Eroding citizenship: gender and labour in contemporary India
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CHAPTER 5

Gendered Labour Regimes Established in the Era of De-regulation

This chapter delineates the features of gendered labour regimes that were established in the era of de-regulation. From the mid-eighties onwards, a number of enterprises were established with closer technical collaboration with foreign capital. The internal dynamics, structure of the labour force and managerial practices in these enterprises are quite distinct from the two gendered labour regimes discussed previously.

Gendered Labour Regime 3: Patriarchal Despotism: 'Daughter/Insiders and Migrant/Outsiders'

This gendered labour regime approximates most closely to the stereotype that emerged from the early literature on women workers in world market factories, yet there are differences. The features of this type are drawn from data from four factories which are large-sized units, employing between 150 to 350 workers. These factories are linked with multinational electronic companies in a subcontracting relationship. Calcom Electronics produces tuners, colour picture tubes and televisions on subcontract for other companies. Phillips, Netherlands takes around 80 per cent of their output while other companies such as Videocon, Uptonica take the rest. The company has six plants in Delhi and employs around 700 workers, with an annual turnover of between Rs. 100-125 crores (ten million). The plants are split primarily to benefit from the official concessions given to small-scale industries. In fact, two of the factories studied Calcom Electronics and Calcom Plastics Limited, located in Okhla Industrial Estate, were started in 1991 and are run practically by the same management.

Monica Electronics is a plant of the well-known Onida company, which ranked highest in sales and ratings of reliability in 1987.¹ The company started with the manufacture of electronic watches, and then shifted to audio items and telephones. By 1985 the plants were manufacturing colour televisions. The company had a technical collaboration with the Japanese company JVC and used the latest technology as well as training and management techniques from Japan. Kits were imported from JVC component units in Japan and assembled in the Indian units. The products were primarily for the local market, for which
there is an increasing demand. In the nineties, the company had also started exporting.

*As-Impex* was a new kind of enterprise started in 1994. This plant is an example of a second-tier subcontractor for large well-known companies such as Onida, Weston and BPL-Sanyo, which have international subcontracting links. The plant manufactured televisions and spare parts and employed over 150 workers. There was a mixture of features in this factory. Though it was supposed to be an independent subcontractor supplying to different companies, a number of the workers had been trained in the company to which the factory supplies products, such as Onida. All four enterprises described above have varying kinds of subcontracting arrangements. However, they share a similar labour process based on the latest production techniques, and recruit a similar type of workforce. The subcontracting unit *As-Impex*, for instance, replicates the same production process for television manufacture, and has been set up primarily to take advantage of the concessions to new small-scale units and to meet increased demand. In all the factories there was a formalised training system. Workers started as probationers for six months, and then moved to the category of regular workers. After another six months, they were given a written contract as permanent workers. Calcom Electronics had a special training institute in its unit located in Wazirpur, and ME trained workers for *As-Impex*.

**Automated labour process and rigid gender division of labour**

These factories are characterised by a more automated production process. The production process in Monica Electronics, which was similar to that in Calcom and *As-Impex*, except for minor variations, was divided into eight sections.

*Diagram 5.1 Automated production process*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Insertion</th>
<th>Auto-soldering</th>
<th>Touch-up</th>
<th>EHT fixing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-assembly</td>
<td>Pre-testing</td>
<td>Final testing</td>
<td>Servicing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wire cutting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some sections such as soldering had been automated, and an automatic conveyor belt ensured continuous flow production in the assembly sections. The sexual division of labour was sharpest at the two ends of the production process: only women did insertion of components and only men did servicing of the final product. In the Auto-soldering section, men did the soldering and women carried out visual checks. In the rest of the sections, men and women worked on the
same jobs. However, the ratio of men and women was not equal. For instance, in the Touch-up section there were 40 women and 10 men; in Wire cutting, 35 women and 5 men; and in Pre-testing, 12 women and 8 men. The automated sections such as soldering had 5 men and 5 women. The numerical dominance of women is seen also in that the Insertion section had 60 women, while Servicing had only 6 men.

Initially women and men were spatially separated. Women worked in the basement and men on the floor above, reflecting a sharper sexual division of labour. The reason given by the personnel Manager for changing this was, strangely enough, related to ‘harassment’. The men used to peek through the windows and tease the women.

I then suggested that some women should also be sent up but they felt shy. Then we chose tough women who could answer back and sent them to the men’s section – after that we have had no problems. (S. Kumar, Personnel Manager, Monica Electronics)

Reflecting the more modernised production process, jobs had clear designations and there was an occupational hierarchy in each production line and department. Each line had from the lowest level upwards: Relief Operators, Machine Operators, Quality Control Checkers, Group leader, Supervisor, Assistant Technicians, and Technician and Engineers for the whole department. The Relief Operators/Girls took over any seat that was empty. Technicians and Engineers were all men and the group leaders and line supervisors were usually women. There was one glaring difference in designations between men and women doing the same job: men were called Production Assistants and women were called Assistant Technicians in Monica Electronics.

Wage differentials: gender and skill

All the workers had permanent job status and written contracts. When they joined, they were placed as apprentices for training for a three-month period, during which they received a stipend of Rs. 500. After six months, workers were made permanent. A section of the workers in ME had been employed for ten years and had seen an improvement in their wages. In 1987, Assistant Technicians received Rs. 600 consolidated. In 1995, their wages ranged between Rs. 3000 and 3600, although their designation remained the same. However, the wages for new recruits in ME and in the other factories ranged between Rs. 1395 and 1490 for production workers. The high percentage in the category above minimum wage in the figure below is due to the predominance of ME workers with over ten years of service.
Table 5.1 Percentage of workers in minimum wage categories GLR 3 (rates on August 1, 1994)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Per cent women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below minimum wage, up to Rs 1419</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled minimum wage Rs.1420-1585</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled minimum wage Rs.1585-1843</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled minimum wage Rs. 1844-2000</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above minimum wage Rs. 2001 +</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GLR3 sample: 36 women

Apart from a section of Monica Electronics workers who were considered skilled workers, all the other women were considered unskilled workers. In spite of that, only 11 percent were getting the minimum wage for unskilled workers. The majority had wages below the statutory minimum wage fixed for that period.

