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TO STUDY THE PERCEPTION OF MALE EMPLOYEES ABOUT THEIR FEMALE COUNTERPARTS IN STAR HOTELS

ANURADHA KARMARKAR
ASST. PROFESSOR
AISSMS COLLEGE OF HMCT
PUNE

JYOTI PESHAVE
ASST. PROFESSOR
BHARTI VIDYAPEETH IHMCT
PUNE

ABSTRACT

The differences between the male and female employee perceptions, thinking, communication, challenges faced by them at work place and behaviour has been an interest of universal research and a lot of discussions & debate has been carried out on the same. This research is conducted to understand the views of male employees about the female employees working in five star hotels in Pune. The research is significant because it testifies whether the male employees have a pessimistic attitude about female employees working in the same organization. In hospitality industry in Pune, work force has been dominated by male presence than female (approximately 60: 40 ratio of male to female employees). While working together they must be facing several diverge situations or on the contrary absolutely free and congenial work environment. Both conditions either affect or effect the performance of these two genders. This paper highlights the perception of male employees about the strengths and weaknesses, challenges faced and personality traits of female employees. Through the observation and discussion it has been reflected that women usually tend to get some concessions or considerations from the management and peers, which probably the male employees don't get. At the same time the paper also tries to find out how male employees perceive the challenges that women faces at their work place. The study employed a descriptive research design. The sample size was 50 respondents from different hotels and hospitality/service sectors in Pune. A purposive random technique was used to select only male employees who are working in hotels. Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect primary data while secondary data was referred from research articles. The study revealed that majority of the male employees (90.50 %) preferred to work under female managers because of their possession of feminine traits. It is, therefore recommended, that the hospitality industry employees should embrace and integrate female heads in decision making positions.

KEYWORDS

male employees, perception, hotels, challenges.

INTRODUCTION

The differences between the male and female employee perceptions, thinking, communication, challenges faced by them at work place and behaviour has been an interest of universal research and a lot of discussions & debate has been carried out on the same.

The role of women has changed today. The percentage of women educating in hospitality is increasing. The skills possessed by women as being creative, social, effective communication and interpersonal skills are inevitable for hospitality providers. As the hospitality industry is growing the demand for qualified, skilled female personnel is on rise.

In the current set-up in the Indian hospitality industry woman hold more positions of power now, than in the past. But compared to the percentage in population women hold few positions compared to males. A typical Gender Pyramid exists wherein the women get lower level jobs with few career escalation opportunities and the managerial positions are dominated by men. Though India seems to poise as a developing country empowering women, the social status of women still lurks in darkness.

In Pune hospitality industry, work force has a blend of approximately 60:40 ratio of male and female employees (**Smita Jatia 2013**). While working together they do face several diverge situations or on the contrary absolutely free and congenial work environment. Both conditions either affect or effect the performance of these two genders.

It has been observed that females have underrepresentation in the hospitality sector, especially at the higher position, despite series of discussions, articles and conferences being held that advocate for women empowerment to escalate them at managerial positions in the workplace (**Alexander Preko**) The perception of male employees about the growth opportunities of female employees in hospitality industry is also discussed in this paper

This article is planned as follows: Firstly some of the research literature on perceptions of male employees about women employees working in their organisation is reviewed. The research methodology is structured and the results are discussed. This research is conducted to understand the views of male employees about the female employees working in five star hotels in Pune. The research carried out is of significance as it testifies whether the male employees have a pessimistic attitude about female employees working in the same organization

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ms Manjula Chaudhary and Megha Gupta (2010) study opines that the women status in the society gets reflected by her role played in family, social or political group. Women hold few managerial positions as compare to male in the industry. The earlier studies have reported that the deeply entrenched beliefs and stereotyped attitude towards women at job is the main barrier in gender equality. The unequal status of its women, constitutes more than half of its demographic.

Rachelle Cortis, Vincent Cassar, (2005) study indicate that no differences between job involvement and work-based self-esteem of male and female managers exists. On the other hand, both male employees and students seem to hold more stereotypical attitudes towards women in management than their female counterparts.

