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7.   **HEADINGS**: All the headings should be in a 10 point Calibri Font. These must be bold-faced, aligned left and fully capitalised. Leave a blank line before each heading.

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9.   **MAIN TEXT**: The main text should follow the following sequence:

        INTRODUCTION

        REVIEW OF LITERATURE

        NEED/IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

        STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

        OBJECTIVES

        HYPOTHESES

        RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

        RESULTS & DISCUSSION

        FINDINGS

        RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

        CONCLUSIONS

        SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

        ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

        REFERENCES

        APPENDIX/ANNEXURE

        It should be in a 8 point Calibri Font, single spaced and justified. The manuscript should preferably not exceed *5000 WORDS*.

10.   **FIGURES &TABLES**: These should be simple, crystal clear, centered, separately numbered & self explained, and **titles must be above the table/figure**. **Sources of data should be mentioned below the table/figure**. It should be ensured that the tables/figures are referred to from the main text.

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BOOKS

•   Bowersox, Donald J., Closs, David J., (1996), "Logistical Management." Tata McGraw, Hill, New Delhi.

•   Hunker, H.L. and A.J. Wright (1963), "Factors of Industrial Location in Ohio" Ohio State University, Nigeria.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO BOOKS

•   Sharma T., Kwatra, G. (2008) Effectiveness of Social Advertising: A Study of Selected Campaigns, Corporate Social Responsibility, Edited by David Crowther & Nicholas Capaldi, Ashgate Research Companion to Corporate Social Responsibility, Chapter 15, pp 287-303.

JOURNAL AND OTHER ARTICLES

•   Schemenner, R.W., Huber, J.C. and Cook, R.L. (1987), "Geographic Differences and the Location of New Manufacturing Facilities," Journal of Urban Economics, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 83-104.

CONFERENCE PAPERS

•   Garg, Sambhav (2011): "Business Ethics" Paper presented at the Annual International Conference for the All India Management Association, New Delhi, India, 19–22 June.

UNPUBLISHED DISSERTATIONS AND THESES

•   Kumar S. (2011): "Customer Value: A Comparative Study of Rural and Urban Customers," Thesis, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.

ONLINE RESOURCES

•   Always indicate the date that the source was accessed, as online resources are frequently updated or removed.

WEBSITES

•   Garg, Bhavet (2011): Towards a New Natural Gas Policy, Political Weekly, Viewed on January 01, 2012 http://epw.in/user/viewabstract.jsp

EMERGING PROFILE OF WOMEN IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECTOR IN GOA

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ABSTRACT

At the macro level, the presence of women employees in the IT sector is critical both from the progressive aspects of such inclusion and the various issues and challenges that it poses to the new age woman. The IT sector provides a platform for greater economic advancement and equal work opportunities for women employees. This paper, based on secondary and primary data, presents a profile of 50 women employees in the IT sector in Goa and attempts to understand various opportunities, issues, challenges faced by these women employees in this sector. The analysis of primary survey reveals that the IT woman finds working for long hours and the travel factor the most difficult part of her employment. She favours flexitime, and prefers better support systems at home, and expects the IT sector employer to offer her childcare and other facilities at workplace.

KEYWORDS
Information technology, women, job, employee.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND
RATIONALE AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The rationale for studying the critical role that women employees in the Information Technology sector play in our society and economy can be better understood when we consider some macro aspects .In the nation as a whole, where work participation rates for women are generally low, where there is a greater presence of women in the unorganised sector than in the organised sector, the Information Technology woman represents an advancement and progress in the economy and society. She is undoubtedly the new age woman, in terms of her levels of educational attainment and her career aspirations. The Information Technology industry is to be differently perceived from the rest of the employers. This because, it is showing an increasing participation of women employees over time. Also it shows continuous efforts to include gender sensitivity. One progressive step toward empowerment is the presence of women in more advanced and organised occupations, hence presence of these few women in the IT sector can be considered as a sign of women empowerment. In the labour market, participation of women professional employees in the software sector contributes towards a process called labour deepening. Here labour deepening happens when skills and gender component enhances the existing labour structure.(Basant,2004).The Indian IT-BPO sector is a valued sector in terms of revenue generation, employment generation and value creation. National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM, 2010), the nodal body of Indian IT and ITeS firms, anticipates that owing to an increase in the global requirement for software technology products, the country's information technology sector has potential to generate huge revenues in near future.Both internationally and within the nation, it has powerful linkage effects. The industry has been playing a major role in Indian states and their regional development in terms of diverse pattern of employment generation, creating consumer spending, contributing to innovations, and its social responsibility towards education, health and awareness in society. As far as the gender dimension goes, the Information technology sector has unique application as it is a sector characterised by features and issues like strength of enrolment, retention of employees, specific skills required (communication and articulation of women employees).The sector currently is moving towards greater gender inclusivity. Though IT sector can be looked at as a sector that places a woman in a valued position, in terms of societal progress, empowerment, labour market deepening, it is not devoid of problems, issues and challenges. Long and at times odd hours of work, travelling, safety at and beyond workplace, need for support systems at work and at home are some of the many issues that characterise a woman's work in the IT sector.(Upadhyay2007,Lavarasan 2008)

