to women and this notion poses specific difficulties to women in performing both family and work roles. Family systems are gendered to the extent that there is clear-cut division of labour on the basis of gender regarding household tasks and society do not acknowledge the men's involvement in 'women's tasks', such as cooking. Many other difficulties Indian working women face incorporate aggressive behavior at home, including oral mistreatment by other women in the family depending on some notion of 'inability' to satisfy household obligations even when working women hire domestic help to co-operate in household chores and childcare. Women are seen exclusively in their homemaker roles (even once in a while by themselves), there are cultural restrictions on women's spatial and temporal mobility, an absence of authenticity to their paid employment, relative imperceptibility at the top administrative positions and high attrition rate among those who get married. Despite everything dominant parts of the society consider it 'unsuitable' for women to work in BPOs or call centre industry as well as in night shift; the emerging male-dominated profession of IT/ITES industry is particularly regarded as a 'bad sector' for women. Women working in night shift and in BPO sectors can also be considered as having 'loose characters' because these jobs are not socially desirable for women. Sexual harassment at workplace is prevalent and especially for women negotiating the legal framework can be threatening (Weiss 2012). Even though the constitution of India and national and industrial policies forbid discrimination on the basis of caste, religion and gender but in practice there are gaps between intended and implemented policies. In this way, Chapter 2 fabricates a case for looking for experiences of work-family life of women in the Indian context. The various levels of real world wherein women carry out work and family roles are differentiated; including the IT/ITES industry, the labour market and the extended family system in the Indian setting by and large. These interrelated multiple layers are the basics to keep away from a severe polarity between structure and agency, to epitomize the subtleties within and over the work and family structures, and to comprehend the covered power dynamics and components identified with the experience of WFC. Chapter 3 discusses the theoretical framework for the gender-based division of labour emphasizing on the social constructed division of labour especially from liberal feminist perspective. The theoretical framework for the study is derived from the Symbolic Interaction Theory and Gender Inequality Theory. These theories are especially critical on the grounds that, every one of these theories give an extraordinary point of

view and, a response to why women are considered as equal participants as men in the labour market. As indicated by the theories, despite the fact that men and women are unequally placed in the labour market, this imbalance isn't the product of any biological or psychological difference; rather, the theories advocate that, it is the continuation of separate domains of activities for men and women that has prompted the disparity between men and women. The study continued with the assumption that socialization into female sex role is negatively associated to women's career accomplishment patterns and aspirations and the findings support this assumption. Despite the fact that, the participants of the study symbolize to that section of society which could be considered as the most unusual in their viewpoint towards gender roles and value systems, the conventional role stereotypes that are transmitted through socialization are so strong and obligatory that no woman can discontinue internalizing them and enacting accordingly.

The chapter goes on to summarize relevant mainstream sociological debate on the public versus private distinction. In order to understand the structure and work culture of BPO sectors, the researcher applied Foucault's theory of surveillance and Mills' theory of 'Personality Market'. The chapter further discusses the Hochschild's theory of 'Emotional Labour' to look at the problems of women working in BPO sectors. The chapter also throws light on the fact that how the BPO sectors are creating digital divide. To understand the interplay of culture, religion, caste, class and family structure with gender an intersectional approach was used. The intersectional focal point consolidates a multi-level investigation of social disparity - and subsequently - gives space to look at how explicit social classes can assume a more conspicuous function than others in specific conditions, and thusly, unloads the intricacy of the Indian women's encounters of work-family roles. Chapter 4 discusses the methodology of the research. Feminist standpoint was adopted to know the work-family experiences of women keeping in mind the possibility that women have subjugated positions in the society and the mainstream literature ignored their marginalized knowledge (Harding 1987; Healy et al. 2011). Critical realist research philosophy was used to understand the experiences of working women within work and family structures. In this chapter the researcher has presented her view of reality comprising the distinct, interconnected layers (i.e., stratified ontology) and consequently gave a comprehension of the unseen structures and mechanisms that cause, or are caused by, activities to create knowledge (i.e. reproduction). In this study, the researcher identified herself both as an insider and an

outsider. Layder's (1993) research map and mixed method approach were used as research tools to keep up centre around probing experiences of women's work-family life within the diverse layers of reality selected from a diversity of relevant theoretical contemplations. The map assisted with supporting the research focus and aims with the literatures and research methods. This chapter also discussed the background of fieldwork that the researcher carried out in BPO sectors located at NOIDA in Delhi in India. The random sampling was adopted to select BPO sectors. The sample size was 200 and out of these samples, 24 employees were interviewed qualitatively and this was done in two phases. Semi- structured Interview Schedule was the tool used in the present study. The schedule consisted of 54 questions out of which mainstream questions were close-ended. There were a small number of open-ended questions also. The participants were reached over telephone; meeting plans were fixed and the respondents were met either at the work place or at home according to the pre-chosen agenda. The first phase consisted of quantitative interviews with semi-structured interview schedule to get a 'panoramic' view of the situation of women in the multifaceted research context of India from the viewpoint of men and women working in BPO sectors. Subsequent stage was informed by the first stage of quantitative data, which comprised of qualitative in-depth interviews (for in-depth examination of their lived experiences of work-family life) solely with women. My personal contacts acted as gatekeepers and assisted me to meet the participants for both methods; snowball and convenience sampling techniques were also used. The interviews were conducted in both English and Hindi. In order to understand the impact of the globalization or working in globalized world that is BPO sectors, the researcher interviewed 20 male employees of the sectors. The basic point of the current research was to look at the view of women professionals in BPO sectors, in regards to their family and professional roles, with a comprehension of the issues that they perceive as empowering or constraining them in accomplishing family and work life balance. It endeavored to discover the components that inspire women to join the BPO sectors, the struggles they have to experience, and, the mechanisms that they adopt to overcome WFC.