In these factories, there was also a gendered job hierarchy that was reflected in the higher maximum wage available for men production workers. In most sections where women and men did the same work, the basic wage was the same. However, through indirect means the take-home pay of men workers in some sections was higher. For instance, in ME men got an increment bonus of 40 per cent, and women an increment bonus of 20 per cent. In Calcom wage differentials were based on the possession of a technical diploma from a polytechnic or from one of the Industrial Training Institutes, which a number of the men possessed. This differential did not imply that they did different work from the women.

The companies differed in the range of non-wage benefits provided to workers. In ME, workers were provided with all the legally entitled leave, provident fund, ESI and 20 per cent bonus as well as uniforms and transport, after women workers had demanded these in 1987. In Calcom and As-Impex, workers got the entitled leave, 20 per cent bonus and ESI benefits, but there were irregularities in the deposit of provident fund by the company and they did not get uniforms or transport. None of the factories had a crèche.

Multiple forms of labour control

Labour control in this gendered labour regime is based on the deployment of a number of mechanisms. Some are part of a conscious management strategy, and others arise from the nature of the workforce and production process. Three main mechanisms can be identified: Technical/bureaucratic control embedded in the production process; gender and ethnic divisions in the workforce; and influence of social institutions of the labour market: the family and the neighbourhood.
I. Technical/bureaucratic control

Continuous process production required an evolved system of work discipline. In these factories, a formalised procedure of reward and punishment was instituted. In ME for instance, lines and departments were divided into groups with a group leader. Group leaders filed daily personal reports on each operator, and target achievements for each group were displayed on a board. Competition between groups as well as individual workers was achieved through awards such as Best Group, Best Operator, Best Attendance and Best All Rounders. In Calcom, the award of Best Performance for the group and individual worker played the same role. Productivity increases were closely monitored. If a group exceeded the target, and the productivity increase was maintained at least for a week, they were given a gift — usually a packet of biscuits. After a month, the production norm was raised for all the groups. Quality Control checkers and group leaders were under considerable pressure to motivate their groups and ensure that there were no mistakes. Every six months, there were wage increments as well on the basis of daily reports. This was in lieu of a system of promotions. The Daily Report included items such as discipline, ways of working, breakage, and extra work. The work pressure was reflected in the fact that most of these workers said that they found it difficult to maintain the targets.

Punishment was also formalised and procedural. If workers were late to work, they immediately received a warning letter. In ME this rarely occurred, since there was a company bus. Going to the toilet was also formally regulated — each time they went, workers had to sign in a register. Unlike the personalised despotism of the foreman so evident in GLR2, regulation and discipline was impersonalised to a large extent. Although there were conflicts between workers, group leaders and production engineers in particular (see below), in general workers did not complain about the production process per se. As Akhram noted ‘the graphs are there for everyone to see so there is not much to argue about’ (see Work Sheet, Appendix IV).

Group leaders were chosen by the workers, and this also created a sense of personal responsibility.

We get points on the performance of the work — if I make a mistake then my points are cut. Till now we do not have a system of fines. If we do what the group leader says then no complaint is made. It depends on us what kind of group leader we choose and how we deal with them. (Geeta, assistant technician, ME)

There were no unions in these factories till 1995. In ME there was a union which was broken by the management. Then an organisation called the ‘sansad’ was established, which met every week and handled grievances as well as issues of productivity.
2. Gender and ethnic divisions

The significance of gender as a form of control emerges through an examination of the contradictory and different discourses deployed by management, women and men workers over the sexual division of labour. The following discussion is based on data from Monica Electronics collected in 1987, and then is updated with data collected in 1995 in the same company.

Confirming the general trend in Indian industry of employer preference for male labour, the company had first hired only men (Banerjee, 1991c). When workers tried to form a union, a large number were dismissed and young unmarried women – migrants from Kerala and Delhi-based – were hired. Migrant men from Kerala were also recruited. In 1987, the composition of the workforce was 100 women migrants from Kerala, 79 women from Delhi and Faridabad, 50 men migrants from Kerala and 21 men from Delhi. The perceptions and discourses about ‘women’s work’ and ‘men’s work’ have to be seen in the context of these shifts in recruitment policies.

Women workers saw themselves as capable of doing any job on the production line. This was based on the fact that they often substituted for men in situations of male absenteeism, during peak production periods or rush orders.

There is no difference between men’s and women’s work...although it is true that women are more soft-hearted (weak). However, it is not true that they work less. All are equal. How can there be a difference when we know that we can stand in for them? We can do their work equally well. (Geeta, assistant technician, female)

At an immediate level, all the workers would say that the real differences were based on individual capacities rather than gender. However, further discussion would bring out significant gender differences in the methods and attitudes towards work.

Women work better. They work consistently for one to one-and-a-half hours without moving on the job. Boys also work hard but they keep getting up, going for a cigarette... What can I say? That is why there are fewer men now. (Sarla, assistant technician, female)

The similarity of tasks could not be denied by men either. Even where tasks were differentiated, as in the auto-soldering section where men handled the machines and women did the visual checks, men acknowledged that if women were trained, they could handle most machines. At the same time a link was constantly made between heavy machines and masculine physical strength. Qualities of ‘speed, dexterity and lightness’, the hallmark of managerial constructions of essentially female qualities, were projected as essentially masculine attributes. Feminine qualities were seen as ‘fear, delicacy and sensitivity’ which impinged negatively on women’s capacity to work. As a result, the recognition of women workers’ skills and competence at work – facts
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difficult to deny – was combined with a mixture of derogatory and paternalist judgements on their naivety and vulnerability as women.

Both men and women do the same work. Women also do heavy work, but there are differences. Men work on other machines – women cannot work on them because it is too difficult. Women would need to have speed, lightness, dexterity (spurti) to do that. If they are trained perhaps they also can do the work. They do work on similar machines but those are the Japanese type. (Akram, production technician, male)

Women get scared, they don’t say anything. They are hard working but so are men who have responsibilities. Those who do not have responsibilities tend to play the fool. Women cannot do soldering because one needs to be quick with the machines, and they can’t bear the heat. (Ram Naresh, production technician, male)

The issue of soldering is an important one, since this was one section where men had a clearly identified task different from that of the women in the same section. Interestingly, the women were also not too keen on taking on soldering work. This was not because they could not do it, but because it violated notions of femininity: soldering required wearing goggles to protect the eyes which made them look ‘odd’ and made their faces sweaty.

Managerial discourses on women’s and men’s work, however, emphasised that these very same ‘feminine qualities’, i.e. dexterity, delicacy, ‘the training by parents which made girls more responsible and diligent in their work’, sincerity and docility made women better workers than men. Women workers were seen as able to do the same jobs as men, in fact better than men.