Goa and Information Technology-Goa is a state with a small geographical area and a population of 15 lakhs, yet it has made rapid advancements in the last 50 years of post-liberation era, in tourism, and industry. It is recognised as a state with one of highest per capita incomes in India. The emergence of the IT sector though is a recent development of the last 15 years. The presence of a few IT majors and a number of small players has opened up fresh avenues for women to enter the job market. It is estimated that there are around 200 women professionals in middle and higher end professional IT jobs in Goa.(This excludes the BPO sector).Thus, the existing Information Technology network is very small and yet to develop in terms of employment potential. The IT policy of Goa was gazetted on 17th November 2005, with an initiative to give a boost to the IT sector. When the government announced the IT policy, it stated thus-'The Government of Goa is committed to making Goa a leading Information Technology State in India. It is committed to make Margao-Verna-Vasco-Panaji-Mapusa corridor, one of the leading centres for software development in the world. In order to make Goa a leading Information Technology State of India, the Government of Goa hereby announces its Information Technology Policy.'In a significant development towards securing employment for local youth,the government offered an incentive to IT entrepreneurs employing Goans in the IT industry and its enabled services at the rate of Rs 15000 per employee per annum. Also power and water tariff rebates were offered.

Experts at that time felt that it was an industry friendly policy that offered a number of incentives based on parameters which had been well thought of. Experts felt that there was a need to focus on its implementation, which was to be a bigger challenge. There are quite a few issues that need to be tackled said experts, like development of IT infrastructure, the proper implementation of the IT policy, and the rapid growth of IT related infrastructure (Nadkarni, 2011).So many years down the line, the Goa government has yet to offer an environment conducive to the growth of IT infrastructure, offered in other states. The neighbouring states like Maharashtra and Karnataka have offered longer term income tax concessions and excise exemptions, and have been liberal with the handling of land at concessional rates for developing software parks. The much proposed IT habitat envisaged at Dona Paula is yet to take shape, as various political considerations have also come as an impediment to the setting up of the much envisaged IT infrastructure in Goa. The popular perception one gathers from IT specialists and experts in Goa is that all favour the development of IT as it is a pollution free sector, capable of employment generation and revenue generation. If the sector develops, it would open up newer employment opportunities for men and women alike. A hugely spread education network in terms of government and private engineering colleges that train graduates for Information Technology and Computer sciences, a vast network of degree colleges that offer degrees in computer science, the introduction of IT as a subject for degree courses, and post graduate studies in Computer Applications have rendered immense opportunities for aspiring girl students. Besides, a generally conducive and safe atmosphere for females who seek education and jobs makes Goa a state capable of promise and potential for a woman IT professional.

OBJECTIVES
1. To present a profile of the woman employee in the information technology sector in Goa
2. To understand the opportunities, challenges, issues, perceptions of women employees in the IT sector.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
The paper has relied on both secondary data and primary data sources. Secondary data was used for purpose of reviewing the presence, potential of the women in Information Technology Sector in Goa .Primary data was generated and analysed at two levels:

1. *At the first level*, *In depth interviews* were conducted with the relevant experts in the Information Technology sector to understand their views on women employees and their scope and potential in the IT sector of Goa.

2. *At the second level, a survey* was conducted on around 50 women employees, from 5-7 organisations having software services in Goa.(However the names of the companies have not been revealed in this paper in order to maintain confidentiality which is requested by certain companies).

The sample size of 50 women constituted 25% of the Goa's total women employee base. This survey elicited information by asking close-ended and open-ended questions to employees. The close ended questions elicited information on general profiles of these women like

1. Age profile,
2. Parents' educational levels
3. Marital status,
4. Migration status,
5. The influences on their career.

The *qualitative dimensions* of women employees were studied with the use of *open ended questions*, which yielded important insights on the following major issues that currently affect the women in IT sector.

1. Women's opportunities, challenges, issues as IT employees.
2. Their gender perceptions on issues related to support systems, attitude of male colleagues, discrimination at workplace.
3. Their views on the IT job and its importance, their experiences of IT job, their perceptions of its merits and demerits .
4. Their opinions on facilities like flexitime for women, presence of support facilities like childcare centres at workplace.
5. Information on various qualitative dimensions of the job

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The section below presents the discussion and results of the primary survey of 50 women employees. Through the profile, an attempt is made to understand the presence, prospects, opportunities, issues and challenges of these women employees in the IT sector.