The researcher is interested in the question of inequality between men and women in the family as well as at workplace and its relationships with established institutions. Based on reviewed literature, it can be said that unequal relations between the two sexes is an established fact. It is rooted in socialization process right from the birth. It is clear from the stories of my respondents that priorities are given only to the men's career. The point is that the patriarchal system has been

structured in a way that the subjects (women) are not able to think that they are being exploited. Working in IT/ITES sectors is itself a process of advancement for women especially because this sector is known as knowledge society. But their thinking remain same everywhere. They are happy in their traditional role as ‘housewife and mother’. Researches on call centre industry indicate that work pressures, dealing with repetitive phone calls, target deadlines, performance-based incentives are some of the important issues that create so many problems because of these issues they are hardly able to give times to their family responsibilities. They pointed out that most of the women working in call centre industry are either unmarried (who are free from domestic responsibilities) or widow or divorced. Work and family areas are viewed as two distinctive subfields in which women are playing out the double functions of homemaker and provider. Contrasted with the IT/ITES ventures, Indian women have all the more a personal stake in the home contingent upon their gendered homemaker character. As per public versus private distinction debate both men and women fit in to different fields one after another; and they struggle amongst themselves to ‘dominate the game’. Gaining knowledge of domestic skills and internalizing a marriage orientation is mandatory for the women in India and in both work and family sphere this society usually constraints their choices.

8.3 Main conclusions of the findings: The women in this study see work-family strains as an issue of moral obligation or disappointment, and experience relevant emotional work in which their honours are in question. For Indian women, the dichotomy of structural pressures characterized as WFC, and the blame related with the powerlessness to perform to the standards of an ‘ideal laborer’ and a ‘great woman’ (Hochschild 1989; Acker 2011). Care work is characterized as women’s family roles, yet is spread over a range of undertakings including cooking, clothing, going to relatives’ place and taking an interest in get-togethers. For the most part, after marriage the extent of household chores upon women increases and at ends of the week. Some professional women endeavor to fight different stereotypes linked with women that prevail in the Indian labour market and society, including organizational impression of women as non-serious employees and the cultural picture of women as homemakers. All the while, they fight to gain acknowledgment as professional, effective providers who attempt to attain the highest position at career ladder. In this day by day battle to move between their roles as a homemaker and wage earner, these women also need to safeguard their chastity, which might be in question because of working the night shift. Because of the internalization of gender and

symbolic violence right from the birth, women look upon any incongruity or difficulties in being both ‘ideal worker’ and ‘good women’ as their own disappointment. They battle to safeguard their modesty alongside their professional character influences their personalities of ‘ideal laborers’ and ‘good women’.

Chapter 5 provides the quantitative representation of collected data. A woman in Indian society is considered as ‘conformist’ to the gendered culture, but when she takes up paid employment in IT/ITES industries, she tries to become as ‘superwoman’ perfect in both at workplace as well as at home. Majority of the participants reported that they want to be full time employee along with the role of wife and mother. Although the percentage of career-focused women is very low but this change can be seen in the sample of the study. These career-focused women are the most energetic agents who appear to oppose conventionally decided gender roles; women are tending to leave their career so as to protect the marriage and family when they experience WFC frequently, intensely and in the long run. The study focuses on the fact that experiences of discrimination, exclusion and subjugation of Indian women are fairly comparable as women in other patriarchal and collective social orders. Nevertheless, differences can be noticed in the interplay of culture, gender, religion, caste, class, social status and family structure and the impact of this intersectionality on the research participants’ work-family roles. Taking insights from the field, chapter 6 deals with the challenges of women working in BPO sectors and their coping mechanisms to deal with their professional and personal lives. It is concluded that interacting with male interpretations of religious text the gendered structures and cultures in society and the workplace play a vital role to bring down the power and status of middle class working women in India. Gender-segregations are found in largely organizations, they are restricted at entry levels and not allowed to reach at the managerial levels and women feel immense pressure to work long hours at workplace and then carry out the domestic responsibilities at home. Extremely restricted alternative working options (no part-time work) can be noticed and in case of married women, they are not getting chance of selection because of stereotypical image of women having domestic responsibilities. At a more extensive level, one of the basic challenges for working mothers is the absence of dependable childcare supportive networks because of which for childcare they may need to rely upon their family and social capital. In the family, gendered division of domestic work is clearly visible; in any event, when a family completely acknowledges a woman’s wage earner role, there is no escape for them from

household responsibilities. For ‘poor’ homemaking skills, relatives can attack a woman and they subject to parallel association with the female homemakers similarly as the male providers, making them to feel guilty for not being perfect in either work or family sphere.

The study has pointed out that the duties identified with family stretch out beyond the women’s direct family, and that women likewise feel committed to take care of their parents- in-law and take an interest in get-togethers, similarly as the relatives provide dependable childcare and backing in playing out the household responsibilities. Women’s own social structure is gendered due to gendered socialization, at any rate somewhat, as they perceive WFC as regular yet sensible by their very own estimations of time management, quality, devotion and internal truthfulness; the overall idea is that women can plan to put off WFC. In any event, when a male family member offers their co-operation to household tasks, he might be subjected to social criticism from other individuals in the family or society and can label him pessimistically, subsequently demoralizing him a step down from male-centric qualities in the private domain and reproducing downsides for women. This disciplinary gaze or cultural pressure implies that external to woman’s very own self, likewise WFC can be caused by structural issues, for example, commuting from the workplace to the home, particularly for women who are not financially advantaged to have their own vehicle and rely upon public transport. Thus, most of the women are frustrated at being seen as less productive than men. Because of the legitimate culture of reference in the organizations and their failure to work long hours or smooth-talk with the male management, the professional success of women is moderate, fundamentally because it contradicts with their class, gender, and culture. Since in the home, because of workloads in the BPO sectors, conjugal relationships are being affected and families are ‘neglected’, numerous women also have expressed their intentions to discontinue or change the job. Although in the IT/ITES industries, to adjust to WFC the experience of being denied leave is common for both men and women; nonetheless, due to their gender women might be more disadvantaged than men. Women expressed their concern to leave their wage earner role as a way of dealing with stress for WFC, but men’s wage earner role is promoted by the society and they are not considered responsible for household responsibilities (Greenhaus et al. 1997). The myth that women are passive victims is exposed by the agency represented in women’s mechanisms of adapting to WFC. A few women even questioned the power systems and gendered structures and indicating a familiarity with the improving situation of women in India. For the most part,