The fact that we have only women as relief workers shows that the work in all sections can be done by anyone. We have learnt through past experience that women are more sincere. They are easy to convince. They devote themselves to the work, since they are taught traditionally by parents to be more responsible. Such training is useful for this kind of work. (S. Kumar, personnel manager, male)

Given this classic package of the special qualities of women workers, why didn’t the management shift to a women-only workforce? Although management said this ideal had to be jettisoned due to the restrictions of protective legislation (i.e. a ban on night work), given the frequency of overtime and rush production schedules, in fact the employment of men was a more complex issue related to the gendered politics of production.

The conflicting constructions of masculinity and femininity in the statements have to be seen in the context of a three-way power struggle as management substituted women in place of men, and used this as a threat to discipline the men. Tension between women and men workers was expressed in the shifting meanings of masculinity and femininity, as men tried to carve out and preserve an ‘essentially masculine, heavy machine’ area of work, while at the same time
appropriating women’s qualities for themselves. The use of women to discipline men also emerges in the way in which the issue of sexual harassment was handled, as mentioned earlier. Rather than creating barriers and maintaining the initial spatial separation, management used ‘tough women who talk back’ to handle the men, who now had not only to stop visual harassment but also had to accept the presence of these women in their own department.

Conflict between supervisors and production-line workers became simultaneously a gender struggle, since most of the supervisors (group leaders) were women. Men found it difficult to accept women in supervisory positions.

I want to leave this company because they do not give work according to capacity. I was shifted because I told the group leader I would slap her. I didn’t abuse her or anything. She was hassling me about the target and I said to her, ‘What’s your problem? I’ll do it in my own time’. She started screaming at me so I told her I’d slap her — then they shifted me from that section. (Ram Naresh, production technician, male)

Managerial deployment of a discourse on the ‘more productive’ capacities of women workers created a constant feeling among men that they could lose their jobs. They identified negative feminine attributes in women workers, and presented these as reasons for the incapacity of women to do certain jobs. In addition, men workers emphasised that the same feminine qualities were reasons for the lack of a joint alliance as workers against the management. Men thereby represented women workers as doubly incompetent – at their work as well as in unionisation and organising against management. Women workers, on the other hand, responded to company policy and male worker resentment by flaunting their special qualities of patience and diligence at work, reconstructing broader social models of femininity in the workplace. These dynamics of the politics of production reveal another aspect of the ‘nimble fingers’ argument which is not only used by management but also by workers as they struggle to define their claims to particular kinds of work.

In 1995, the tension between men and women in Monica Electronics had ebbed. Men had seen that in spite of the preference for young unmarried women, there was a space for them. There was still resentment that wage differentials did not take into account that married men had more responsibilities, and that men should therefore be paid more. However, since wage increases as well as most non-wage benefits had been given to all workers, this remained a latent resentment rather than an overt tension. In Calcom, a similar tension had existed between men who had an ITI diploma and women who had a diploma from the Calcom Training Centre in Wazirabad. This tension however was overtaken by the common struggle for designations and revised minimum wages.

Daughter/insiders and migrant/outsiders: Divisions between women workers

In addition to gender divisions, the other axis of difference used by management was between the Delhi-based North Indians and the Kerala
migrants. This difference was also accentuated and played out around perceptions of productivity and capacity to work. Management saw the women from Kerala as more educated, even though their qualifications were not substantially different from those of the North Indians. Ethnicity, education and class differences were combined to stress the different capacities of the two groups of women workers.

The women from Kerala are more educated and well behaved. They do not mix with others – just do their work quietly and go home. The Delhi girls, especially those who come from a better background, tend to talk back – they are bold. (S.K, personnel manager, ME, male)

The migrants themselves distinguished the way they worked from the rest of the workers. As Annama put it:

Malayali workers are ‘sincere’ in their work, they are more ‘hardworking’; whatever they are asked to do they do. We come from so far away – we need the job, so we never say no to any work. (Annama, group leader, female)

Such comparisons were constantly reiterated in discussions about production targets, as well as among group leaders. The North Indian women were constantly made to feel that they were less productive. A simmering resentment against the migrants found expression in racist attitudes and remarks about their colour and cultural habits. The North Indians, particularly Punjabis, never let an opportunity pass in dropping remarks about these women who were ‘kali-kali’ and ‘chawl khane wale’ (dark-complexioned-black and rice eaters). The women from Kerala complained that they were called ‘madrasis’ (a general epithet used by North Indians to classify all South Indians).

Here people keep calling us ‘Madras, Madras’ – we are not Madrasi, we are from Kerala. It takes hours to go from Kerala to Madras. I asked them why they say so – they said our language is difficult. But there are many languages – Tamil and Malayalam are different. Then they say because we are from the South so we are not Hindustani. If we speak another language, then we are seen as not Hindustani. I have tried to explain so often, but they just call us Madrasis. We ourselves do not like Madrasis... (Ramani, visual checker)

In private, the migrant women were characterised in more demeaning terms. They were seen as ‘clever, liars, and promiscuous’ – the same trope mentioned by older women workers in GLR2. The qualities that management lauded were undermined by depicting these women as manipulators who ‘pretended’ to work hard. In the group system where the work of each worker was interlinked and evaluated, the non-migrants felt that the migrant women never shared their knowledge. The charge of ‘promiscuity’ was easy to make since the women were not living under the protection of their natal or marital families. Sharing one room with other women or with a sister and brother-in-law made these women vulnerable to all sorts of sexual innuendo. The view of these women as
promiscuous was one that operated also in the neighbourhood and functioned as an extra-factory form of control, as we shall see in the last section.²

The migrants and the North Indians did not mix in the factory and never met outside. This division was in fact sharper than that between women and men who, in spite of the work tensions, did become friends. There were many jokes about who liked whom, flirtations, and some cases of serious love relationships as well. Just as men were threatened with replacement by women, the North Indian women also felt insecure as management made it clear that migrant/outsiders could be easily hired to replace North Indian women if they challenged factory discipline.

In the subtle power play between management and the workers, the construction of the migrant women workers as more ‘productive, clever, and educated’ functioned as a mechanism of pace setting and operated as a form of regulating productivity within the production process.³ At the same time, migrants were also ‘outsiders’, and here extra-factory institutional structures and ideologies played a role whereby the North Indian women were simultaneously treated like daughters/insiders.