Marko D. Petrović, Tamara Jovanović, Jelica J. Marković, Tanja Armenski& Vladimir Marković, (2014) in their study of why should gender differences in hospitality really matter concludes that that women also perceive organisational support, but not as much as men do. Female employees are more focused on users of hotel services and customer satisfaction is more important to them, as well as good relationship with guests. The job satisfaction of a female hotel employee will increase when she receives good comments and praise from customers and when she can see their satisfaction. Thus, interactions and feedback from customers are very important to them, which is in agreement with the finding of Groves (1992)

Leidner (1993) and Carmeli, (2003) have shown that women are more likely to express empathy, pleasantness and helpfulness to a greater extent than their male colleagues.

Caruso, Mayer, and Salovey (2002) points out that women have a great ability to understand other people's emotions and are closer in communication with others -Economic Research-Ekonomska Istraživanja801Downloaded by [117.223.108.216] at 06:16 14 July 2015.

Krum & Geddes, (2000) there is research that show that women are better at controlling emotions of stress at the workplace. They have a higher frequency of expression of desired emotions, even when they are employed on the same job as their male colleagues.

Samantha C. Paustian-Underdahl, Lisa Slattery Walker David J. Woehr (2014) at the meta-analysis published in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, looked at data from dozens of studies going back nearly 50 years states that "Women are typically described and expected to be more communal, relations-oriented and nurturing than men, whereas men are believed and expected to be more agentic, assertive and independent than women".

Alexander Preko(2012), relates to the stereotyped attitudes displayed by male subordinates toward female bosses at the work place.

Brownell, Judi (1993) research has documented a variety of issues associated with women in the workforce, including such challenges as the glass ceiling: old boy networks: and sexual harassment." Other concerns such as quality of life issues," equity in pay and promotions, and professional credibility have also been explored.

Lan Li, Roberta Wang Leung, (2001) arrived at the conclusion that female managers in Singapore hotels have let go their family life in order to go ahead in the career. An interesting finding is that the barriers to advancement for female managers are due to neither corporate practices nor policies, but rather seem to be a function of cultural and societal sanctions.

Gregg Joseph B. and Johnson, Paulette M., (1990) In the present research work carried out by them, they desires to identify that the Women in hospitality organizations are getting ahead in their career at a pace significantly outdistancing their colleagues of a few decades ago, but women managers selectively perceive overt and covert discriminatory resistance, from chauvinism to carefully-contrived covert prejudicial treatment constructed to assure a no-win situation. The authors determines that these biased practices against equally well-trained, capable, and experienced hospitality women middle managers do affect their perception of their career growth as compared to male counterparts

Catherine W. Ng and Ray Pine (2003) study reveals that female hotel managers in Hong Kong, like their Western counterparts, are aware of the difficulties women face in a male-dominated hospitality industry. The study also reveals that while both women and men prefer male supervisors, men's preference is more definitive. Male managers also prefer supervising male subordinates.

Powell, G. N. (1990) Empirical study conducted by the author reveals that in Hong Kong female and male managers perceive gender and career development issues differently than their Western counterparts. The study also revealed the fact that that while both women and men prefer male supervisors, men's preference is more definitive. Male managers also prefer supervising male subordinates. The findings suggest that there is room for Hong Kong's hotel industry to review the effect of structural barriers on women's career development.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess whether the male employees prefer to work under female boss/peer.
2. To examine the perception of male employees about the personality traits of female employees
3. To analyze the perception of male employees about the Challenges faced by female employees at the workplace.
4. To ascertain the perception of male employees about the strengths and weaknesses of female employees.
5. To study the perception of male employees about the special considerations given to female employees.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Collection of data: The data required was collected using the following techniques:

- **PERSONAL INTERVIEWS**

The researcher conducted personal interviews with the male employees of the various star hotels to understand their perceptions towards their female colleagues.

- **QUESTIONNAIRE**

A questionnaire was made and circulated to the male employees of the hotels by forwarding the link of the questionnaire to obtain their views.