women know that their wage earner role isn't legitimate, and to adapt to the hierarchical and cultural procedures dependent upon them. They miss out onsite foreign visit opportunities with the conviction to prevent workload expansion at hand, and consider it to be a transitory sacrifice. By using economic capital obtained from the job in IT/ITES industries, it is common among working women to hire maid to reduce household chores in the family. Although the joint-family system help in bringing down the WFC by supervising maids and providing free and dependable childcare but at the same time through the disciplinary look it can likewise put pressure on the women by demanding execution of household chores single-handedly and discouraging men's assistance in the kitchen. The relatives who condemn a working woman can be the same relatives who were helping her in execution of domestic chores and childcare, which shows that that social capital can be 'double edged' or the society has twofold norms. By and large, women's decisions are always constrained and women lessen the pressure of WFC by sacrificing the individual self through surrendering recreation time, relinquishing rest, praying, being strong and idealistic. This depends on the prospect that the techniques to forestall, diminish, or reduce WFC are principally central to the women. One woman's strategy to adapt to WFC, for instance, employing domestic maid, could be another woman's explanation behind WFC. For instance, reliance on paid domestic maids for childcare and domestic obligations can be the source of relaxation for one woman but on the other hand it can be the source of anxiety for other women because of untrustworthiness on maid. Without a doubt, a woman's strategy, for instance, domestic help could likewise be the reason for WFC if such assistance was seen to be unreliable. One reason of women despite everything keep on working in spite of extreme WFC experiences is on the grounds, as they think that their present condition is better than the condition of an 'absolutely domestic or unemployed woman; and that their present place of employment is furnishing them with additional symbolic and financial capital to give better expectations for everyday comforts to their youngsters. Noticeably WFC is an active and fluid construct including interrelatedness of its dimensions and women's capacity and eagerness to adapt to WFC subject to the interaction of different cultural structures. In spite of the fact that the gender was the essential focal point of the research, additionally the interplay of gender with caste, class, religion, family structure and culture was taken into consideration for this study. That means, in understanding the experiences of their work-family life beyond the women's individual self, the underlying mechanisms and structures are noteworthy.

8.4 Theoretical and methodological contributions: This study has made important theoretical and empirical contributions to the existing literature on work-family life of women working in BPO sectors along multiple lines. The findings of the study further contribute to theory development in the domain from an intersectional perspective keeping in mind the interplay of gender, culture, caste, class and religion in Indian context. The empirical study dismisses the idea of women either as agents or as victims, and shows that women have constrained choices in the society. At work, they experience emotional labour during the interaction with their clients, have to tolerate abusive language and face stereotypes associated with their homemaker role. Working the night shift is considered one of the biggest challenges for the women especially married women. The feminist methodologies undertaken in this study contribute to the growing body of feminist research regarding the experiences of women working in BPO sectors. Within a feminist methodology and feminist standpoint perspective on examining women's construction and reconstruction of identities of 'ideal worker' and 'good woman', this study employs in-depth interviews to understand the women's experiences. It additionally addresses how women identify to power relations in the patriarchal structures at the family, organizational and societal level. As a working woman conducting interviews with working women, and being both an insider and an outsider to the research setting, I assisted with uncovering the subtleties of women's work-family experiences. This study also addresses the need for intersectional analysis of work-life issues. Despite the fact the analysis of gender is central to this study; it is not analyzed in isolation. An intersectional approach allows one to see the complex interplay of gender with other social structures, such as culture, caste, class, religion, marriage and socio-economic position. This study provides empirical support to the existing Indian feminist literature which focuses on the issues that Indian women are subjected to gendered oppression in the culture and caste system that defines, control, restrict and exploit them. Inspecting this interplay exhibits new types of control and power systems working at various levels, and shows how these procedures influence women's identities of 'good woman' and 'ideal worker' in a complex society. By using Layder's (1993) research map to comprehend the interaction of structure and agency, this study makes a significant contribution to this research gap. In accordance with critical realist philosophy, reality is seen as comprising of multiple, entwined layers, and Layder's framework empowers one to analyze the macro, meso and micro layers through an engaged approach and customized research tools. It permits an authentic historical measurement to the contextualization of social

phenomena, which is especially pertinent to social orders experiencing socio-cultural transformation. Utilizing in-depth interviews to analyze women's experiences, and narrative survey and quantitative data to gain expansive generalizations of the labour market situation delivers enormous volume of data against distinctive levels of society. These give a comprehension of the inconspicuous structures and mechanisms behind the observational noticeable data. As a unique endeavor to use critical realist philosophy and Layder's (1993) research map, this investigation gives unique knowledge into the study of work-family experiences of women working in BPO sectors. The methodology chapter and supporting material (interview schedule) in this thesis take a reader through the journey of fieldwork data management. Likewise, the field observations give knowledge into what it resembles for an insider woman to gather essential primary data in a male-dominated industry of a developing nation.