3. Social institutions of the labour market: The family and the neighbourhood

The transference of the family into the factory takes many forms. As noted earlier, employers’ preference for women was expressed in acknowledging the role of parental training which made them more sincere, devoted to their work and responsible. An important component of the analogy of factory and family was the provision of a safe environment for young women. Interestingly, this did not mean a sharply segregated sexual division of labour or spatial restrictions: women and men worked closely together. Safety on the production line was ensured through very strict regulation and surveillance by supervisors who were usually women. Immediate action was taken on any charge of harassment and often led to dismissal of the man. Women were rarely asked to do overtime and if they did, the company bus would drop them home at night. In response to the demand put forward in the sansad, the management of Monica Electronics also agreed to provide daily transport.

The general manager in particular behaved in a very paternal manner with the women. In all the factories, the women spoke of the GM as if he were an indulgent father:

Mr. ____ is always so concerned about us. Whenever we ask him for something he agrees, but he is not like that with the boys. The boys often send one of us to ask for something saying ‘papaji will say yes to the betis’ (daughters).

Being daughters, however, did not only mean getting favoured treatment. It also meant being treated like children, scolded, and above all being obedient. As Sushma describes it:
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Things were very different before we went on strike. Girls used to be so scared to open their mouths, though they could not tolerate so many things. We used to be treated in any odd way. Whoever wanted to exert their authority, in whatever way, they would do it. Those days they would, most of all, *talk down to us*: 'Don’t giggle, what are you showing your teeth for, have you come to work or to visit, haven’t you eaten enough, why do you have to go to the toilet so often'.
(Sushma, line supervisor, Calcom)

There were three standard statements that recurred in discussion with the girls in these factories. They were constantly being told: ‘No leave’, ‘Keep quiet’, ‘You have to do this’. In the interviews the workers recalled the early period of their service as one where they were ‘as quiet as mice’.

*Indirect control: Strangers in the neighbourhood*

Migrant women, although considered ‘outsiders’ and not included in the discourse about daughters, also found the factory a place of safety, but for different reasons. This factor played an important role in their ‘docility’. Although the migrants lived clustered together in the same colony, they were subjected to high levels of harassment by landlords and local *goondas* (thugs). Some of these were the usual forms of harassment all tenants face, such as not being allowed to keep lights on late or put on the television or keep guests. In addition, however, there were more violent forms of harassment which seemed to be directed specifically at the fact that these were young women and migrants. Landlords would sometimes arrive with a gang of *goondas* and demand a deposit of Rs. 25,000. Workers also complained that they had to keep their belongings under lock and key since the landlord often stole their things. The most serious and continuous threat was of sexual harassment by landlords. A number of cases of rape had occurred, but these were never reported to the police. During the latter half of the research period, an incident of rape occurred. This bought out an aspect of the migrant workers’ lives which had not been mentioned in the earlier interviews.

The Malayali workers are quite afraid of the local people. Just two months back in Gobindpuri two girls who shared a room together were raped. The landlord was also involved. After the rape one of the girls was killed. The husband of Rosanna was telling me that during the day none of our women can be left alone – it is not safe. (Dr. Shekhar L. Das, Research Assistant, letter from the field, 1997)

For women migrant workers, residential space contained a constant threat of violence, and the factory provided safety and security. They were rarely absent from work, since to stay at home meant arranging for some male protection. It is significant that the main complaint these migrant workers from Kerala had, had to do with landlords and the neighbourhood. Very few were critical of the employers.
Until 1995, the situation in these factories was one of a complex form of despotism which combined technical/bureaucratic control with strategies which divided workers on gender and ethnic grounds. Conflict tended to be lateral rather than vertical (Burawoy, 1985). These factories presented the typical picture of a hegemonic despotic control regime. However, this was ruptured by an outbreak of spontaneous militancy.

*When daughters become disobedient...*

Being obedient only means exploitation. (Sushma, Calcom)

In April 1994, a major struggle involving most of the workers erupted in the two Calcom factories over the issue of minimum wages and skill designations. In the process, workers formed a union and carried their struggle into the public space of the labour office and courtrooms.

What led to this eruption, this militancy and determination to fight for their rights? None of the workers – women and men – had been employed for more than four years, and there was no union in the factory. Sushma describes the turning point:

Once two girls were quarrelling and shouting at each other. V... (the production engineer) intervened. A third girl told him to keep quiet since it had nothing to do with him. V... got aggressive and yelled at the three girls, abusing them with bad words. The third girl again asked him to quiet down or he would see what would happen to him. In a fit of anger, V... picked up a radio and was about to throw it at them when this girl jumped, held his hand in mid-air and bought it down. Everybody was stunned into silence. For the first time, someone had managed to confront V... and make him behave.

Although the women felt that management would support them, since V... had a bad reputation, in fact the General Manager did not intervene. V... returned from the General Manager's office and continued to grumble and threaten the women. He tried to get Sushma on his side by appealing to her supervisory status. ‘He sidled up to me and whispered that these production girls will not work well unless they are beaten by shoes (*bina jute khaye yeh ladkiya kam nahi karenge*)’. This was the last straw for Sushma:

I was furious. I had been silent for long but my anger and humiliation at their behaviour towards us was mounting. I yelled and shouted at him, calling him names. He threatened to get all of us thrown out. I told him that an engineer is worth nothing – the factory functions because of us workers and our work, not because of dogs like him. I told him to go anywhere, to anyone – we were not scared of the management at all.

With one incident, Sushma made the transition from acceptance – albeit reluctant – of the forms of control established by the management to questioning of and confrontation with managerial authority. She stormed into the General Manager’s office and poured out pent-up feelings of humiliation and anger.
I could not control myself. I yelled at all of them and told them about all the humiliation we had faced. We come to work, not to be treated like dirt. We have our own self-respect. I suddenly realised I was all alone – all the girls had gone.

In fact she was not alone – all the workers were waiting for her at the bus stop. The transition had become collective and the next day everyone refused to work till V... apologised. He did so and also had to hand in his resignation. From that time on, a new pattern of shop floor relations were established. Male engineers/supervisors now had to guard their behaviour and speak respectfully to the women. The women in turn were no longer ‘quiet as mice’ and began to speak up on issues on the spot.