AGE PROFILE OF WOMEN

44% of the women belonged to the 26-30 age group,34% of women ,belonged to the 21-25 age group.12% belonged to the 31-35 age group, followed by 8% women in the 40 and above category. The least of them belonged to the 36-40 years age group.

FIGURE 1
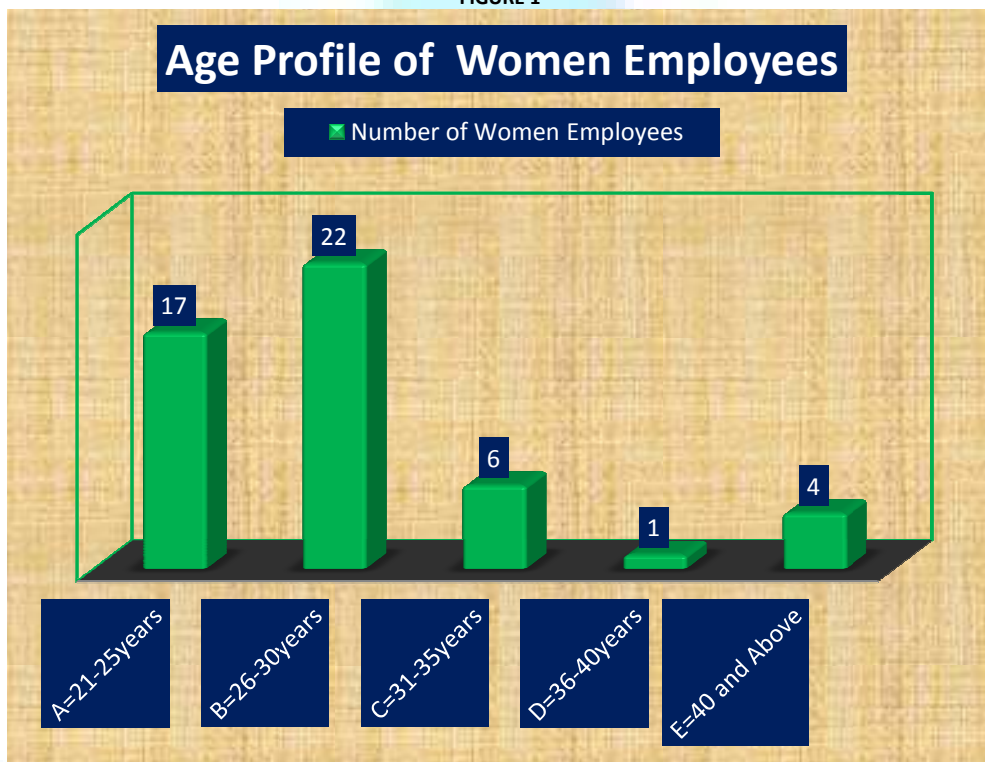
Source: Author's own

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES

Educational Qualification.	No. of Women Employees
BE	34
MCA	7
M Tech	4
MBA	3
ME	1
MS	1

Source: Author's own

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Out of 50 women,34 women had a degree in engineering,7 had completed their masters in computer applications,3 had postgraduation in business administration.Six of the women had done masters in their engineering profession.Out of these 4 had attained an M.Tech degree,1 had attained M.E. and 1 had attained M.S. degree.

PARENT'S EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

FIGURE 2

Mother's Educational Levels
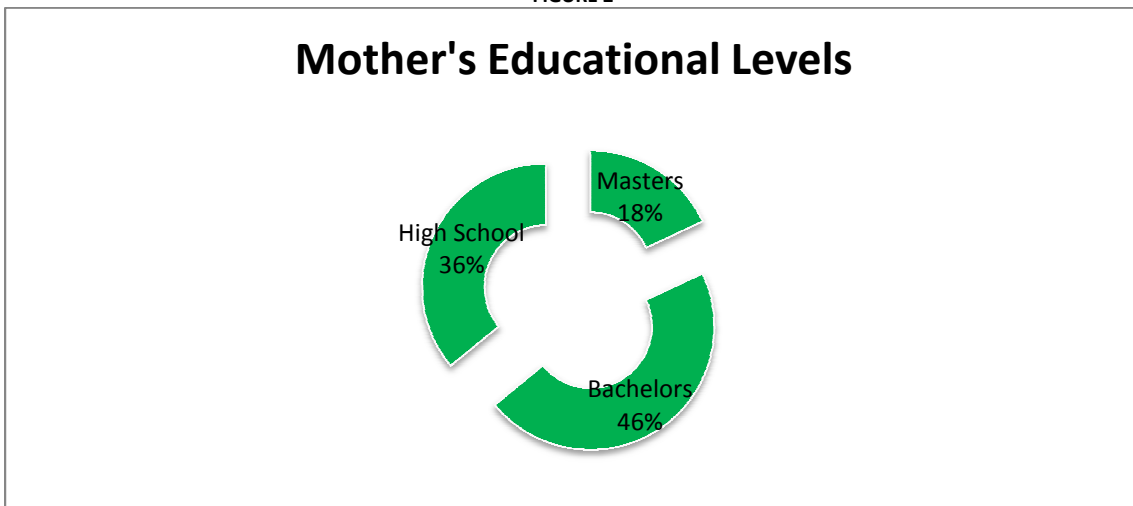
Source: Author's own