- **SELECTION OF SAMPLE**

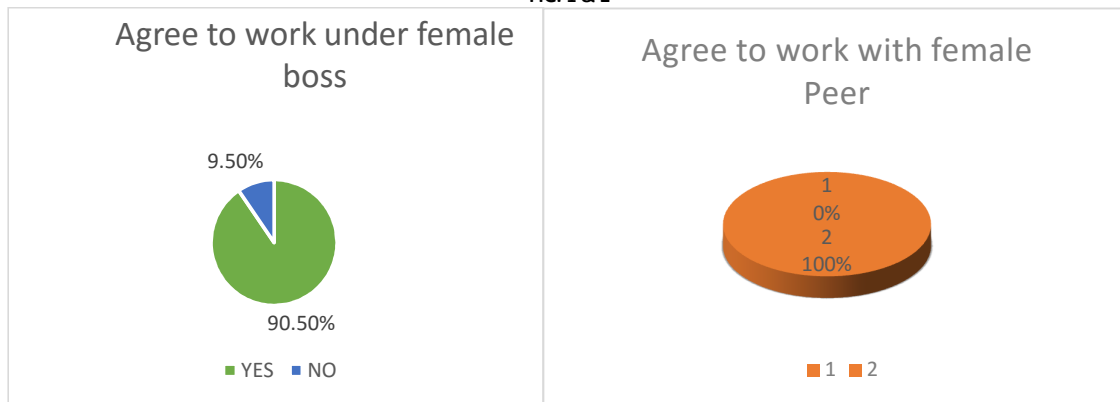
The study has been conducted to identify the perceptions of male employees of their female counterparts in the hotel industry in Pune. A sample of male employees has been selected at random from different five star hotels in Pune city

DATA ANALYSIS

The perception of male employees was judged on several parameters as:

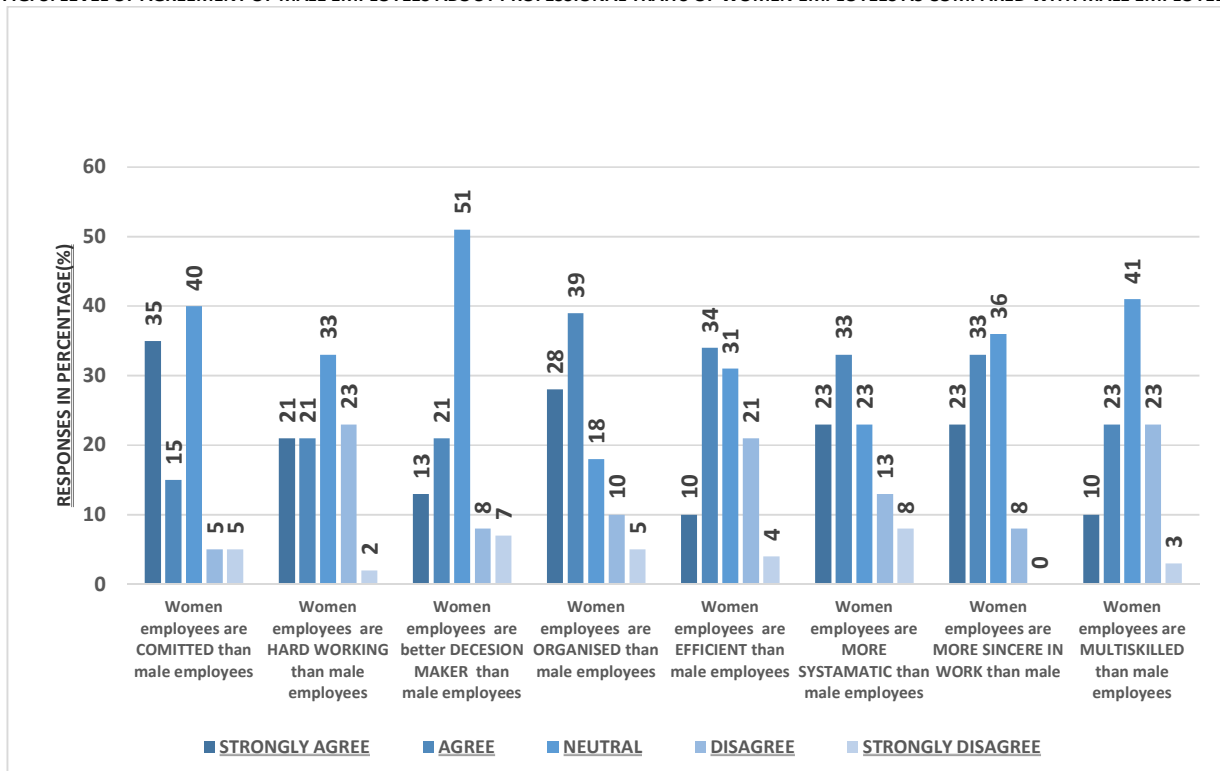
- Personality Traits of the female employee
- Special Consideration given to the women employees
- Strengths and weaknesses of women employees
- Challenges faced by women employees