This first assertion – to be treated with dignity and respect – was a major rupture, yet did not in itself challenge the broader terms of patriarchal ideology. Male engineers/supervisors were told to see the women as their sisters/daughters and to behave properly. There was however a shift, in the sense that the women were no longer treated as children to be scolded and nagged. The next issue the women took up went a little further, and a new need and awareness to be treated as ‘persons’ began to find expression. This emerged through a challenge to time discipline and bodily surveillance and control exercised through the registration of toilet breaks. The newfound confidence in confronting shop-floor level authority led many women to verbalise publicly a question that they often discussed amongst themselves: ‘Why did the management keep a record of how many times they went to the toilet?’ Signing in the ‘toilet register’ was experienced as so humiliating that many women preferred not to go at all till the lunch break.

We had been talking about the toilet register, and although I had myself refused to sign it, that was not a solution. One day I confronted the supervisor and later the General Manager. I told him clearly, ‘Either burn or destroy the register or hand it over to me’. ‘There is no alternative’, I told them.’ They got scared. I took over the register and we announced all over the place to the girls that henceforth, there would be no register to sign if you go to the toilet. This was one of our earliest fights, when we began having our way. (Sushma, operator, Calcom)

Management response to this sudden assertiveness of the women was initially cautious. Work discipline was enforced more rigidly, and line supervisors and group leaders, some of whom were seen as the leaders/instigators of the workers’ new attitudes, were reprimanded if production output fell. Then the main leaders were transferred to other departments and to the other unit. This strategy soon backfired on the management as news spread about the ‘Audio Girls’ and what they had done among workers of the other departments and the other unit. Workers began to speak of other grievances to the newly emerged shop floor ‘leaders’ and an informal organisation began to form.
Calcom demonstration
Gendered Labour Regimes Established in the Era of De-regulation

Calcom demonstration
Chapter 5

Calcom dharna
Until 1994, confrontation and negotiation between workers and management had remained internal to the factory. The issues taken up related to use/abuse of power and lack of respect at the shop floor level. However, in April, as the Delhi Government issued a notice on the revision of minimum wages, discussions began in the Calcom units. The leaders put forward a demand to have their wages raised in line with the new notice. This led to the struggle and case mentioned earlier. As they waited for a response, another issue emerged. When workers were paid their salaries in September, they were surprised to discover that in the salary notice, their designations had been changed. 'Operators' became 'Workers Grade III', and 'fitters' were first made into 'helpers' and then redesignated as 'workers'. This changed their status from skilled to unskilled workers. This meant that they were not entitled to the minimum wage for skilled workers or the increment passed by the Delhi Administration on 1st August 1994 (see Appendix V). The loss in wages as a result of the re-designation as unskilled workers was around Rs. 464. When the workers had received their appointment letters four years earlier, it was clearly stated that they were selected to the post of Operator III. The salary intimation in 1994 however stated that they were 'Workers Grade III, Unskilled (see Appendix IV). The management claimed that the earlier appointment letter was a 'clerical error' and that all the workers were in fact unskilled.

The shop floor leadership and informal organisation of workers now moved into action. Sushma, a 22-year-old line supervisor, spoke to the manager and handed over a letter signed by all the workers, demanding that this re-designation be reversed and the revised minimum wage for skilled workers be paid. The manager agreed to discuss the issue with the owner who refused even to consider the demand. The workers were agitated, gathered in-groups and refused to work. One of the engineers threatened the workers. Sushma tried to stop him but he pushed and hit her – and she hit back. The General Manager came of his office, shouted at the workers to get back to work, and abused and suspended Sushma. The next day almost all the workers, the main exception being migrant workers from Kerala, stopped work and sat in front of the factory gate demanding Sushma’s reinstatement.

Given management intransigence, the struggle now moved outside the factory. Some workers contacted a union leader whose organisation was affiliated to the All India Trade Union Centre. He filed a formal notice to the management demanding payment of minimum wages on the previous designations and rescinding of the suspension of the leaders. A full-fledged industrial struggle had begun. The local Assistant Labour Commissioner was called in to intervene; the issue became a ‘case’ in the labour court, and then moved to the High Court. Workers continued to sit in dharna outside the factory gate for weeks, then started a hunger strike in front of the Chief Minister’s residence and held numerous demonstrations. The details of this struggle and other organisational issues are discussed in Chapter 6. In this section, the focus is on the managerial responses. Management expressed and deployed a
combination of control mechanisms that characterised this gendered labour regime, i.e. parental authority and ideology of the family, legal-procedural and direct threat, and coercion.

Calcom Electronics Limited
A-57/1, Okhla Industrial Area,
Phase-2, New Delhi-110020

Date: 23-11-94

To the mothers and fathers of the girls who work with us

As you know your daughter works with us. At our workplace we treat the girls who work with us like daughters and provide them with all sorts of facilities.

It is regrettable that some mischievous outsiders have managed to get some selfish employees/workers to join them. They had other objectives and towards those ends these selfish people instigated and threatened the women workers to start a sit-in strike on 18-11-94. No prior information about this was given to the management. Your daughter is also involved in this illegal and informal strike. She either comes and does not work or does not even enter inside. We have been informed that in most cases women workers are involved against their wishes and are participating due to fear of the outsiders and selfish people.

These striking workers did not do any work on 19-11-94 and 21-11-94. On 22-11-94 they punched their attendance cards, went outside the factory and started shouting slogans against the workers who wanted to work as well as the management. They also tried to get the girls who were working inside to go outside. After this all these workers collected outside the main gate of our other factory unit and shouted slogans in abusive language against the management and workers working inside. On 23-11-94 some girls did not come inside the factory but stayed outside the factory gate and with the support of some outsiders shouted slogans against the manager and workers who wanted to work. Your daughter was involved in all these activities.

The manager requests you to explain properly the good and bad consequences to your daughter since these kinds of activities do not reflect well on girls from respectable families. These selfish people appear suddenly at any time in any factory, mislead innocent workers, and organise this kind of strike. These selfish people have devious motives.

Please think whether when you send your daughter outside the house if it is to be involved in such useless activities. Management will institute proper proceedings against the guilty workers and for those on strike applying the principle of 'no work, no pay' no wages will be paid for the period of the strike and in addition 8 days wages will be cut from their salary.

In our factory a proper atmosphere exists for women.

Therefore we request you to convince and advice your daughter to return to work.

