Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations
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The research results and their interpretation along with the discussions were presented in the previous chapter. This chapter presents the conclusions and the implications for employee development practices in the private and public sectors of the telecom industry. Recommendations and significance are also included in this chapter. The chapter is concluded by providing limitations of the study and directions for future research.

Employee development is a concept concerned with the holistic development of the individual on and off work in alignment with the overall development of the organization. There are many indicators pointing the rising interest in employee development practices with respect to the telecom industry. The present study focused on comparing employee development practices in the selected units of the private and public sectors of the telecom industry and determining the impact of the employee development practices on the employee satisfaction in the telecom industry. The research has covered the endeavour of various experts, who threw light on the domain of employee development. A set of fifteen employee development practices was adapted from the “Employee Development Survey Report, 2005” by Evren Esen and Jessica Collison. A survey instrument was developed to determine the extent of implementation of selected employee development practices in public and the private sector of the telecom industry and their perceived significance. The survey was also a medium to ascertain the impact of employee development practices in the telecom industry as a whole. Purposive and snowball sampling technique were used to gather the responses from 400 employees in the selected units of the private and public sectors of the telecom industry. In total 313 valid responses were obtained from the employees belonging to the junior, middle and higher levels of management, in the selected four units of the telecom industry. The response rate was 71 per cent. The sampling units were; Bharti Airtel, and Aircel Ltd. from the private sector and MTNL and BSNL from the public sector of the telecom industry.
To study the responses, a structured questionnaire was used for the present study. It consisted of four sections. First section gathered the demographic profile of the respondents. Second and third sections determined the extent of implementation and perceived significance of the selected fifteen employee development practices respectively. Section four queried the perceptions about the impact of the employee development practices on employee satisfaction and in that way on job performance of the employees.

Analysis was conducted and interpretation of the results alongwith the discussions and the linkage with the theory have been presented in chapter 4.

The first objective was to study and compare the employee development practices in the intra-sector and inter-sector basis in the selected units of the telecom industry. For this the employees were asked to rate the existing practices on a seven point scale indicating the extent of implementation of the practices. In the present study the comparison of the selected employee development practices was made between the private and public sectors, between selected units (Bharti Airtel and Aircel Ltd.) of the private sector and between selected units (MTNL and BSNL) of the public sector.

The second objective was to compare the perception of employees towards the existing employee development practices. For this the perception of the employees indicating the significance level of the selected employee development practices was taken on a five point scale. The comparison thereafter was drawn between the private and public sectors, between selected units (Bharti Airtel and Aircel Ltd.) of the private sector and between selected units (MTNL and BSNL) of the public sector.

The third objective was to find out the perceived impact of employee development practices on employee satisfaction and thereby job performance in telecom industry. The perception of the employees for the variables of the constructs was determined on a five point scale. Finally, a model depicting the different constructs was tested by structural equation modeling to find the relationship between the constructs.

Finally recommendations for the shortcomings in the employee development practices have been made, in general, and in the selected private and public sector telecom companies, in particular.
5.1. Extent of implementation of employee development practices

5.1.1. Telecom industry: Private and public sector

The results clearly stated that the selected fifteen practices are on an average being used ones between 18 to 24 months in the telecom industry. But when compared between inter and intra sectors, it is found that the nature of ownership of the company does affect the extent of implementation of employee development practices. It was found that the mean scores for private sector are higher for all the fifteen employee development practices. The mean score indicate that the employee development practices are more often used in the private sector as compared to the public sector of the telecom Industry. The t-test was found to be significant indicating that there is a significant difference in using the employee development practices in the private and the public sector. The study suggested that apart from the nature of ownership of the company, the nature of the practices also affect the extent of implementation of the employee development practices.

- An examination of the group means indicated that the top five practices which are often used in the private sector are **Self directed learning, Behavioral training, Stretch assignment, High visibility assignment, and both E-learning and Development Appraisal** occupying the fifth rank with similar mean scores and the least five use practices are **Cross-cultural training, Job sharing, Job rotation, Stress training, and Apprenticeship** (Appendix 3).

- Similarly the top five practices which are often used in the public sector are **High visibility assignment, E-learning, Job sharing, Job rotation, and Apprenticeship** and the least used are **Self directed learning, Succession planning, Career planning, Stretch assignment, and Stress training.**

5.1.2. Selected units of the private sector of telecom industry: Airtel and Aircel

From the mean scores of the two selected companies of the private sector, it is found that the mean score is higher for Airtel as compared to Aircel for all the fifteen employee development practices. The t-test was found to be significant indicating that there is a significant difference in using the employee development practices in the two companies i.e. Airtel and Aircel.
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- An examination of the group means indicated that in Airtel the frequently used top five practices are Behavioral training, Self directed learning, Cross-cultural Training, E-learning, Leadership training. And the least used practices are Stretch assignment; Stress training, Job rotation, Job sharing, and Apprenticeship (Appendix 3).