Mothers of all employees had good educational background.23 mothers had a bachelors degree, 18 had completed high school and 9 had completed their masters.

FATHER'S EDUCATIONAL LEVELS

Similarly, fathers of all employees had good educational background.4 fathers had a high school degree, 34 had a Bachelors degree, 9 had a Masters degree and 3 were Ph.D holders.

Thus, all the women employees surveyed had both parents with good educational backgrounds.

FIGURE 3

Father's Educational Levels
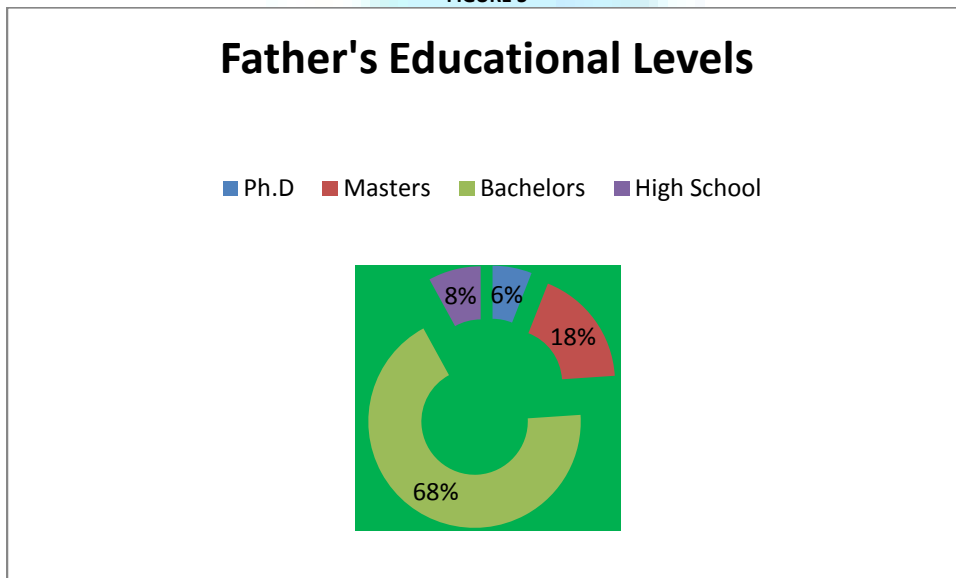
Source: Author's own

AREA OF RESIDENCE

FIGURE 4

Parents' Place of Residense
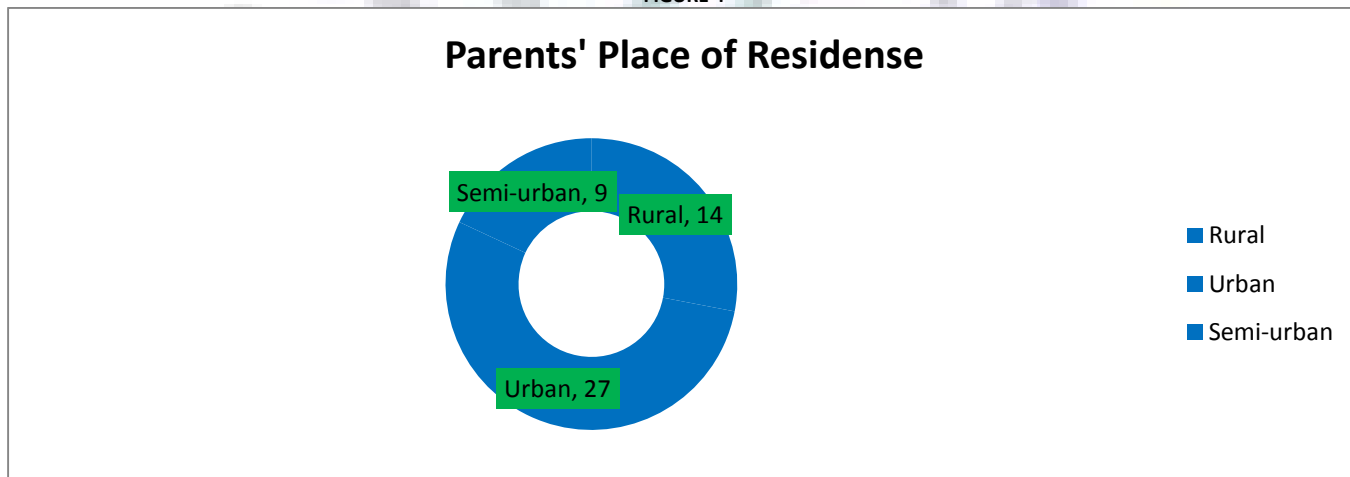
Source: Author's own