8.5 Dual Role Perceptions: In this context, the perceptions of women professionals of their dual role were examined, with an assessment through personal family and work domain variables. The first major finding of the study is with regard to the dual role perceptions of the women professionals of BPO sectors, which demonstrate that while most of the respondents consider family and career as equally important, a greater number of respondents consider family as more important than career. It could be concluded that gender role expectations and responsibilities continue to be dominant for women in Delhi. Perceptions on the relative importance of family roles and career seem to differ in this sample. Subsequently it could be inferred that it isn't the age of the participants or the nature of profession yet rather the value systems imbibed through socialization that shape the view of the participants and decide the importance attached to family and career. The way that there is a shift in emphasis in various age groups that women professionals stick to the deep rooted presumptions internalized through socialization with respect to the perfect role of women and they give precedence to family in the society.

8.6 Job involvement and Job satisfaction. The analysis of the level of job involvement of the women professionals discloses that the involvement level is quite high and the nature of job is highly demanding. The results show that 79 percent of the women professionals agreed on the question that the job is highly demanding and they are highly involved with their profession, 16

percent of them strongly agreed to the question and only a marginal 5 percent neither agreed nor disagreed to the question.

Regarding job satisfaction, the findings indicate that indicates that only 7% participants expressed it as enjoyable, 67% of them reported the work as stressful, 16% of them reported it as satisfactory and 10% found it as unsatisfactory. Therefore, it can be said that majority of the participants reported BPO work as stressful.

8.7 Dual Role Experience: To get an understanding into the respondents' double job execution, their self – assessment on the degree of trouble experienced in joining family and profession is evaluated. The reactions are not comparable. An endeavor is made in this research to analyze the factors that encourage and compel the dual role performance of the women professionals of Delhi. The analysis shows that 'life partner support' is the most basic component in the dual role performance of women. The data uncover that absence of time is the biggest issue for women professionals in their dual role performance. Consolidating a paid employment with child caring, keeping up with hobbies and adapting to household chores bring about numerous women professionals feeling disappointed because of lack of time. Being too occupied to even consider doing things well can likewise give rise to a feeling of disappointment. The findings of previous studies that time allocation is the biggest problem for women professionals supported this. It has been recognized that working women face profound workload due to their household responsibilities and job related responsibilities. (Rani 1971). This highlights the complexity and encompassing nature of family and work for working women. The demands of the household chores and the perceptions associated with the home role put painstaking pressure and stress on the working women, making dual role performance difficult.

8.8 Social Support Systems: The study also assessed the various support systems that enable dual role performance and tried to unfold the nature and dynamics of spouse-support. One aspect of husband's support is the support extended by him in the managing the routine household chores or the division of work within the household. This is particularly significant, since for the full time employed working woman dealing with daily household and childcare obligations, in roles of wife and mother may be especially inconvenient, and a source of additional strain. The findings of this study indicate that the respondents do not get family related support of their spouses as expected. Nearly all the professionals consider their spouses to be respecting their

professional accomplishments. The narratives of the participants show three points of view on men's assistance in the family. First point of view is that for some of the participants, women's role as wage earner was accepted by the social structures and husband's assistance at home was not objected by the family members as well as the society, subsequently, he can assist in front of everyone. The second point of view is that society supports particular kinds of tasks to be performed by the men, yet not others. The third point is the society did not acknowledge the men's help in the kitchen, usually it happens in the joint or extended family systems, for instance, as one participant said that 'We can deal with these things when there is nobody around'. Some husbands do assist in secrecy, which implies that they can assist their better half and prevent cultural disapproval simultaneously. Some husbands support their wives by ordering foods from outside or by going out for food. The findings were supported by the previous studies which propose that husbands of working women were more likely to respect competence and achievement in women (Rapoport and Rapoport 1971). It is seen that the support extended in areas such as household chores positively is low. The practical help extended in household chores is available to a still lesser extent. This leads to the conclusion that the performance of household duties is still gendered. In general, taking care of the children and the household tasks are still considered the obligation of women. The outcomes support the findings of Rapoport and Rapoport (1971) and Poloma (1972) that in dual career families there were only slight changes in household task performance and the obligation regarding it remains with the wife. The findings of this study unveil a similar fact. It shows that the spouse support to the family-related problems is very low. The explanation behind the low family –related spouse support can be ascribed to the availability of paid domestic help and the convenience of the support of parents or parents-in-law, combined with the idea that household tasks are fundamentally female tasks.

8.9 Work-Family Conflict: The implications of the findings of this study lead to an extensive conclusion in relation to the reasons for work family conflict among women professionals. It is seen that the fundamental issues originate from the combination of family and career among working women. For them the contentions start from the patriarchal ideology of our society, where the demands of the husband, children and family get precedence. Sociologically, the demands work and family systems place are incongruous and therefore working women find them in an incompatible situation. The dilemma of work and family can be severe for working women as they are liable for the accomplishment of their own profession and the welfare of their

family. As a working wife and mother, married working women have to assume multiple roles both in relation to family and career. Frequently this results in work-family conflict because they have to manage both work and family roles all together. Research studies report that they have to tolerate significant responsibility for household chores and childcare (Loscocco and Leicht 1993). These household responsibilities have made the process of career accomplishment more difficult for working women. This study aims to contribute to the current level of knowledge of the working women in BPO sectors, by increasing a comprehension of the ways these women struggle to resolve work commitment with their obligation to family. Even though these contentions may appear like individual struggles, we find that they are ingrained in ground-breaking cultural suppositions about what makes life valuable. Hence it could be inferred that contention between work and family emerge because of the inconsistency between cultural understandings of what one's identity is, and what one ought to do. It very well may be affirmed that the principle battles emanating from dual role support of women start in the patriarchal belief system of our society, where the demands of the family are believed to be the first and prime concern for women. Henceforth it very well may be inferred that work-family issues are on a very basic level established in the mutual and incredible socio-social understandings, which are communicated through the process of socialization. Accordingly, to confront work-family strife is to struggle with significant issues of duties and social and individual personality, as formed by the culture and community in which one is a part. As Sharma (1984) clarify, patriarchal ideology is the main instrument of women's oppression inside the family and women also internalize this philosophy and acknowledge the related practices through the process of socialization.