- In Aircel the frequently used top five practices are Self directed learning, Stretch assignment, Behavioral training, High visibility assignment, and Development Appraisal and the least used are Job sharing, Cross-cultural training, Job rotation, Stress training, and Apprenticeship.

5.1.3. Selected units of the public sector of telecom industry: MTNL and BSNL

Considering the mean scores of the two selected companies of the public sector it is found that except High visibility assignment, and E-learning which are more often used in BSNL, rest 13 development practices are more frequently used in MTNL as compared to BSNL in public sector of the telecom industry. Using an alpha level of 0.05, an independent sample t-test was run which explained that the difference in the mean score of BSNL and MTNL, for the extent of usage of various practices like Apprenticeship, Cross-cultural training, Development appraisal, Coaching and mentoring, Career planning, Succession planning, High visibility assignment, Job rotation, Behavioral training, Leadership training, E-learning, Self directed learning, and Stretch assignment, has been insignificant. This implies that the above practices do not act as differentiator for their frequency of implementation between MTNL and BSNL, the two public sector companies under study. The difference in the usage of these practices occurs by chance. On the other hand, the contrast in the mean score for the implementation of Job Sharing with p value 0.00 and Stress training with p value 0.02 have been significant at 5% level of significance. It has been found that the difference of implementation of above practices is significant in the two companies of the public sector.

- In MTNL the most frequently used five practices are Job sharing, High visibility assignment, Job rotation, Apprenticeship, and E-learning, whereas the least frequently used five practices are Succession Planning, Cross-cultural training, Career planning, Stretch assignment, and Stress training (Appendix 3).
As seen in BSNL the top five the practices are **E-learning, High visibility assignment, Job rotation, Apprenticeship, and Job sharing**, whereas the least ones are **Career mentoring, Self directed learning, Succession Planning, Stretch assignment, and Stress training**.

### 5.2. Perception of the employees towards the existing practices

#### 5.2.1. Telecom industry: Private and public sector

The results of the study also revealed that the perception of the employees differed with type of nature of business. The mean scores for the significance level of the employee development practices for the private sector are found to be high for all the fifteen practices. The mean scores indicate that the employees of the private sector perceive all the existing employee development practices to be more significant as compared to the employees belonging to the public sector.

The t-test was found to be significant indicating that there is a significant difference in the perception of the employees towards the existing employee development practices in the private and public sector of the telecom industry. An examination of the group means indicated that the employees of the private sector tend to give more significance to all the existing employee development practices as compared to the public sector of the telecom industry. The study also revealed the difference in the ranking of the practices in terms of their level of significance for each of the two sectors.

- Top five practices that are perceived to be significant for the employees of private sector are: **Behavioral training, Self directed learning, Leadership training, Succession planning, and Stretch assignment**, and the least impactful practices according to the employees are **Development appraisal, Coaching and mentoring, Job sharing, Job rotation, and Apprenticeship** (Appendix 3).

- Similarly the top five practices which are perceived significantly important are: **Leadership training, Behavioural training, Self directed learning, Job sharing, and High visibility assignment**, and five least significant practices are **Job rotation, Career planning, Succession planning, Stress training, and Cross cultural training**.
5.2.2. Selected units of the private sector of telecom industry: Airtel and Aircel

The mean scores of the two selected companies of the private sector indicated that Apprenticeship, Cross cultural training, Development appraisal, Coaching and mentoring, High visibility assignment, Job rotation, Leadership training, E learning, and Self directed learning are the practices which are highly significant as perceived by the employees of Aircel, whereas Career planning, Succession planning, Job sharing, Behavioral training, Stretch assignment, and Stress training are more important for the employees of Airtel.

- When seen the five most significant and the five least significant practices in the two companies, top five significant practices in Airtel are Behavioral training, Stress training, Stretch assignment, Career planning, and Self directed learning. Least five significant practices as perceived by the employees in Airtel are High visibility assignment, Development appraisal, Coaching and mentoring, Job rotation, and Apprenticeship (Appendix 3).

- Top five significant practices in Aircel are Self directed learning, E-learning, Behavioral training, Leadership training, and Succession planning, and the least five significant practices in Aircel are Coaching and mentoring, Stress training, Apprenticeship, Job rotation, and Job sharing.

The differences in the mean scores of Airtel and Aircel for the perceived significance of various practices like, Cross-cultural training, Development appraisal, Formal coaching, Succession planning, Career planning, High visibility assignment, Job rotation, Leadership training, Self directed learning, Stretch assignment have been insignificant in the present study. This implies that the above practices do not act as differentiator between Airtel and Aircel, the two private sector companies under study. The difference in these practices occurs by chance. On the other hand, the employees of Airtel and Aircel differ for the level of significance in case of 5 development practices. They are; Apprenticeship (p value 0.03), Job Sharing with p value 0.01, Behavioral training (p value 0.01), E learning (p value 0.00) and Stress training (p value 0.00).
5.2.3. Selected units of the public sector of the telecom industry: MTNL and BSNL

The mean scores of the two selected companies of the public sector signified that Apprenticeship, Cross-cultural training, Development appraisal, Coaching and mentoring, Career planning, Succession planning, High visibility assignment, Behavioral training, Leadership training, E learning, Self directed learning and Stretch assignment are the practices which are highly significant as perceived by the employees of BSNL, whereas, Job rotation, Job Sharing, and Stress training are perceived to be more important for the employees of MTNL.