Out of the 50 women in the sample, more than half, that is 27 belonged to urban areas, 14 belonged to rural areas and the rest 9 belonged to semi-urban areas.

CAREER INFLUENCES ON WOMEN EMPLOYEES

The career that a woman takes up is often shaped by other important people in her early life like teachers and parents. When asked about who was the greatest influence in the early stage of their career,26 women stated that they themselves decided on their career choice.For 17 women, their parents had been the most influential factor.4 women appeared to have been influenced by their teachers. The rest 3 had been influenced by their friends.This means that though many women took up their careers on their own, some had been influenced by parents, teachers and even friends.

FIGURE 5

Career Influences On Women Employees

Source: Author's own

MIGRATORY FEATURES AND THE IT JOB

12 out of 50 women were not of native Goan origin and had migrated to Goa due to work reasons. The rest 38 employees belonged to Goa, were educated in the state and later were absorbed in the IT sector in Goa. Thus immigration of women had happened on account of the sector's employment opportunities. Also some women employees had friends who out migrated from Goa to other states in search of IT sector jobs.
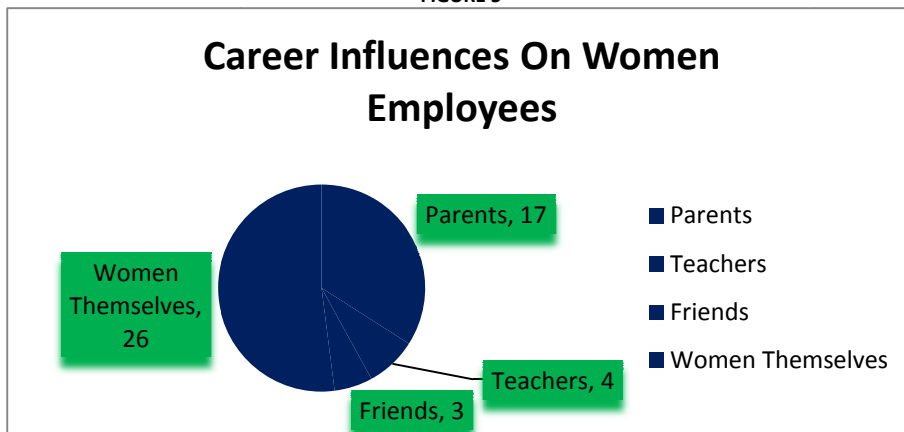
MARITAL STATUS AND RELATED FACTORS

For a female employee, marriage plays a critical role in influencing many work related aspects like, flexible timings, hours of work, career growth, work -life balance ,travelling ,etc. In addition to this, marital status can affect the job when it concerns the woman's maternity and other breaks, the presence of support systems at her home etc.

Out of the 50 women interviewed, 29 were married and 21 were unmarried. Majority of women (37 out of 50) were of the opinion that marital status of a woman does affect her career and decisions in a major way.