FIG. 1 & 2



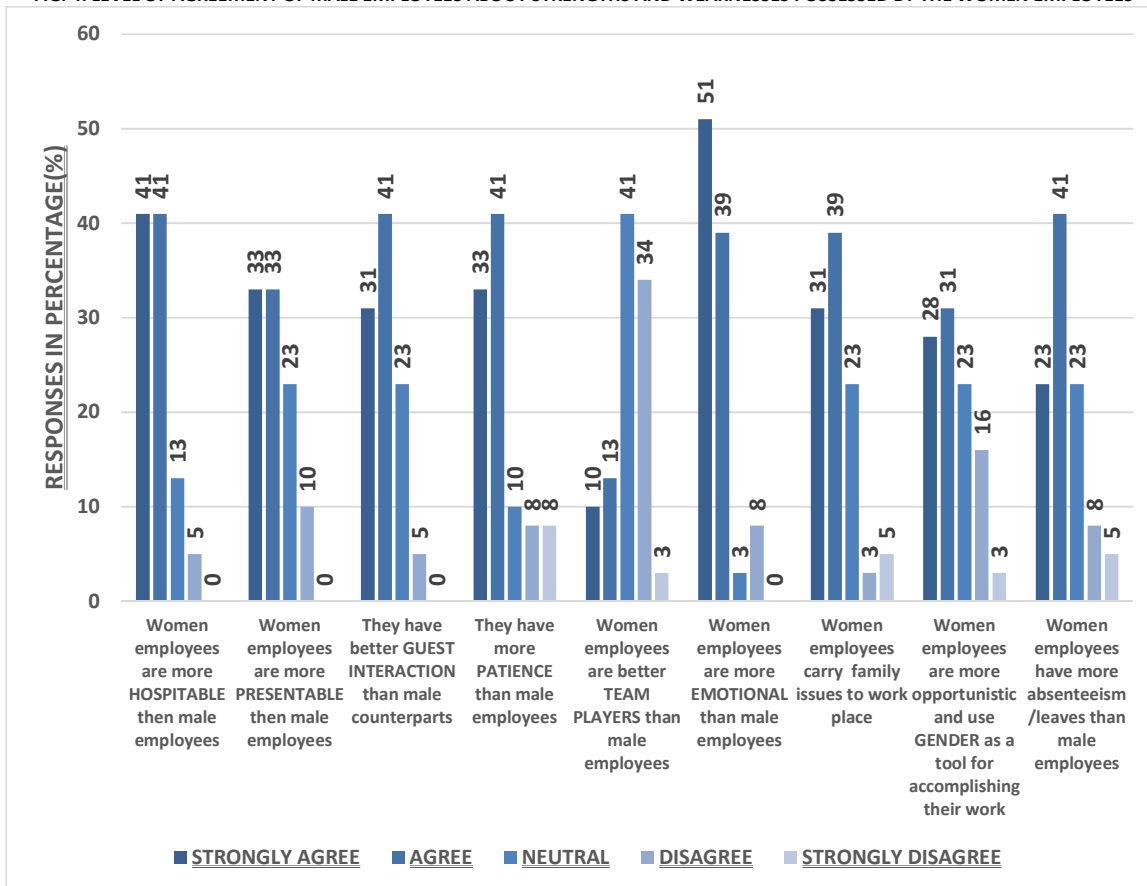
The male employees were asked about their preferences to work with female boss/peers, and as indicated in the graph 91% would like to have a female boss and 100 % of men agreed to work with female peers. The reason perceived in both the cases is the professional as well as feminine traits possessed by the female employees.

FIG. 3: LEVEL OF AGREEMENT OF MALE EMPLOYEES ABOUT PROFESSIONAL TRAITS OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES AS COMPARED WITH MALE EMPLOYEES



The data analysed indicates that most of the men have neutral approach towards the personality traits of women, whereas being efficient and committed are the two traits where the level of agreement is highest.

