

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Reforms in the Indian power sector have brought major changes to the sector's operating environment. It has led to commercial approach, setting up of independent regulators, restructuring, and privatization in the sector. Vertically integrated State Electricity Boards (SEBs) have been unbundled into separate power generation, power transmission, and power distribution companies (DISCOMs). Subsequent to reforms, there have been changes in the work orientation, and emergence of many new technologies and commercial practices, in which DISCOMs' manpower is not trained. This has resulted in performance deficiency and reduced customer satisfaction.

Frontline managers, posted in the field offices, act as an inter-face between customers and DISCOM. They use most of the technologies and practices. However, their skills need to be updated and polished to ensure efficient operations and quality customer services. Against this backdrop, the researcher wanted to probe, whether or not the frontline managers are adequately updated with these new technologies and practices. For this, the researcher has studied as to how the training needs of frontline managers are determined at the power distribution companies. The business problem of the present study is - Inadequate training of frontline managers at Indian DISCOMs in new technologies and commercial practices is resulting in inefficient operations.

The present work is organized in seven chapters for the purpose of exploration and presentation. The first chapter, Introduction and Background highlights the need, significance and rational of the business problem and its scope. The second, third, and fourth chapters are related to literature review. The chapter five is methodology for the research, and the sixth and seventh chapters are dedicated to operationalization and conclusions.

This empirical study focuses on four power distribution companies operating in central India. These companies are: Madhya Pradesh Eastern Region Power Distribution Company, Madhya Pradesh Central Region Power Distribution Company, Madhya Pradesh Western Region Power Distribution Company, and Chhattisgarh State Power Distribution Company Limited. Intense review of literature is undertaken under three (3) themes: post-reforms developments in Indian

power sector, training needs in power distribution companies are affected by customers' expectations, and training needs assessment for analysing the post reform training requirements of frontline managers in power distribution companies. Literature review identified three (3) research gaps; which are the technologies on which the competency of frontline Managers need to be upgraded, which customer services the front line managers need up gradation, and is there any significant difference of opinion between middle managers and frontline managers with regard to organisation-task-person analysis for training needs assessment.

A self-designed, pre-tested questionnaire based on the literature reviews and reflections of top managers of DISCOMs was used for the purpose of the study. The questionnaire included seventy-three items under organisational items, task items, and person items. A total of three hundred and sixty useful responses was utilised after examining the validity and reliability of the scales to make it statistically adequate. The responses were subjected to Chi-Square analysis.

Data interpretation presented on organisation analysis, task analysis and person analysis addresses the research questions in findings, and the research objectives are deliberated in the discussion on the findings. Organisational analysis revealed that the DISCOMs under study undertake TNA and concerned on FLMs' competency building. The learnt skills are however not being effectively transformed at the workplace due to work environment reasons requiring strategic training needs assessment. Communication gap between middle managers and FLMs leading to performance gap is revealed in the task analysis anticipating the need of strategic task analysis. Person analysis advocated that the technological know-how of FLMs under study is not as per industry requirement and customers' expectation, thereby leading to performance discrepancy.

The study gives an in-depth understanding of TNA practices in Indian DISCOMs. It attempts to fill the gap between theoretical constructs and practical evidence of TNA models within the context of the Indian DISCOMs. Results identify the deficit as an indicator to determine training needs in power distribution sector. Its findings can be used as a base for future TNA studies based on O-T-P model for other employees' levels at DISCOMs. The study also recommends policy formation for FLMs' training and addressing cost benefit analysis in the future researches.