FIGURE 6

Marital Status
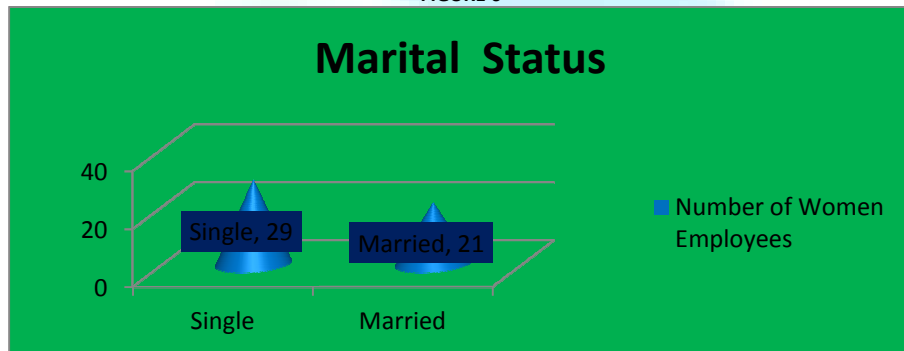
Source: Author's own

FIGURE 7

Opinion on Effect of Marriage on Career
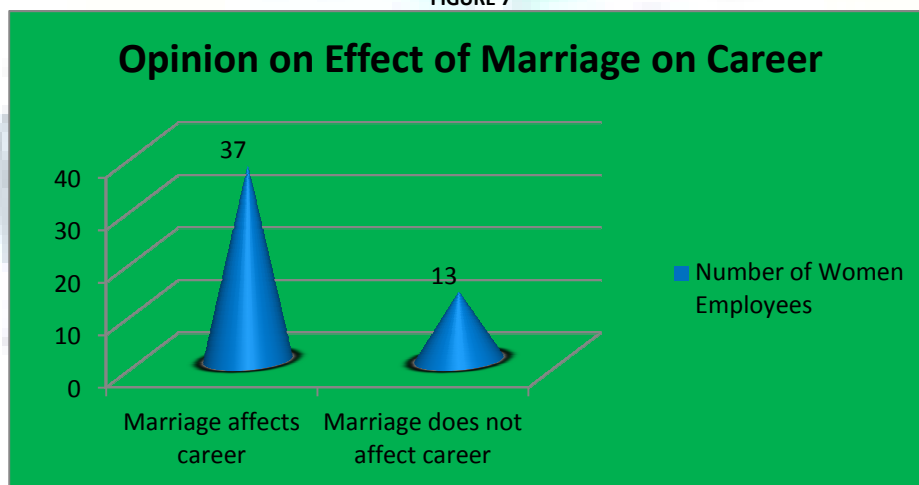
Source: Author's own

FLEXITIME PREFERENCES

Out of 50, majority of women(41 women) preferred flexitime, whereas only 9 did not favour the application of flexitime at workplace

Merits of Flexible timings for women: Majority of women who favoured flexitime viewed it as a great convenience for a female employee and felt that it could make child care easy, help to maintain work life balance, help them to fulfil family responsibilities in a better way, as also to attend to some personal priorities

and to do full justice to their career and homes. The women with kids often found it difficult to entrust the kids with maids and felt flexitime at work can greatly help resolve this issue.

FIGURE 8
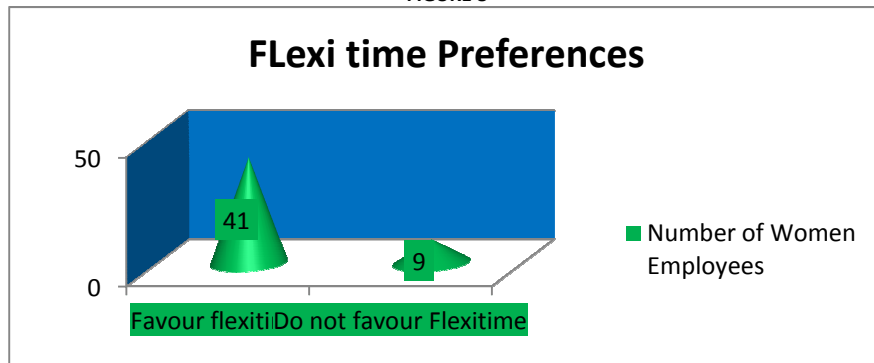
Source: Author's own

Demerits of Flexible timings for women- The four reasons which the women felt can affect the implementation of flexitime are:

1. Flexible may pile up the workload for the woman eventually.
2. Flexible timings for women can cause delay of assigned work of the employee and affect overall team performance or entire project performance.
3. Some women feel that women employees should learn to manage with time, if they expect to be treated on par with men.
4. Sometimes, there is a tendency to stay back even when not required by the demands at home.

JOB PROFILE/OPINIONS OF WOMEN ON PROFESSION RELATED ASPECTS

OPPORTUNITY IN THIS IT SECTOR AS A WOMAN EMPLOYEE

The most important opportunities cited by women employees in the IT sector were taking on leadership roles, and onsite opportunities. They also felt that the IT sector provided opportunities for working with experienced people, and that they gained from such interactions. Most women tried to foresee good career avenues and bright future in the IT sector

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE/ISSUE AT WORKPLACE FOR WOMEN EMPLOYEES

Working for 9 hours and beyond and the long hours of work was cited as the most critical challenge at workplace by the employees. The second biggest challenge which the women faced is late transport and its adverse effects. A few women found meeting work deadlines on time a challenge.

A FEW LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE JOB FOR WOMEN EMPLOYEES

The IT women felt that the sector trained them in technical and soft skills, and focused on developing their leadership skills and thus created enough exposure for them. The employees felt that the sector enabled them to have increased client interactions, and thereby helped them to enhance their communicative and interactive skills and gave them a sense of fulfilment.