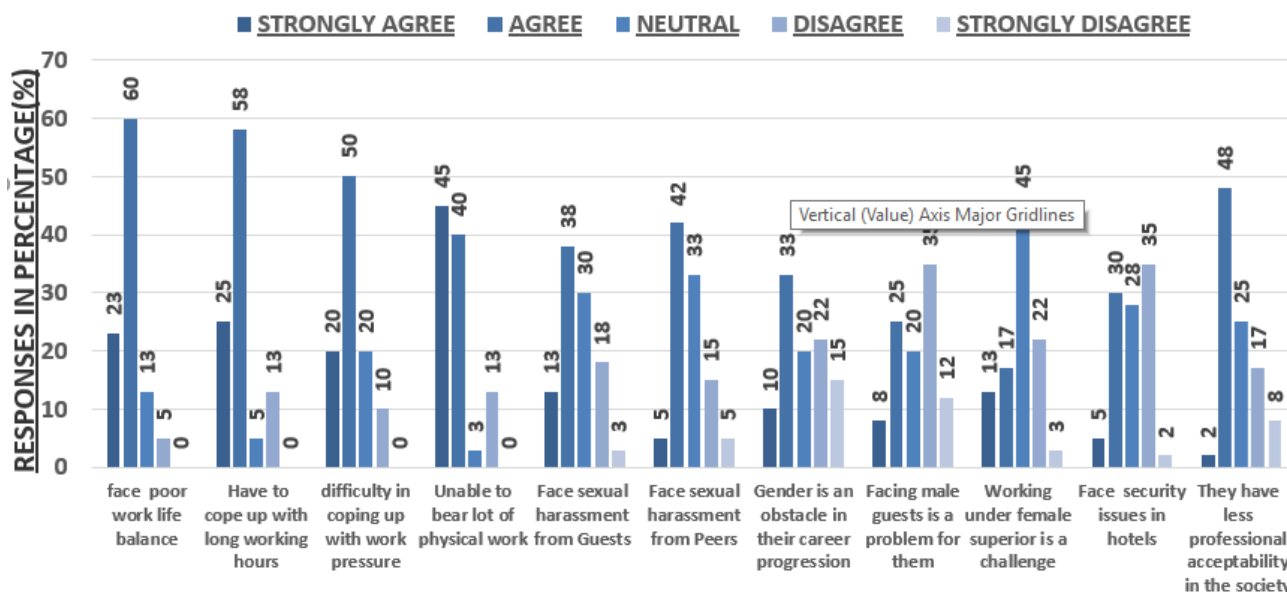
FIG. 4: LEVEL OF AGREEMENT OF MALE EMPLOYEES ABOUT STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES POSSESSED BY THE WOMEN EMPLOYEES



The findings for the level of agreement about strengths and weaknesses of women employees indicates that most of the men (40-50%) either strongly agree or agree about the strengths possessed by women employees such as being more hospitable, presentable, patient, and having better guest interactions of women employee. The trend of not agreeing to these strengths is negligible (5-10%).

This depicts that men do have a positive perception about the strengths possessed by their women counterparts. As far as the weaknesses like being emotional, carrying their family issues at work ,remaining absent at the work place and using their gender for accomplishing work, men do agree that women employees do possess these weaknesses and very few disagree with the same.

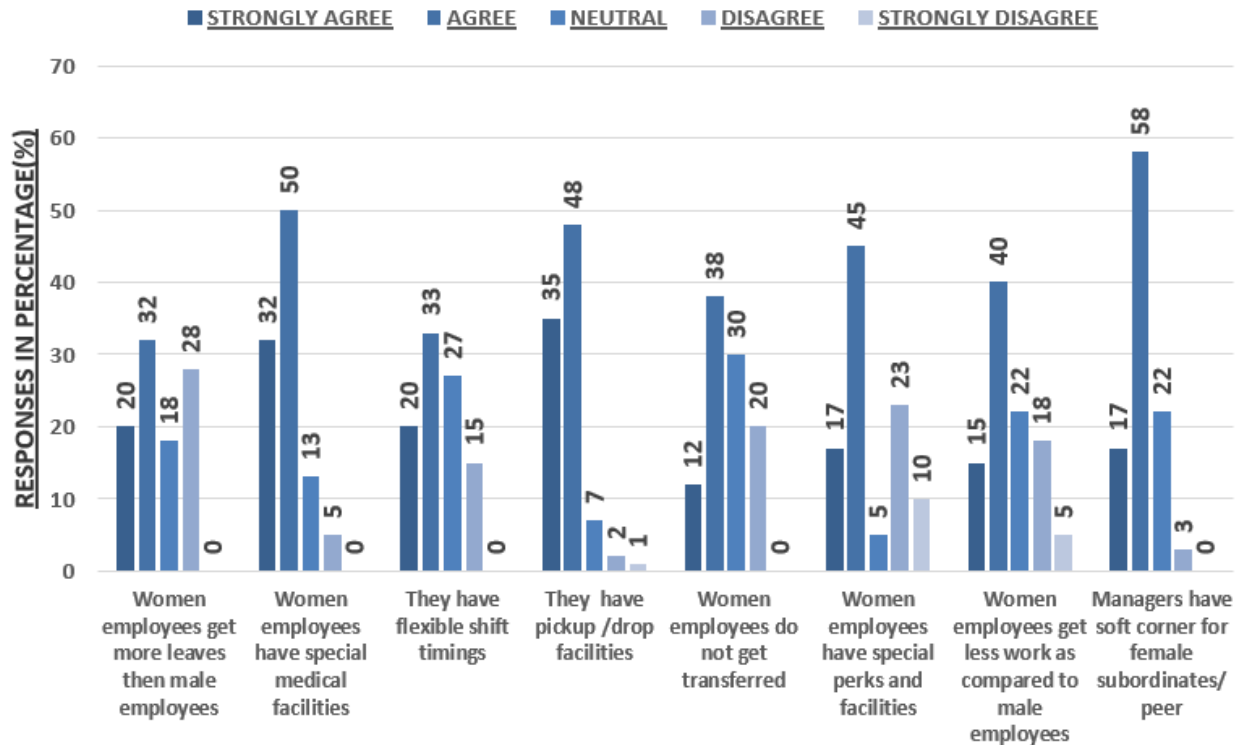
FIG. 5: LEVEL OF AGREEMENT OF MALE EMPLOYEES ABOUT CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN HOTELS