8.10 Gender Discrimination: Apart from the issues identified with role struggle, another universal worry that frequents women in the professions is the gender equality issue. Radical increase in the number of working women has pushed this issue to the working environment front line. Gender discrimination is pervasive and gives off an impression of being exacerbated by the confounding duties of working women endeavoring to adjust family life and professional career. Reducing gender discrimination in the labour market, consequently advancing women's participation in huge numbers, is probably going to emphatically influence the economic development of a country (Esteve-Volart 2004; Tansel 2001). Women's participation in employment can help decrease gender disparity, along these lines enabling women and adding to

their ability to exert choice and decision-making power and agency in key areas of their lives (Desai and Jain 1994; Kabeer 2012; Mammen and Paxson 2000). The constitution of India guarantees gender equality in its preamble as Fundamental Right and furthermore engages the state to embrace measures of positive discrimination for women by method of enactment and policies. However it is believed that there exist a wide gap between the objectives articulated in the constitution, enactment policies, plans, programs and the truth with respect to the situation of women in India. Regardless of legislative institutions guaranteeing equity for Indian women alongside men, there are unfair traditions and customs which subvert the legislative gains extended to women. The current study unveils that in spite of their expanded participation, women don't have equal access to the various degrees of occupational hierarchies. They are under-represented in more elevated level employments- higher positions remain male-dominated. It is for that reason not surprising that women's participation in professions is also socially determined. Obviously there are zones where women's lives have changed, especially education, which has empowered the participation of women in the professions. Furthermore, our pioneers, both men and women have consistently crusaded for doing away the customs and practices that prescribe subordinate status to women. However the study demonstrates that in a multiple ways, women's lives are constrained by the prescriptions of the society. This study also reveals that the gender stereotypes that keep on plaguing women are situated with regards to all professions. To comprehend the circumstance in BPO sectors, this study inspected women professionals' understanding of sexual harassment in their specific profession. The findings show that sexual harassment at working environment isn't as across the board among working women in BPO sectors as it might be in other professions or somewhere else. Majority of the respondents contradicted the explanation that women are exposed to sexual harassment in their professions. It is contended that it is the educational status of the professionals that has made them see each other as equivalents, as people paying little heed to their sex and has achieved such a circumstance. This study additionally endeavored to see if 'unreasonable impediment' or 'glass-ceiling' reflect in the experiences of the working women. The finding reveals that there exists undetectable ceiling called 'glass-ceiling', the wide range of sorts of social and cultural obstructions that keep working women from performing admirably and from progressing to top positions. The outcomes show that majority of the respondents have the inclination that the predominance of gender stereotypes act as barriers and deny the women professionals due

admiration and ruin their career prospects. Subsequently it very well may be concludes that gender proves to be inflexible impediment in the professional success of the working women and lead to their biased treatment and discrimination at work hence denying them decency and impartiality in the professional opportunity structure. The main drivers for these barriers just as prejudices and social predispositions can be traced to cultural desires and the ensuing processes of social conditioning. There are different aspects of socialization, one among them being the division of labour by gender, which reinforces the subordinate status of women. Everywhere social orders partition tasks between men and women. Two tasks that fall into the women's parcel everywhere are the sustenance of newborn infants and cooking. In the ideology of separate domains, the gender-based division of work in most cases make household chores the essential careers of women; extending personal services to the husband and care for the requirements and appropriate socialization of next generation. It has been seen that women have typically been socialized to see the fulfillment of this objective as an ideal. Further, gender socialization influences the goals, inspirations and perspectives of women towards work. Most women embrace the strategy of 'bargain on profession development' to accomplish balance between family and career, realizing that they will lose their opportunity to go up in their profession and that they will earn less. Sociologist Carol Ireson (1978) noted that two thirds of all job categories were still virtually closed to women. Family work and adult work patterns all pass on the idea that women ought to be subordinate to and reliant on men. The findings of this study demonstrate that these conventional perspectives have extraordinary control over women's lives. In this manner, regardless of legislative enactments guaranteeing equity for Indian women alongside men, there are prejudicial traditions and conventions which subvert the legislative gains extended to women. Studies on occupational segregation of women unveil that an enormous number of women can at present be found in occupations that are in concurrence with the socially endorsed roles of women for instance, teaching, medical professions etc. Yes, the study proves that in a number of ways, women's lives are constrained by the prescriptions of the society and women's participation in the profession is socially determined.

8.11 Spatial and Temporal Women's Mobility: Transnational call centre employment gives women moderately lucrative occupations that were earlier inaccessible. However, it is untidy in the case of working the night shift will obstruct or improve a woman's mobility and spatial access to the larger network. By all accounts, call centres symbolize for a noticeable shift in

women's access to employment. Simultaneously, call centre positions have high attrition rates, are lower in compensation compared with other IT positions, and are viewed as provisional positions until better work can be found (Kelkar et al. 2002). Moreover, as opposed to the hyper-mobility stood to MNC's through redistributing its workforce on a global scale, this study supports the findings of Patel's study propose that women's mobility keeps on reflecting a male-centric structure that depends on the surveillance and "protection" of women's bodies, just as new types of temporal entanglement that are connected to the global economy's interest for employees on a 24 x 7 basis. All of the participants from my sample who worked night shift reported that they have to face sarcastic remarks from the neighbours such as low character girl, prostitutes, not belonging to good family, calling for rape etc. They said that their neighbours believe that BPO sectors especially call centre employees are giving rise to rape culture in India. This can be said that women's spatial and temporal mobility is also socially monitored.