FEW LOVED ASPECTS OF THE IT PROFESSION

The employees ranked 'good job environment' as the most loved aspect of the job. The other loved aspects of the job were, innovativeness involved in the job, working on client projects, being self-directed, opportunities to socialise, interactive opportunities with various people. Some women loved aspects related to knowledge seeking, self dependence, competitive environment and travel aspects of the IT job. Just a single woman felt that 'monetary gain' was the single most loved aspect of her job.

ONE MOST DISLIKED ASPECT ABOUT THE IT PROFESSION

Majority of women felt 'the long working hours' as the disliked aspect of the IT sector job, and they also favoured flexitime as a solution to this difficulty

RELATIVE RANKINGS OF JOB

The respondents were told to rank the importance of the following five major aspects in relation to their job

1.   The monetary benefits of the job
2.   The ability to feel empowered through the job
3.   The feeling of being a worthy human being
4.   The ability to socialise on account of the job
5.   The sense of prestige associated with the job

The women accorded highest priority to prestige factor associated with the job. The second most important aspect to them was the feeling of empowerment they got as women. The ability to socialise was the third most favoured aspect followed by the monetary benefits of the job. The lowest priority was accorded to the ability of the job to make them better human beings.

TREATMENT AND ATTITUDE OF MALE EMPLOYEES AT WORKPLACE

23 women termed the attitude of their men employees at workplace as 'cooperative', followed by 18 women who termed it as 'highly cooperative', and 9 women who termed the attitude as 'fairly cooperative'. None felt that their male colleagues are uncooperative towards them.

FIGURE 9

Source: Author's own

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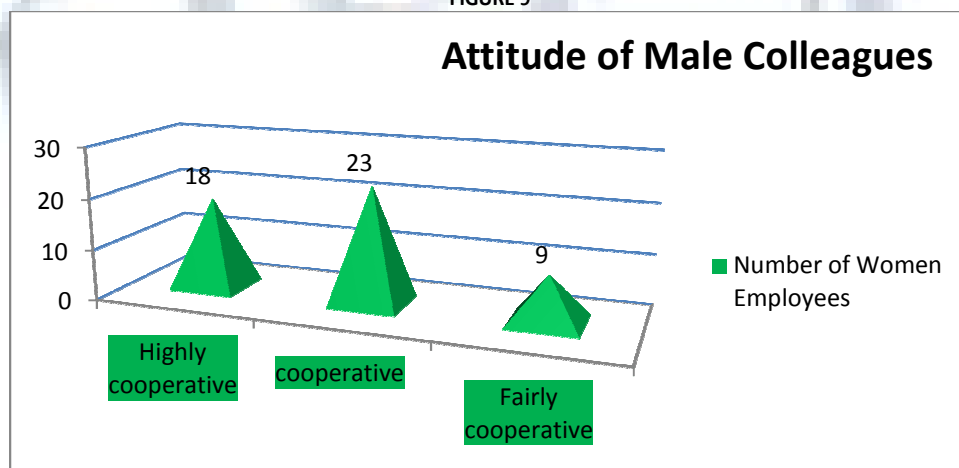
BREAKS AT WORK

Out of 50 women interviewed,27 had taken a major break after joining the work. Out of these 27,12 took a break for meeting family obligations,6 women had maternity break and 5 went on a break for health reasons .Only 2 women reported a sort of disconnect when they joined back after the break. The rest 25 had no problems getting back to work.23 women had not taken any major break from work.

TABLE 2

Reasons for Major Break	
Reasons for Major Break	Number of Women Employees
Maternity	6
Family Obligations	12
Health Reasons	5
No Break	23
Family +health reasons	2
Family +maternity reasons	2

THE NEED FOR SUPPORT SYSTEMS AT HOME

Majority of women strongly felt that women employees need better support systems at home, in comparison to men. This, they said could help them maintain a proper balance between work and home.

FIGURE 10
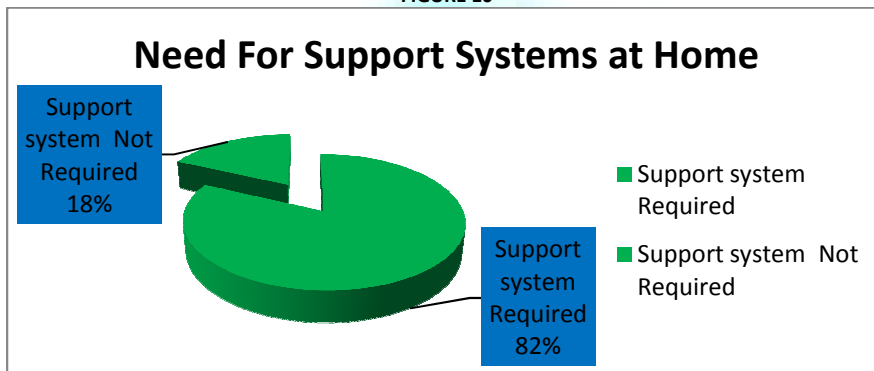
Source: Author's own

WORKPLACE TREATMENT FOR WOMEN EMPLOYEES

38 out of 50 employees feel they are treated at par with their men colleagues and their superiors never make them feel subordinated in comparison to their male counterparts.

