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A Study on Work value Perceptions of Women Employees in Indian Postal Department with Special Reference to Tamilnadu State

DR. K. Gomathi

J.J. College of Arts and Science (Autonomous) - Pudukkottai

gomathimaitreyan@gmail.com

Abstract: *Women established an identity of their own and created a space for them in education and work sphere. Educational institutions started training women to enter new arenas enabling them to move away from traditional roles. Families began expecting women not only to continue with higher education, but also to pursue any interest they may have in the profession. And, naturally, after spending so many years in education and obtaining professional degrees, they became interested in using the knowledge acquired productively. As a result, modern Indian women have made inroads into different professions that were unthinkable to women in the past. The number of women in the profession is increasing and they are making substantial progress toward parity with men.*

Today, in India, one can find more and more women in familiar as well as unfamiliar places - as heads of giant organizations, at the controls of aircrafts, in parliament, in judiciary, as police officers, doctors, engineers, teachers- the list is never ending. By tradition and throughout history, Indian women were expected to fulfill roles that defined them in relation to others only, – the kinship identities. But increasingly contemporary women establish independent identities and move beyond the identities of daughter, wife and mother. The present study has made an attempt to study the work value perceptions of women employees in Indian Postal Department.

Key words: *Work Values, Job related variables, Demographic Variables.*

I. Introduction

Women established an identity of their own and created a space for them in education and work sphere. Educational institutions started training women to enter new arenas enabling them to move away from traditional roles. Families began expecting women not only to continue with higher education, but also to pursue any interest they may have in the profession. And, naturally, after spending so many years in education and obtaining professional degrees, they became interested in using the knowledge acquired productively. As a result, modern Indian women have made inroads into different professions that were unthinkable to women in the past. The number of women in the profession is increasing and they are making substantial progress toward parity with men.

Today, in India, one can find more and more women in familiar as well as unfamiliar places - as heads of giant organizations, at the controls of aircrafts, in parliament, in judiciary, as police officers, doctors, engineers, teachers- the list is never ending. By tradition and throughout history, Indian women were expected to fulfill roles that defined them in relation to others only, –

the kinship identities. But increasingly contemporary women establish independent identities and move beyond the identities of daughter, wife and mother.

II. WORK VALUES

Existence, relatedness and growth needs which are assigned by an individual in his work are taken as work values. It is measured in terms of the relative importance and the extent of realisation of these values in an individual's work life.

A value can be described as an enduring belief that a specific conduct or state is personally/ psychologically or socially/ culturally preferable to a converse mode of conduct or an opposite end state of existence. Value potentially derives from the expectations about an offering itself, from experiences accompanying the exchange and from the residual of having engaged in behaviours necessary to achieve the exchange. Hence, value can reflect the worth of the element itself as well as the experience associated with the transaction.

Values are the basis of actions, attitudes and judgments in the aspects of social life. Therefore, the present study incorporates measurement of work values to judge the quality of work life balance of the women employees in Indian postal department.

A question with two separate 3 point interval scales is presented in the questionnaire (Questionnaire: Part – C – Question 31; Items 31.1 to 31.12) to measure importance attached to the values and the extent to which they are fulfilled.

In order to measure the work values perceived by the women employees, Alderfer's ERG model has been adopted for the present study. Clayton Alderfer's modified need hierarchy design collapse Maslow's five hierarchical levels in to three "i.e." Existence, Relatedness and Growth (ERG).

Physiological and safety needs: Existence needs

Needs required to preserve human life. They include all of what Maslow termed as physiological needs relating to material safety.

Social needs: Relatedness needs

They refer to all socially intended needs "i.e." how people relate themselves to their surrounding social environment. These include the need for meaningful social and interpersonal relationship.

Esteem and self actualization needs: Growth needs

They reflect the individuals' desire to be self confident, productive and creative. The desire to engage in tasks that requires full utilization of abilities and to develop additional capabilities and skills.

This ERG model of Alderfer is born out of reality that all the needs are prescribed by the values and values in turn operated as a boundary for the needs.

III. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To identify and examine the work value perceptions of women employees in Indian postal department in Tamilnadu.