Women in outbound call centres face more problems than women in inbound call centres because in outbound call centres employees have to make calls to the clients without the interest of the clients whereas in inbound call centres employees have to receive calls and provide solutions to the problems enquired by the clients. Likewise women in sale designation face more problems than women of other designation because they are supposed to call to the clients at any time without keeping in mind the schedule of the clients. So, if this call conflict with the schedule of the clients, they have to face gendered abusive language from their clients because it is the interest of the organization instead of the clients.

8.12 Intergenerational Changes: Impact of globalization on women's lives, viewed through the lens of IT/ITES industry, have all the earmarks of being delivering to some degree conflicting social impacts: from one viewpoint, new forms of advancement are rising (for example, the procedure of individualization), introduction to different cultures in the working environment while on the other a procedure of reaffirmation of 'custom' has all the earmarks of being filling in as IT/ITES laborers rediscover their own 'Indian culture' by satisfying their conventional housewife role. A feeling of misfortune and melancholy for a previous form of sociality, intense with systems of family, kinfolk and companions, pervades the self-reflective narratives of IT/ITES employees and focuses to a genuine shift in the idea of sociality in this class.

Dynamic and progressive young female employees said that they will teach their sons to co-operate with their wives in household chores. They said that they will socialize their sons in such a way that the son would learn how to live with an educated and career prospects wife. The problem lies in socialization because the parents' thinking regarding their daughters careers have reached far beyond the expectations but they have not progressed themselves to accept and socialize their sons in such a way that they should co-operate with their working wives. While the 'joint family' is emerging as a child care provider for busy working couples, the content of family and gender relations within the family has been considerably altered because of which inter-generational tensions and other kinds of conflicts emerge.

8.13 Coping Strategies: The choice of women who pick a profession alongside gender roles credited to them as caring figures is found to prompt coping strategies. The choice to be with the family may block taking an advancement that could prompt career development. Correspondingly empowering the professional success of one's spouse would mean hindering the career path of oneself. At the end of the day, women frequently abridge their career aspirations for their families Today's professional women are incessantly challenged by the demands of all day work and when the day's work is done at the workplace, they carry a greater amount of the duties and responsibilities at home. Frequently working women report that their lives are a shuffling demonstration that incorporates various responsibilities at work, substantial touring plans, and excursions for work, on head of dealing with the day by day schedule obligations of life and home. Unquestionably, all women experience the torment of adjusting their work and family lives. Despite the fact that work-life balance is an issue for men as well, it appears to attack upon women the most. Indeed, even with a spouse and family to help them, the contentions between work and family don't resolve. Usually, this depletes the women both emotionally and physically. This subject has picked up significance today in comparison with the past, on the grounds that previously, women frequently had the option to go to fundamentally to one significant role just in their life as opposed to a few, which is typical of today. Henceforth this study endeavors to inspect the strategies embraced by working women for accomplishing work-life balance. The difficulties confronting women who pick up between demanding professions and family lives has been the subject of numerous studies and the greater part of them propose strategies for settling the difficulties. This study is diverse in the way that centers on more extensive social and cultural powers that make women's characters and shape their

comprehension of what makes life worth living. The current study analyzed the career paths of women professionals who have attempted different strategies to deal with adjusting profession and family. Essentially, so as to achieve dual role balance, the women professionals may resort on a few different process to satisfy the needs of family and career; departing household tasks and childcare to paid assistance, compromise on social exercises and bargain on pastimes are the practically all inclusive adapting mechanisms adopted by the women professionals. These adapting strategies involve a few things. To begin with, the impact of male-centric belief system which lies inactive becomes visible when the women professionals select to leave the household tasks and child care to paid assistance. At the end of the day, by this adaptation, they avoid shifting any of their duties to their spouses and want to get the services of housemaids. Second, their eagerness to sacrifice their own interests for the family and its harmony gets apparent. The dread of their powerlessness to meet the role expectations for others pushes them to surrender or possibly diminish individual side interests and social responsibilities. As Afshan (2019) argues that there is a need to change the mindset regarding gender roles and co-operation from both partners in every step of life is necessary aspect for smooth running of home and both partners should understand the importance of each other for the happy and prosperous life (287).

8.14 Implications for Research and Practice This thesis has important implications from culture and gender perspectives for both IT/ITES industries and family systems and the society as a whole within the context of India. The challenges and coping strategies of WFC for women working in IT/ITES industries are now better understood. Taking into account the current situation of women working in BPO sectors, various significant issues must be considered in planning and executing proper techniques for making workplace better for working women. The study uncovers that there exist a wide range of sorts of social and cultural obstructions that prevent working women from performing admirably and from progressing to top positions. Gender inequalities are not just established in the socio-cultural standards of nations, they are additionally dug in the strategy and institutional systems that shape the employment opportunities of South Asia's female workforce. However it remains persistent phenomenon, but to varying degrees relying upon territorial, national and local contexts. Women keep on confronting numerous barriers to entering the labour market and accessing good work, including care responsibilities, absence of skills, restricted mobility and security issues, among others. Women experience a range of numerous challenges identifying with access to employment,