Signed
L.R. Wadhwa
Manager (Personnel and Admin)

(Translated from Hindi – original in Appendix VI)
As soon as the union entered the picture and the issue took on the form of an industrial dispute, management issued a letter addressed to the parents of the women. Although most of the men were also involved in the strike, the letter was sent only to the women's parents. The letter was a mixture of paternalism and threat, appealing to parents to use their authority to bring the 'disobedient daughters' to heel again. The Personnel Manager visited a number of parents at home as well.

Parents did respond to this appeal, but in ways contrary to the expectations of the management. Some got nervous and made their daughters withdraw. However most of them, especially fathers who were or had been industrial workers, felt that the women were raising a legitimate issue and needed support to fight for their rights. Consequently, mothers joined dharna and the hunger strike as chaperones, and were seen knitting or reading in a corner. Fathers individually gave their daughters advice on strategies and had discussions with the union leader.

The family operated in this context as a support structure. In many cases the challenge to managerial authority was paralleled with a demand within the family to reciprocate the financial support that the young women had provided to the family.

We have no fear of pressure from the family. I tell my family that all these years I gave my entire salary. Now you better feed and maintain me these few months. They have no choice! (Manju, 23 years old, operator, Calcom)

Not all the workers had families that could support them in this way. A number of them were main earners. Men also were under great pressure since many were living in rented accommodation. In spite of this all the workers, with the exception of the migrant workers from Kerala, remained united and managed to resist the other strategies deployed by the management. These were standard strategies such as bribery and threats, dismissal, physical attacks, and kidnapping. One of the leaders had taken a loan earlier since her father was ill, and she was put under considerable pressure by the management to split the workers. Tactics such as accusing individual workers of misconduct, which then led to a lengthy procedure of inquiry which workers had to attend, were common.

The challenge to hegemonic patriarchal despotism had come from a deep sense of injustice and could not be crushed so easily. This sense of injustice was based on a feeling of betrayal and violation of the unspoken contract implicit in the relationships of the family/company: i.e. that everyone had rights and responsibilities. Workers felt that they had been tricked, that management had not kept to their side of the implicit contract. When management told the women that they were responsible for giving the company a bad name, the workers responded by saying that it was management who had first done the wrong thing by being irresponsible and not treating them with the care and respect that is
expected within the family. The following slogan, which was repeatedly chanted, was an effective shaming technique, revealing the implicit contract of the moral economy of the family/company shared by workers and management, as well as its violation.

'Dekh malik tere factory ke, behn, beti, srakh pe.'

(Look, owner, the sisters and daughters from your factory are on the road.)

Earlier studies in the Southeast Asian context have emphasised the congruence between the rural family and the factory through the reproduction of pre-industrial authority structures within the factory, as well as continued control and surveillance of ‘factory daughters’ by the family, village/community leaders and religious ideology. Protest against the coercion and control of factory regimes also takes the form of a resort to pre-industrial forms of action such as spirit possession, personal crisis, and withdrawal rather than direct confrontation (Ong, 1987; Wolf, 1992). Wolf’s study, situated in Central Java, differs in that it points to certain degrees of individual autonomy in relation to the family, as daughters defy parents and obtain factory jobs and maintain control over their income. In all these studies, however, assertions of female agency do not take direct, confrontational forms in the factory or in relation to the management. At the most, real fathers (and mothers) are challenged on the basis of economic independence, but ‘patron-fathers’ in the factory are still paid obeisance.

The Calcom case provides another picture of factory daughters. There was a similar reproduction of familial authority within the factory, but once this ideological hegemony was ruptured, factory daughters challenged and confronted managerial control. The challenge was couched initially within the shared terms of the moral economy of the family/factory. However, as the young women got organised into a union and engaged in a classical industrial dispute, a broader awareness of workers’ rights and organisational strategies developed. This struggle led to a ‘leap in consciousness’ from which there was no turning back. Factory daughters also challenged and negotiated areas of autonomy in relation to their families, where the material as well as ideological basis of the moral economy of the family was being undermined. The dynamics of organising collectively as workers and the basis for the transformation from dutiful daughters to ‘disobedient daughters’ and then into industrial worker citizens are explored further in Chapter 6.

The rupture in the ideological hegemony of this gendered labour regime was not limited to the Calcom factories. In Monica Electronics too, workers raised the issue of minimum wages in 1998. It is significant that, unlike the Calcom case, it was migrant workers from Kerala, particularly women who had worked for 10-14 years, who were very active in this struggle. A section of workers started a dharna when management refused to accept the demands. Union leaders affiliated to the Centre for Indian Trade Unions (CITU) were contacted and a notice was served on the management. The workers were immediately
dismissed and the factory was closed. The Assistant Labour Commissioner declared that this was a case of illegal lockout. The management then allowed 53 workers who were between the ages of 25-30 to return to work, but they suspended 26 workers who were above the age of 30 years and had been most active on the issue.

The workers who were taken back were then sent to the other unit of the company in Okhla, Miracle Electronics, where they were given ‘behavioural training’. For two days, workers attended what was called a psychology class led by a psychologist hired by the company. After the two-day training, they had to report to work in the same unit but were not given any work to do. They had to sit around in the factory, some for ten days, others for a month and some even for six months. After this period, one section of workers was transferred to the NOIDA unit. It was not possible to get information on the content of this training. According to the women workers who had been suspended, the training made all the workers ‘selfish’, they refused to talk to the suspended workers and were very withdrawn.

Unlike the Calcom struggle, which continued in court, in this case the factory in Okhla was closed. Workers, who had undergone behavioural training or had not been involved in the strike, were sent to the new factory in NOIDA. Most of the suspended workers had accepted a settlement and returned to Kerala.

What is significant about management responses to the collective action by workers in this type of gendered labour regime is the attempt to re-impose and reconstruct ideological hegemony through the use of family discipline and new management techniques of behavioural training. Although in the Calcom case this management strategy did not work, and in Monica Electronics the strategy did work, the end result was the same for both. Monica Electronics closed down in Okhla and relocated with ‘well behaved’ workers to NOIDA. New girls were recruited in Calcom and were subjected to stricter discipline. The suspended workers either found new jobs as contract workers or remained unemployed.