India post is the most widely distributed post office system in the world and has 23 postal circles in India including a special circle called the Base circle to cater to the postal services of the Armed Forces of India. The Indian Postal Service has 1, 54,866 [post offices](#) as on 31-03-2012, of which 139,040 (89.78%) are in rural areas & 15,826 in urban area (10.22%) 25,464 departmental POs & 1, 29,402 EDBPOs. It employs 4,84,000 persons to provide number of services like postal insurance, postal savings account etc. in addition to postal service to the people of India.

Women are usually recognized have been employed by the post office since 1870. In 1876 the Post office instituted a marriage bar which required women to resign on marriage and forbade the employment of married women in established positions. Married women remain working as sub postmistresses as these were not established positions. But now, out of the total workforce of India post, women employees constitute more than 30% and even pursuing higher positions. Therefore, it is essential to study about quality of work life balance of women employees in Indian postal department.

This study is confined to state of Tamilnadu, India. Further, this study focuses on four areas of Tamilnadu namely Chennai, Madurai, Coimbatore and Trichy postal divisions as these four divisions cover most of the postal divisions in Tamilnadu. Chennai is the capital of Tamilnadu and the fourth largest metropolis in the country. Tamil Nadu is the eleventh largest state in India by area and the seventh most populous state. It is the fourth largest contributor (as of 2010) to India's [GDP](#) and ranks tenth in Human Development Index as of 2006. Tamil Nadu is also the most urbanized state in India. The state has the highest number (10.56%) of business enterprises and stands second in total employment (9.97%) in India compared to the population share of about 6%.

As per Census of India, 2011, total population of Tamilnadu has reached 72138958. Out of total population of Tamilnadu, 51.55% of people in Tamilnadu (37189229) live in rural area and 48.45% live in urban area (34949729). Further, literacy rate has increased from 66.2% to 80.3% and population density is 555/km². Tamilnadu has 32 Districts, 76 Divisions, 220 Taluks, 1127 Firkas and 16564 Revenue Villages.

Tamilnadu has the total population of 7,21,38,958 out of which 3,61,58,871 are males and 3,59,80,087 are females as per census of India , 2011 (provisional). Out of total population of Tamilnadu, 51.55% of people in Tamilnadu (37189229) live in rural area and 48.45% live in urban area (34949729). Tamilnadu has 32 Districts, 76 Divisions, 220 Taluks, 1127 Firkas and 16564 Revenue Villages and Tamilnadu has 10 corporations, 20 special grade municipalities, 29 selection grade municipalities, 29 first class municipalities, 21 second grade municipalities, 49 third class municipalities, 559 town panchayats, 385 panchayat unions, 12620 village panchayats and 561 special village panchayats.

Further, Tamilnadu has become home for persons belonging to different religion, caste, ethnicity and region. These are the reasons for which the present study has chosen Tamilnadu as locale of the study.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

METHOD OF RESEARCH

This study is based on both primary data and secondary data. The quality of data is invariably tied to the method and technique used for data collection. Hence, survey method through structured questionnaire is adopted to collect primary data for this study as it is found suitable for this research. Further, secondary data of this study is collected from different sources namely India post, government of India web site etc.

POPULATION

The Indian Postal Service has 1, 54,866 [post offices](#) as on 31-03-2012, It employs 4, 84,000 persons to provide number of postal services. Out of the total workforce of India post, women employees constitute more than 30%. Hence, the population of the study is around 3, 000.

SAMPLING FRAME

Primary data needed for the study have been collected through questionnaire issued to women employees in Indian postal department in Tamilnadu. Sample consists of women employees in Postal department in Tamilnadu belonging to different category and age group. Stratified random sampling has been adopted for the purpose of data collection effort. However, due consideration is exercised for the proportionate representation of the sample population.

DATA COLLECTION

Around 500 questionnaires were issued to the women employees in Indian postal department in Tamilnadu region through personal contacts and through the assistance obtained from friends and colleagues. For data collection in Tamilnadu the study is confined with four main divisions namely Chennai, Trichy, Madurai and Coimbatore. In each area, 125 questionnaires were distributed among women employees working in low, middle and top level in Indian postal department. Out of which, 356 questionnaires were finally received from the respondents. Out of 356 questionnaires received, 35 questionnaires were from top level management employees, 239 were from middle level management women employees and 82 were received from low level management employees. Out of 356 questionnaires received, 19 questionnaires were discarded because of incomplete answering as they will not be useful for statistical purposes. Finally, 337 completed questionnaires were taken up for the study. The response rate is 67.4%.