Women employee faces many problems or challenges while working in hotels. From the findings, the above graph indicates that men perceive almost all the challenges in a similar manner as women feel they face. The challenges like work life balance, loing working hours, female mentors/bosses and less acceptability by the society are faced by women, and men colleauges do agree that they face these challenges. On the other hand, some issues related to security of women employees or facing male gusetis is not agreed as a challenge faced by women employees. Maximum men agree that managing work life balance is the biggest challenge, a women employee faces in the hospitality industry.

The most important aspect observed in this study and agreed upon by the male employees is that women employees do face sexual harrasment not only from the guests but also from peers. But at the same time men don't agree that women employees have security iuues in hotels (37% disagree). Sexual harrasment being one of the security concerns, their views about no security issue are faced by the females employees is contradictory.

FIG. 6: LEVEL OF AGREEMENT OF MALE EMPLOYEES ABOUT SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS GIVEN TO WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN HOTELS



The trend from the data analysis depicts that (38-50 %) men agree that women employees do have special considerations given to them in hotels in terms of special leaves(maternity leave),flexibility in working hours, amount of work and pickup /drop facilities. Maximum men perceive that the superiors have a soft corner for women employees.

FINDINGS

Overall, it can be interpreted that the perception of male employees are inclined towards "agreement" for almost all the parameters whether it's about strengths and weaknesses, the challenges faced by women employees or any special considerations given to women employees. This depicts that male employees have a similar view towards the issues or challenges faced by women employees as they themselves perceive. The neutral perception is seen only for the personality traits of women employees.

Finally, it can be concluded that the study shows that the perception of male employees towards their female counterparts is not pessimistic and they do believe that women have challenges while working in hotels.

CONCLUSION

The study carried out to understand the perception of male employees about their female colleagues in hotel projects that

1. Male employees have neutral approach towards the personality traits of women.
2. The strengths and weaknesses perceived by women are also perceived by male counterparts.
3. Men agree that their female counterpart do face challenges working in hotels and the most challenging problem is managing work life balance.
4. They do agree that women employees are given special considerations in terms of leaves, work related concessions. Also the approach towards them by the superior is compassionate as compared with the male employees.
5. Sexual harassment by not only the guests but also from their peers is a challenge faced by female employees. It is probably because of more interactions and long working hours that the male and female employees together have at the work place. The work culture is also quiet liberal.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study about the perception of male employees highlights a few issues which can be looked into by the management of hotel.

- A protocol of behaviour amongst the colleagues may be suggested to avoid cases of sexual harassment.
- Men should also be given some special considerations as Paternal Leaves, Pickup/drop facilities and even work distribution amongst men and women should be uniform employees.
- Recruitment of female employees may be considered not only at entry level but also at mid or higher levels, by the management owing to the preferences of male employees to work with and under female peer/superior.
- Considering the perception of male employees about women not being good team player, special training may be imparted for women employees to be a good team player.

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