decision of work, working conditions, job security, wage equality, discrimination, and adjusting the contending burdens of work and family obligations. Of the numerous actors included-individuals, households, communities, employers, government, the State unmistakably has a critical role in directing gender relations and practices. This should be possible in a few different ways through policies and laws. But, State intervention alone may not prompt desired changes within the desired time period; in any case they can fill in as significant initial moves towards genuine change for women and a means for organizing a gender impartial mindset. Individual strengthening and changing accepted practices should be joined with macroeconomic and social policy measures, legal systems and social mobilization to accomplish gender parity. NGOs can play a critical role here by creating consciousness amongst men about women's unpaid domestic work and its impact and dynamically involving them in disintegrating the cultural norms pertaining to the gender-based division of labor. There is no doubt that the supposed 'glass-ceiling' is a reality in BPO sectors in India. The main drivers for these barriers just as partialities and social inclinations against women ought to be recognized and should be discarded. Conflict between work and family should be overcome. The expanded interest of women in BPO sectors has brought about possible clash between the family and profession related duties subsequently making new difficulties in the zones of youngster and older contemplation. For working women, getting trapped in the work-life balance issues will keep on being a continuous challenge. But, careful arranging and individual endeavor will empower one to accomplish harmony between the twin roles. Different clarifications have been progressed for the absence of any extreme change in the propensity for women to keep on being essentially answerable for household chores and men for the economic flourishing of the family. These incorporate the ingenuity of institutional, social and politico-financial (in the feeling of power) points of interest of men over women outside and inside the family. Subsequently, no one factor alone can represent the continued with unjust distribution of unpaid household task between men and women in a similar house hold and keeping in mind that women have assumed greater liability for breadwinning, men presently can't seem to coordinate this change by taking a proportionate level of responsibility regarding household work. As one respondent summed up, 'to achieve work-life balance, one needs to productively plan and organize as proficiently as possible'. To put it evidently, this study planned to investigate the consciousness of women working in BPO sectors, in regards to their personal and professional roles, with a comprehension of the issues that they see as empowering

or constraining them in accomplishing family and work-life balance. The study additionally uncovers the presence of ‘glass-ceiling’ that deny the working women their legitimate place in the occupational hierarchy. The adapting systems encompassing dual role is likewise unveiled.

The study identified the significant challenges both work-specific and family-specific that can lead to WFC. The study also pointed out that work-family conflict can lead to lower job performance and slower career growth and career vulnerability which are unfortunate outcomes for organizations. This study also pointed out the problems of PMS which hinders their performance. There is a need for IT/ITES industries in particular to expand the work-life balance initiatives and family-friendly policies. The study shows that women in general, and wives and mothers in particular, could benefit from part time work, flexible scheduling, one day period leave, installment of sanitary napkins vending machines at the workplace. Employers should focus on reducing women’s work-family tensions and revise the existing policies to provide conducive environment to their female employees. For instance, the prerequisite of quality day care centres at the organizational level or at the societal level can assist women with their childcare responsibilities. Across the BPO industry, gender-based occupational segregation, the culture of long working hours and night shift need to be reconsidered. Establishing quotas to increase women’s visibility at the managerial levels and female role models can help change the gendered culture. Support systems and advisory units to handle complaints should have women on board to persuade women to voice confidential cases, including those of sexual harassment. At the macro level, the maternity leaves should be implemented properly and the uptake of paternal leaves can be made more common and its length should be increased so that women do not feel that they are solely responsible for childcare. Also, organizations should check the implementation of family-friendly policies to guarantee their fair usage. These might help lower work-family struggle, and in the long run, improve women’s job performance and even increase retention. These incorporate family duties, including care and household tasks, mother-youngster struggle, conjugal clash and compromised domestic performance. Here, organizational intervention can prevent or bring down WFC and can still help women in performing work-family roles. Training programs for both male and female managers should incorporate the dimensions of work-life balance, for instance, an appraisal of the forms of WFC, or the significant causes and outcomes they are experiencing. At that point, assistance ought to be furnished to adapt to WFC at an individual-level by offering viable systems and tips to adapt to

WFC. Successful composed correspondence of such organizational arrangements and changes is basic; lastly, regular observing for any negative 'side impacts' of these strategies is additionally significant to accomplish long term viability. At the societal and family level, the study gives proof that a family culture and social desires impact women's performance in work-family roles. Women might be dependent upon analysis for undertaking paid work in a male-dominated industry. Indeed, even the relatives may likewise see a working woman as not a 'good woman', for instance, when women are drained and energy starved, and in this way, incapable to satisfy the customary role of homemaker, they might be viewed as 'careless'. Current cultural standards despite everything bring down men from undertaking homemaker role and appreciate their work roles. Extending family-friendly activities to the male representatives and improving consciousness of men's role in the family can bring down the impacts of the intersecting disparities. In the event that the organizational, family and societal culture is all the more tolerating of women's wage-earner role, the study shows that women's exposition in work-family roles can prompt positive results for work and family, incorporating the advantages related with their supplementary income, expanded system, and feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction. These are fundamental for the progression of the families and the Indian economy. The research findings also have policy implications of women's work-family experiences in other male-centric social orders. At the individual-level, the impression of WFC just like a matter of individual disappointment/personal failure should be changed; being compliant or enduring peacefully isn't prompted as a special adapting technique. At the national level, structural assistance ought to be given to working women, and systems ought to be set up to screen objective usage of the policies. The emotional work experienced by women from the social and organizational sphere in India who are working for multinational companies influences their presentation in work and family structures. Labour laws for sexual harassment ought to particularly be executed to give a more prominent feeling of emotional security to women at work. It is significant for any foreign-based BPOs setting up businesses in India to create gender-explicit and culture-explicit family-friendly strategies to appropriate women. As Indian culture is as of now under transformation, the government can assume its role in implementing equivalent employment opportunities and quota systems for women at top managerial levels in the male-dominated IT/ITES industries, and considerably other industries, and offer social support systems (particularly relating to sexual behaviour) to back up women's role as wage-earners. The

emotional dilemmas and guilt experienced by working women in pursuing their modesty in ‘modern’ organizations, and paid employment in the more extensive social and religious contexts should be under core interest. The socio-cultural context of women’s work in India is changing, and suitable interventions by the organizations and government in the right direction can improve working women’s position in the work and family domains.