PERIOD OF THE STUDY

Questionnaires for sample survey of women employees in Indian postal department in Tamilnadu region were distributed during June and July 2011 and data collection work was extended up to March, 2012. Hence, it took approximately nine months for distribution of questionnaires and collection of data from the respondents.

ANALYSIS OF DEMOGRAPHIC AND JOB RELATED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

The demographic and job related characteristics of the respondents reveal certain significant features of the respondents which are summarized as follows:

1. Most of the respondents are married (84.6%) and the rest of the respondents (15.40%) are single.

2. 46.3% of the respondents have two children, 38.3% of the respondents have one child and 3.9% of the respondents have three children.
3. 54% of the respondents belong to the age group of 19 years to 40 years, 34.7% of respondents belong to the age group of 41 years to 60 years and 11.3% of respondents belong to the age group of 18 years or less than 18 years.
4. Majority of the respondents (73%) are under graduate qualified, 23.1% of the respondents are post graduate qualified and only 03.9% of the respondents have completed Higher Secondary Certification (HSC) or less than HSC.
5. Majority of the respondents (57.9%) have Gross annual income of Rs1,00,001 to 3,00,000, 34.4% of the respondents have Gross annual income of more than Rs 3,00,000, 3.9% of the respondents have Gross annual income of Rs 50,001 to 1,00,000 and 3.9% of the respondents have Gross annual income of Up to Rs 50,000 or Rs 50,000.
6. Almost half of the respondents (49.9%) have 2 or less than 2 dependents, 38.6% of the respondents have 3 to 4 dependents and 11.5% of the respondents have 5 to 6 dependents.
7. 46% of the respondents have total work experience of 10 years and 1 day to 20 years, 38.6% of the respondents have total work experience of more than 20 years, 7.7% of the respondents have total work experience of 3 years and 1 day to 10 years and 7.7% of the respondents have total work experience of Up to 3 years or 3 years.
8. 42.1% of the respondents have total experience of 10 years and 1 day to 20 years in postal department, 38.6% of the respondents have total work experience of more than 20 years in postal department, 15.4% of the respondents have total work experience of 3 years or Up to 3 years in postal department and 3.9% of the respondents have total work experience of 3 years and 1 day to 10 years.
9. 56.60% of the respondents are postal assistants, 23.10% of the respondents are office assistants, 7.7% of the respondents are clerks, 7.7% of the respondents are officers and 3.9% of the respondents are accountants.
10. 69.1% of the respondents belong to middle level management, 23.1% of the respondents belong to low level management and 7.7% of the respondents belong to top level management.
11. 54% of the respondents earned no promotion in the postal department, 30.6% of the respondents earned one promotion in the postal department and 15.4% of the respondents earned two promotions in the postal department.
12. 69.1% of the respondent's use motor vehicles like auto, bus, two wheeler, train etc to reach work place, 3.9% of the respondents use cycle to reach work place and 27% of the respondents go to work place by walk.
13. 73% of the respondents travel less than 5 kms or 5 kms to reach work place, 19.3% of the respondents travel more than 5 kms but less than 20 kms to reach work place and 7.7% of the respondents travel more than 20 kms to reach work place.

ANALYSIS OF WORK VALUE PERCEPTIONS BASED ON DEMOGRAPHIC AND JOB RELATED VARIABLES

Work value, now a day, is an area of research interest especially in organizational behavior and industrial psychology. Work value refers to how people value their employment. The characteristics that workers consider most important in a job will determine the meaningfulness of the job (and employment in general) for the worker and the satisfaction they derive from it.

The researches on work values indicate that overall, what employees valued most in a job was its intrinsic nature – how interesting and challenging a job was. This is what motivated employees the most to remain in a job or when searching for a new job.

Other very important values included the quality of management, management recognition of employee merit and effort, training and development opportunities, work-life balance and relationships with colleagues. Pay and job security also mattered, but usually less than the other factors did. Taken together, these results indicate that personal growth and intrinsic job characteristics were more valued than rewards like pay. However, these results are likely to be biased towards relatively well paid jobs and relatively well educated people, so need to be used cautiously. Work values can vary by factors such as age, gender and regional location, so these variables need to be included in any study of work values.