FIGURE 11
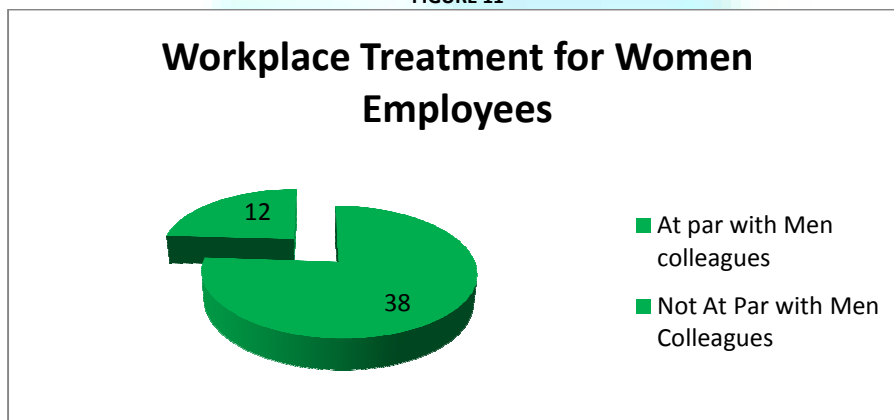
Source: Author's own

OPINION OF WOMEN ON IT SECTOR AND CAREER AND GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN EMPLOYEES

39 out of 50 employees opined that the IT sector offers women career growth and opportunities at par with their men colleagues. Most onsite and other training avenues were being equally made available to them, said many women. There was no discrimination overtly observed or sensed by the interviewed women at workplace.

FIGURE 12

Source: Author's own

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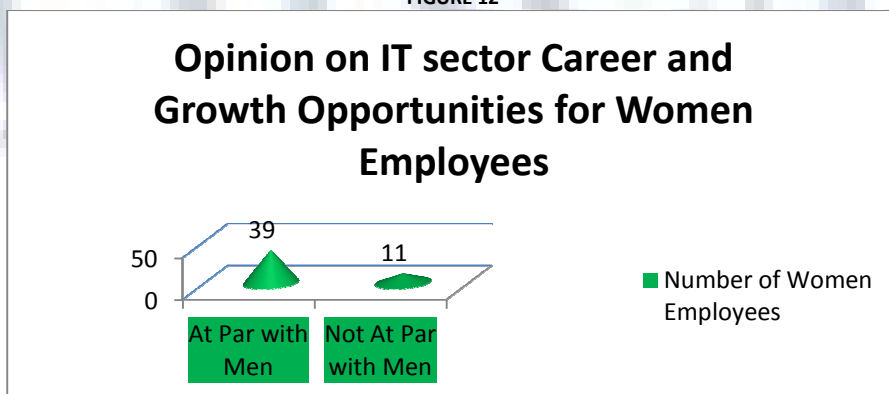
SOME QUALITATIVE DIMENSIONS OF WOMEN'S WORK

Some of the comments made (or reactions) by women employees which are crucial to this study and deserve a quote are.

'During this time of my phase, when husband is out of station for long, it is really difficult. Only hope is my brother's wife, she is much more caring than my mother and father and husband. She supports me a lot even though she is not educated. She is my role model.' (A pregnant woman employee)

My mother forced me to take up more and more education. Father was OK with anything. But, my mother wanted me to be one step better than my other siblings. (A woman on her attainment of educational qualification)

My husband has his off on Thursday. Sometimes he forces me to stay back at home, which I don't like.(A married woman with a strong sense of independence)

CONCLUSION

At the macro level, the presence of women employees in the IT sector is critical both from the progressive aspects of such inclusion and the various issues and challenges that it poses to the new age woman. The IT sector provides a platform for greater economic advancement and equal work opportunities for women employees. The development of the sector is not uniform through the states. In Goa, the sector is nascent, but has potential due to conducive pre employment conditions like availability of good IT education. The network of private and public organisations is expanding, and women have avenues in these organisations.

The primary analysis reveals some important findings

1. The IT woman is young, articulate, independent and ambitious.
2. Her parents (both mother and father) have good educational background.
3. She finds her job promising, yet experiences certain challenges and issues in relation to her job
4. She finds working for long hours and the travel factor the most difficult part of her employment.
5. She favours flexitime, and prefers better support systems at home, and expects the IT sector to offer her childcare and other facilities at workplace.

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