**Gendered Labour Regime 4: Hegemonic Despotism and Industrial Housekeepers**

The fourth type of gendered labour regimes in the electronics industry is symptomatic of the liberalisation process. These are large units with foreign collaboration, initiated from 1993 onwards, and located in low-wage industrial estates and export processing zones. Characteristics of this type are based on data from one factory, National Panasonic, which is part of the Salora International Limited Company. This is a multi-product, multi-crore company engaged in the manufacture and marketing of consumer electronic items. In the early 1990s, the company entered into technical collaboration with Matsushita Electric Industrial Co., Japan, to manufacture and market the latest technology colour televisions and audio products under the Panasonic brand in India. The new plant is located in NOIDA and was set up at the cost of nearly Rs. 100
Crores. The factory has ‘state of the art’ facilities and is seen as ‘comparable to any other plant of Matsushita in South East Asia’ (company brochure: ‘Salora International Ltd.: A Curtain Raiser’, 1993).

The Panasonic factory is an example of a Japanese transplant and represents the new form of gendered labour regimes in the 1990s. The plant manufactures and markets products under the brand name of the parent company. There are two resident Japanese production managers. Staff and workers are sent for and receive training in principles of production and management techniques specific to the parent company. They see themselves as direct employees of Matsushita Electric Industrial Co., Japan, not only as employees of the Indian subsidiary. Although the company caters to the local market, the relationships internally are significantly different from the companies which had entered into a limited technical agreement with Japanese and other multinationals in the 1980s, as discussed in GLR3.

There is an ongoing debate on Japanese transplants and the transferability of the Japanese model to overseas countries (Kaplinsky & Posthuma, 1994; Elger & Smith, 1994; Abdullah & Kennoy, 1995). Case studies of Japanese transplants have highlighted a number of aspects that dispute the assumption of a whole-scale transfer. These studies point out that the notion of a Japanese management syndrome is an ideal type; that corporate management in overseas plants selectively borrow and only certain ‘home practices’ are adapted (Taylor, Elger & Fairbrother, 1994); that the global strategy of the parent company plays a more significant role than the ‘home practices’ (Hiramoto, 1995, Abdullah & Kennoy, 1995); and finally that transferability is considerably ‘conditioned by local economic, political, and legal contexts and socio-cultural values’ (Abdullah & Kennoy, 1995:762).

Aihwa Ong’s study of women workers in Japanese transplants in Malaysia provides an example of the way in which Japanese management strategies ‘reconstitute Malay norms of male-female relations and transforms them into a corporate ideology rooted in Confucian values’ (Ong, 1990:395). Nirmala Banerjee’s brief exploration of a micro-motor firm in Calcutta, established with Japanese collaboration, which was based on the Japanese model of input control and labour involvement, also highlights the changes in work and gender relations, though she holds that labour market and infra-structural constraints are likely to ‘inhibit future development of Indian industries in general on the cost-efficient lines posited by the Japanese model’ (Banerjee, 1995: 251).

Although the issue of transferability or diffusion is not the main focus of this study, the discussion elaborated below relates to this debate in highlighting the adaptation of ‘home practices’ of the global multinational parent company, the ways in which they mesh with local constraints, and the ways in which they introduce new dimensions in forms of gendered labour control in the Indian context.
Highly automated labour process and rigid gender division of labour

The production process is modern and highly automated. In the Panasonic factory an Auto Insert machine (Panasert Machine), inserts 350 components automatically, monitored by a few male operators. These are then put onto a continuous process conveyor belt at which 200 girls sit in rows, inserting components. At different stages, the PCBs pass through a solder bath which fixes the components. VDUs monitor for faults along the line, at the end of which young women and men check for quality. In the final assembly, which is done by men, the PCBs are wired onto the cabinets, undergo further quality control checks and are then sent off for packaging, a task done by men only. Workers are monitored through computerised checks as well as by line, floor and department supervisors.

At various points along the production line, there are visual display units which have colour coded charts which monitor mistakes as well as speed. While showing the way this worked, the Personnel Manager said that 'although we hire high school educated girls, in fact the colour codes are so easy to understand that even illiterates can handle these machines.'

The composition of the workforce on the production floor was 75-80 percent young women and 20-25 percent young men. At the staff level, the gender distribution was the exact reverse (75-80 percent male and 20-25 percent female). Men did packing and loading. Some male ITI graduates did the visual checking along with the women who had technical degrees as well. The sexual division of labour on the line rested on only one of the twin standard features used to distinguish men and women's work: technical qualifications and physical/muscular strength. Since both women and men had technical degrees, there was no difference at that level. The main divide was between technically qualified workers and assembly workers. However the hierarchy of control and supervision was based on gender.

Diagram 5.2 Gendered job hierarchy

- Senior Supervisor – male
- Supervisors – only female
- Leaders and Technicians – female and male
- Operators – only female
Spatial regulation: Working conditions

The primary division between workers was between those with technical training and those with only secondary school education and non-technical diplomas. The first category received high wages, in some cases even above the minimum wage, while the second predominant category received wages below the minimum wage. This division was not gender-based, with women in both categories of workers.

Managerial explanations for the predominant recruitment of women workers are explicitly stated as due to:

(a) Delicacy and nature of jobs suiting female workers in production lines; and
(b) To avoid unions which exist in male dominated factories in India. However, due to certain technical and physical requirements of certain jobs, male members are recruited as they are more suited than female workers. Moreover male workers are mainly employed on specialised jobs which cannot be undertaken by female workers.

(General Manager, Panasonic)

This classic package of ‘nimble fingers’ and docility is not new, as we have seen in the discussion on previous gendered labour regimes. What is different about the fourth type of regimes is the additional qualification or characteristic which was reiterated by managers as well as workers, i.e. that the company recruited ‘freshers’. ‘Freshers’ implied not just that they were unmarried and fresh out of school, but also that their minds were fresh to inculcate a specific kind of training and ideological instruction. This training was a transfer of key ‘home practices’ which were associated partly with the general features of Total Quality Management emphasised by all Japanese companies, and partly with features specific to the corporate ideology of Matsushita. The gendered nature of labour control in this regime lay in the reconstitution of high school girls and electronic engineering graduates into industrial housekeepers committed to the company ideology.

Labour control: Fresh, green labour and industrial housekeepers

5S’s: The five principles of Japanese housekeeping

Key aspects of the Japanese system to achieve Total Quality Management adopted in the factory were five principles of ‘Japanese Housekeeping’. The 5S’s were activities undertaken in the Housekeeping Campaign which started in Japan after the Second World War. The campaign mobilised people to clean up the debris from damaged factories. Since then, the 5S’s have been adopted by Japanese organisations and now form part of workplace training even in American corporations. The name 5S is based on five Japanese ideograms whose meaning starts with “S”: Seiri, Seiton, Seisou, Seiketsu, and Shitsuke. In some manuals a sixth S is added: Shuukan. The five S’s stand for:
The sixth S, Shuukan, stands for incorporation but is not used in this company. The 5S’s are seen as a powerful tool to develop employees’ attitudes towards job quality and productivity. The emphasis is on creating the right mentality in the workers. Some see the adoption of these principles as the first step towards lean production.  