Examining what people value and what they expect in a job is important because both of these variables influence employee retention¹. A research suggested that people search for jobs that fit in with their work values. The match between such individual values and features of the job, team and organization (these three features comprise 'job supplies') influence the individual's job satisfaction and commitment to the job which leads to a better chance of their retention in it.

Therefore, this research intends to study out work values of women employees in Indian postal department and the results of the study are given below.

¹ Taris, Ruben, Jan A Feij and Annelies EM van Vianen (2005) "Met expectations and supplies-values fit of Dutch young adults as determinants of work outcomes", International Journal of Human Resource Management 16(3):366-382.

**TABLE – 1
MARITAL STATUS AND WORK VALUE**

Marital status	Mean value	F value	t value	P value	Result
Married	07.53	15.50	-5.506	.000**	Significant
Single	16.66				

Source: Primary data

*At 1% level of significance **At 5% level of significance.

The above students “t” test table – 1 indicates that there is a significant difference between marital status and work value. It means that work value of the respondents differs according to their marital status. Mean scores indicate that the respondents who are single have more work value (16.66) than the respondents who are married (07.53).

**TABLE – 2
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION AND WORK VALUE**

Educational Qualification	Mean Value	F value	P Value	Result
Up to HSC	08.33	44.66	.000*	Significant
Under graduate	08.14			
Post graduate	10.18			

Source: Primary data, *At 1% level of significance **At 5% level of significance

The above one way ANOVA table – 2 displays that there is a significant difference between educational qualification and work value. Work value of the respondents differs based on their educational qualification. Mean scores exhibit that the respondents who have studied post graduate have more work value (10.18) followed by the respondents who have studied up to HSC (08.33) and the respondents who have under graduate qualification (08.14).

**TABLE – 3
AGE AND WORK VALUE**

Age	Mean Value	F value	P Value	Result
Up to 18 years	08.04	32.93	.000*	Significant
19 years to 40 years	10.11			
41 years to 60 years	04.62			

Source: Primary data, *At 1% level of significance **At 5% level of significance

The above one way ANOVA table – 3 displays that there is a significant difference between age and work value. Work value of the respondents differs based on their age. Mean scores exhibit that the respondents who are in the age group of 19 years to 40 years have more work value (10.11) followed by the respondents who are in the age group of 18 years or less than 18 years (08.04) and the respondents who are in the age group of 41 years to 60 years (04.62).

**TABLE – 4
NO. OF CHILDREN AND WORK VALUE**

No. of children	Mean Value	F value	P Value	Result
One	10.48	74.56	.000*	Significant
Two	02.54			
Three	22.22			

Source: Primary data

*At 1% level of significance **At 5% level of significance

The above table – 4 discloses that there is a significant difference between number of children and work value. Work value of the respondents differs based on number of children held by the respondents. Mean scores exhibit that the respondents who have

three children have more work value (22.22) followed by the respondents who have only one child (10.48) and the respondents who have two children (02.54).

TABLE – 5
GROSS ANNUAL INCOME AND WORK VALUE

Gross annual income	Mean Value	F value	P Value	Result
Up to Rs 50,000	05.55	107.82	.000*	Significant
Rs 50,001 to Rs 1,00,000	08.33			
Rs 1,00,001 to Rs 3,00,000	07.22			
More than Rs 3,00,000	09.48			

Source: Primary data

*At 1% level of significance **At 5% level of significance

The above table – 5 discloses that there is a significant difference between gross annual income of the respondents and their work value. It shows that work value differs on the basis of gross annual income of the respondents. It is evident from the mean scores that the respondents who have gross annual income of more than Rs 3,00,000 have more work value (09.48) followed by the respondents who have gross annual income of Rs 50,001 to Rs 1,00,000 (8.33), the respondents who have gross annual income of Rs 1,00,001 to Rs 3,00,000 (07.22) and the respondents who have gross annual income of Rs 50,000 or less than Rs 50,000 (05.55).

TABLE – 6
NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS AND WORK VALUE

Number of dependents	Mean Value	F value	P Value	Result
Up to 2 members	08.48	78.30	.000**	Significant
3 members to 4 members	09.44			
5 members to 6 members	01.92			

Source: Primary data

*At 1% level of significance **At 5% level of significance

The above table – 6 discloses that there is a significant difference between number of dependents and work value. Work value of the respondents differs based on number of dependents held by the respondents. Mean scores exhibit that the respondents who have three to four dependents have more work value (09.44) followed by the respondents who have two or less than two dependents (08.48) and the respondents who have five to six dependents (01.92).