As a part of economic revival strategies Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe focused to construct almost half a million government-supported crèches to enable youthful mothers to rejoin the workforce and increase LFPR. Government of India can adopt similar strategy to increase female LFPR. Government approaches should concentrate on behaviour changes that make female employment more worthy in the society. Government plans must target the central social and cultural powers that shape patriarchal society. Drawing more women into the workforce, enhanced by structural changes that could help make more occupations would be a source of future development for India. At exactly that point would India have the option to receive the rewards of ‘demographic dividend’ from its enormous and energetic labour force. This study also points out the fact that young boys working in BPO sectors do not want to get married with BPO female employees but they were not feeling hesitant in dating these employees by saying that dating is very different from marriage. This study unveils that their patriarchal mindsets are slowly changing regarding household chores. So it creates hopes for the future generation that there will be no gender-based division of labour in the home. Men need to recognize that women are their equals. To achieve gender equality in true sense one needs to socialize male children to do household chores on a regular basis. The researcher doesn't claim that the study is all encompassive. In any case, it is acknowledged that in a humble way, the findings of this study will prove valuable for future exploration on working women.

8.15 Limitations of the Study

- The interviews conducted in this study do not claim to the larger population of working women in India, but they do provide substantial insights into their experiences. Time and financial resources, large geographical distances, and weak research culture in the BPO sectors of India are some limitations that the researcher faced during this study.
- This study was conducted using a sample size of 200 employees out of the various BPOs located in Noida. These samples were selected on convenience basis. The research findings limited to only one city, whereas there are several BPOs located at other regions

of NCR and other metro cities and towns in India. Further, the sample size of 200 employees may not fully represent all the employees of all BPOs from Noida.

- Since the primary data was collected through a semi-structured questionnaire, all employees may not have fully disclosed their facts due to the confidentiality clause imposed on them by their employers. And the presence of interviewer at the time of interview might have negative impact on the answers given by the participants. Hence, the conclusions drawn on the basis of these samples may have some biases.
- To a certain extent, this is one-sided version of the story, since the perceptions and experiences of spouses, parents and employers are not taken into account.

8.16 Scope for Further Study

This thesis argues that women working in BPOs in India have complex experiences of work-family conflict as they struggle to live up to the image of ‘ideal worker’ and ‘good woman’ or ‘super women’. However, some women have left their careers in BPOs because of work-family tensions. Another valuable area for future research would be to conduct a longitudinal study of work-family experiences across the life-span, especially with respect to before and after marriage, before and after promotion, and before and after having children. With respect to the work-domain, many participants reported that women in the academic sector have ‘easy life; therefore, future research can be conducted on the work-family experiences of women in academia. The comparative research on work-family experiences of women in other masculinised industries in India, such as journalism, advertising, engineering could complement the research on women in academia. There are class variations at IT/ITES industries for example house keepers, gatekeepers, sweepers etc. women working on these posts can have different experiences of WFC from these female employees or women as paid domestic help, whose experiences of WFC may be altogether different from their female employers particularly because of the diverse social positions. Contrary to outlook, in this study none of the participants was a grandmother. It would have been fascinating to study the work-family life of grandmothers whose work-family experiences within the family structure may be more extreme and different from other women. Further research is required into work-related intersecting inequalities of these groups of women. From the family side, looking at the experiences of women with responsibilities to care for a less capable individual in the family can provide additional insight

into the structures and processes that lower working women's situation in the society. It would also be interesting to study the experiences of dual earner couples when both husband and wife are in the BPO sectors, or the experiences of men who are not the primary breadwinners or whose earnings are less than the women in the family, as Indian society condemns the husband if they know that he is depending on his wife's income. The study also gave constrained understanding into work-family enhancement, when women feel that the workplace is a protection and escape from home; therefore, the positive point of view of work-family. Interface for women in the Indian labour market also needs to be addressed in the future research.

The pandemic has exacerbated the previously existing employment emergency in the nation, wherein there were around 30 million jobless people according to the Periodic Labor Force Survey, 2017–18. Employer's strategies of pushing lay-offs and labour reforms strengthen the precariousness of employment. The IT and business process outsourcing (BPO) sectors are witnessing a bloodbath right now in view of the compensation cuts and job losses. Industry sources announced that several laborers are being approached to go on unpaid leaves till further notification, or, much more dreadful, being terminated. The danger is highlighted for those on the bench — who are not taking care of any project as of now. Women are frequently the first to be influenced whenever job opportunities are missing, and often find it more difficult to find work than men do when they are unemployed. The pandemic is likewise being used to protect the interests of the organizations at the expense of the workers by encroaching upon the current labour laws and encouraging the "ease of doing business" in the hour of the lockdown imposed during the pandemic. The states' disposition of unequivocally taking the side of the interests of capital over that of labour not only reflects the power of employers' lobbies, but also extends the feeling of insecurity among labour in general and representatives in the service sector in particular. This subject can be studied further including the impact of lockdown and post pandemic challenges for working women. Comparative study can be done on the same topic. Comparison can be done between men and women; and between women working in BPO sectors and other sectors for instance in academic or medical profession.