In the Panasonic unit, these 5S’s are elaborated in the BBP, the basic business philosophy booklet given to each worker. The training in these five principles, called ‘5 S’s Rules’ in the factory, is conducted in the following ways:

1) In the first few weeks of the training period, video and audio tapes are shown in the training rooms and conference halls.
2) Checking and monitoring by a Housekeeping Committee. The Housekeeping Committee consists of supervisors as well as older women designated as Housekeepers.
3) Checking and monitoring by all group leaders/supervisors and managers. This is done on a daily basis.
4) Regular lectures to inculcate a strong sense of 5S Housekeeping rules in all employees.
5) Posters with the rules displayed at various places in the factory and canteen.

In addition to these five principles, the management also emphasizes seven words/principles which are adopted by all plants of the Matsushita group of companies, based on the teachings of the founder of Matsushita, Mr. Konosuke Matsushita (1894-1989). The seven words were:

1) Contribution to society
2) Fairness and Honesty
3) Co-operation and team Spirit
4) Untiring efforts for improvement
5) Courtesy and humility
6) Adaptability
7) Gratitude

Every morning all the workers recited these words like a morning prayer in chorus. After the recitation, a worker was required to make a small speech on any subject of his/her choice, lasting 3-4 minutes. There was one speaker everyday and everyone took turns by rotation. These activities were done before
factory start time at 8.30. As the General Manager stated, ‘No loss of production time is accepted.’

**New work ethic and corporate culture**

While the 5S’s relate to ways of organising work, the seven words stress the social qualities workers have to develop. Numerous cultural and recreational activities are organised by the welfare department such as Annual Day, picnics, festival celebrations, and Sports Day, which further develop a company culture. Although similar events also took place in GLR3 and 4, in this case these events were integrally linked with the training in the 5S’s and 7 Words. These social activities were highly appreciated by the workers. For the young women working on the assembly line, this was often the only opportunity to participate in such social events, an occasion to dress up and even mix socially with men.

Parents never refused permission, since this was seen as ‘company work’, and given the predominance of women in the factory, they had no anxieties about their daughters going astray.

The company has put in a lot of effort to develop an international image. To project this, management asked all women workers to wear the uniform which was a pant and shirt similar to the one worn in their plants in Malaysia and Singapore. This was one issue which was strongly resisted by the women. Parents sent letters to the management protesting that such a uniform was against Indian culture. Numerous discussions were held, and the main issue boiled down to the significance of the *chunni* (scarf) as a symbol of modesty for women. The manager tried to argue that using a *chunni* was unsafe, as the cloth could get stuck in the machines, but the women refused to give up their *chunnis*. Finally the manager proposed a solution. The women could wear the *chunnis* on the bus, and then when they entered the factory, they could take them off in the changing room. When they finished work, they could put on the *chunnis* again to go home. This whole process took two years to be resolved.

According to the GM, the cultural barriers to creating a new image and work ethic were not very significant. In spite of the initial resistance to the dress code at the Annual Day celebrations, 70-80% of the young women came dressed in western clothes. This fact apparently caused great amusement among the Japanese managers.

The influence of television has had a great impact on Indian workers; they want to be western. Although the Asian workers in Malaysia and Singapore are more cosmopolitan, English-speaking Indian workers are eager to learn, change and become international. (GM, Panasonic)

The company organised lectures on the need to project an international image. Although it had not yet started regular meetings with parents like its sister plants elsewhere, the management was planning to involve parents in the creation of this new image.
The construction of this new 'industrial housekeeper' was a carefully planned process which started in the morning with the recitation of the morning prayer and continued through the day. Boards with the 5S's were placed strategically so that every time a worker looked up she/he could see a board. Daily discipline was very strict and workers were dismissed for the smallest errors. They were frisked whenever they left the production hall, even to go to the canteen. Departments were kept segregated and the audio workers never saw the video workers. They were picked up and dropped off in the company bus. This gendered labour regime was based on more sophisticated methods of surveillance and labour control. The training in 'industrial housekeeping' combined the skills of domesticity with industrial efficiency to create a new kind of gendered workforce.

Concluding Remarks

The success of the company's strategy can only be assessed through further research, but clearly this GLR was introducing a new phenomenon in India, although it is similar to the world market factories of Southeast Asia. Whether this type is only 'an ikebana on foreign soil' as Nirmala Banerjee called it, which would exist in enclaves or if it would affect the nature of industrial production in general, has yet to be seen. The company itself was cautious still about its presence in India. The Panasonic unit was seen as a testing ground, and it may even pull out after a few years. The main problem was the competition with the large Indian electronics companies such as BPL and Videocon. Panasonic products were subject to high import taxes, so they could not undercut the prices of Indian manufactures. China was seen as offering better possibilities. In spite of a cautious attitude, Japanese and South Korean companies are continuing to enter the Indian market at an accelerated pace, introducing a new competitive dynamic into the electronics industry.

Notes

1 In 1987 I had done a detailed case study of this factory. In 1995 I was able to interview workers, which included some workers from the earlier study. The information on Monica Electronics is more comprehensive and enables an examination of shifts in managerial strategies and workers situations over an eight-year period.

2 Other studies have highlighted the association of sexual availability/promiscuity and electronic workers. In this study, such an association was found in relation to the garment industry. There is also a general difference in the Indian situation, since these women did not dress in jeans and T-shirts or wear excessive make up, etc. The association seemed to be linked to communal stereotypes of Christians and to the fact that these women were often single female migrants.
This is similar to the finding from Susan Joekes’s (1985) study of the garment industry in Morocco, where men were placed between women as pacesetters.

L. Stubbe’s study of an Argentinean transplant sees this as a first step towards lean production. She translates the principles from a company manual as – ‘separate the elements you really need to do your job from the ones you don’t; organise your work elements so that you will find them rapidly; clean up your work spot continuously; preserve what has been accomplished; carry out the established rules; take on the new way of seeing and doing things and be ready to start the cycle all over again’ (Stubbe, 2000).