TABLE – 7
TOTAL WORK EXPERIENCE AND WORK VALUE

Total work experience	Mean Value	F value	P Value	Result
Up to 3 years	08.33	15.67	.000*	Significant
3 years and 1 day to 10 years	16.67			
10 years and 1 day to 20 years	08.72			
More than 20 years	05.27			

Source: Primary data

*At 1% level of significance **At 5% level of significance

The above one way ANOVA Table – 7 shows that there is a significant difference between total work experience of the respondents and their work value. It means that work value of the respondents differs on the basis of their total work experience. Mean scores indicate that the respondents who have 3 years and 1 day to 10 years of total work experience have more work value (16.67) followed by the respondents who have 10 years and 1 day to 20 years of total work experience (08.72), the respondents who have 3 years or less than 3 years of total work experience (08.33) and finally by the respondents who have more than 20 years of total work experience (05.27).

**TABLE – 8
EXPERIENCE IN POSTAL DEPARTMENT AND WORK VALUE**

Experience in postal department	Mean Value	F value	P Value	Result
Up to 3 years	12.50	21.90	.000*	Significant
3 years and 1 day to 10 years	08.33			
10 years and 1 day to 20 years	08.76			
More than 20 years	05.27			

Source: Primary data

*At 1% level of significance **At 5% level of significance

The above one way ANOVA Table – 8 shows that there is a significant difference between total experience of the respondents in postal department and their work value. It means that work value of the respondents differs on the basis of their total experience in postal department. Mean scores indicate that the respondents who have 3 years or less than 3 years of total experience in postal department have more work value (12.50) followed by the respondents who have 10 years and 1 day to 20 years of total experience in postal department (08.76), the respondents who have 3 years and 1 day to 10 years of total experience in postal department (08.33) and finally by the respondents who have more than 20 years of total experience in postal department (05.27).

**TABLE – 9
MANAGEMENT LEVEL AND WORK VALUE**

Management level	Mean Value	F value	P Value	Result
Top level	11.11	42.39	.000*	Significant
Middle level	06.73			
Low level	10.64			

Source: Primary data

*At 1% level of significance **At 5% level of significance

The above one way ANOVA Table – 9 shows that there is a significant difference between management level of the respondents and their work value. It means that work value of the respondents differs on the basis of their management level. Mean scores indicate that the respondents who are in top level management have more work value (11.11) followed by the respondents who are in low level management (10.64) and the respondents who are in middle level management (06.73).

**TABLE – 10
NUMBER OF PROMOTIONS EARNED AND WORK VALUE**

Number of promotions earned	Mean Value	F value	P Value	Result
Zero	10.11	25.62	.000*	Significant
One	06.12			
Two	04.16			

Source: Primary data

*At 1% level of significance **At 5% level of significance

The above one way ANOVA Table – 10 shows that there is a significant difference between number of promotions earned by the respondents and their work value. It means that work value of the respondents differs on the basis of number of promotions earned by the respondents. Mean scores indicate that the respondents who have earned no promotions have more work value (10.11) followed by the respondents who have earned one promotion (06.12) and the respondents who have earned two promotions (04.16). In short, mean scores indicate that there is an inverse relationship between number of promotions earned by the respondents and work value. Higher the number of promotions earned by the respondents lowers the work value and lower the number of promotions earned by the respondents, higher the work value.

Conclusion

- ❖ The study results exhibit that the respondent who is single completed post graduation, aged 19 years to 40 years, having one child, three to four dependents, gross annual income of more than Rs 3, 00, 000, total work experience of three years and one day to ten years, total experience of three or less than three years in postal department working at top level management and earned no promotion has higher level of work value perception.
- ❖ Conversely, the study shows that the respondent who is married, aged 41 years to 60 years, having studied under graduation, having two children, five to six dependents, gross annual income of Rs 50,000 or less than 50,000, total work experience of more than twenty years, total experience of more than twenty years in postal department working at middle level management and earned two promotions has lower level of work value perception.

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