- Top five practices in terms of their significance level as per the employees of MTNL are Leadership training, Job sharing, Behavioral training, Self directed learning, and E-learning, and the least five practices in the above context are Succession planning, Coaching and mentoring, Career planning, Cross-cultural training, Development appraisal (Appendix 3).

- For BSNL top five significant practices, according to the perception of the employees are Behavioral training, Self directed learning, Leadership training, Development appraisal, and Coaching and mentoring, and the least five are Career planning, Cross-cultural training, Succession planning, Job rotation, and Stress training.

In the public sector companies the differences in the mean scores for the significance level of three practices i.e. Job rotation, Leadership training, and E learning, have been insignificant in the present study. This implies that the above practices do not act as differentiator between MTNL and BSNL, the two public sector companies under study. The difference in these practices occurs by chance.

On the other hand the results of the t-test showed that employees of MTNL and BSNL differ in their perception for the level of significance in case of 10 practices They are Apprenticeship (p value 0.00), Cross-cultural training (p value 0.00), Development appraisal (p value 0.00), Coaching and mentoring (p value 0.00), Career planning (p value 0.00), Job Sharing with significance with p value 0.00, Behavioral training (p value 0.00), Self directed learning (p value 0.00), Stretch assignment (p value 0.00) and Stress training (p value 0.00).
• It can be concluded that the most frequently used practices across all sectors are **High visibility assignments and E Learning**. The same is exemplified from the sample set of the companies used across both private and public sectors.

• It is clear from the results that the least used practice in both the sectors has been **Stress training**. It is surprising that in the telecom industry which is one of the most competitive and volatile sector, the focus of the corporations across the practice has been insignificant. The Stress training appears high on the perception of employees especially in the private sector, but the same has been underutilized.

• **Job rotation** is a prominently held practice in public sector. But considering its significance the public sector employees perceive it to be one of the least significant practices. Similarly the private sector prioritizes Job rotation as very low in terms of its significance.

• Similar results are obtained with **Apprenticeship** practice which is least implemented and least preferred to be used in the private sector, be it Airtel or Aircel. But in the public sector this practice seems to have substantial use and is also averagely preferred.

• **Matching stretch assignment** is another such practice which is not much used across the sectors. The employees do not perceive the same to be of one of the top five significant practices.

• **Coaching and mentoring** is least preferred practice in both private and public sectors.

• **Succession planning and Career planning** are the least preferred practices from the view point of the public sector employees and in line with it the same has been least put in practice. In the private sector the practice has both moderate significance and implementation

• **Behavioral training and Self directed learning** come out to be most demanded practices across the two sectors of the industry. The practices seem to be adequately implemented in the private sector but the frequency of the same is not appealing in the public sector.

• Similar results are found with **Leadership training** being considered as one of the most important practices in the industry as a whole. On observing its implementation
it does not come out to be the most frequently used practice, it has a moderate implementation in the two sectors

- **Succession planning** is opinionated as an important practice as per the private sector employees whereas the same is rated the least important by the public sector employees.

- **High visibility assignment** on the contrary is preferred the most by the public sector employees and the least by the private sector employees.

- **Cross cultural training** is one of the most frequently used practices in Airtel. On the contrary it is one of the least used practices in Aircel.

- **Stress training** is one of the least used practices in both Airtel and Aircel. But the results on its perceived significance vary in the two companies. Whereas, on one hand, Airtel employees consider the practice to be most significant, on the other hand, employees of Aircel perceive it to be one of the least significant practices for them.

5.3. **Overdone and underdone practices in telecom industry**

After considering the mean scores for the frequency of the fifteen employee development practices understudy and comparing it with the mean scores for the perception of the employees towards the existing practices it was found that there were some practices which were implemented more than their perceived importance and were termed as 'Overdone Practices' and, on the contrary, there were some practices which were put to use less than their perceived significance as per the employees and were termed as 'Underdone Practices'. It was inferred that the overdone practices mean that the employees do not consider these practices to be relevant to their work and therefore, the content and frequency of these practices should be redesigned. Thus 'relevance' of each of the practices forms an important construct for the employee development practice. Similarly, the underdone practices mean that they were not supported by the management despite their high desirability. Hence 'management Support' is another construct for the employee development practice and the same has been supported by literature. The results substantiate that employee development practice is the manifestation of Relevance of the employee development practice and Management Support for the employee development practice.
From the above inference the following conclusions can be drawn (Appendix 3):

- In the private sector: High visibility assignment, and Development appraisal come out to be over utilized practices and Stress training is found to be the under used practice
- In the public sector: Job rotation is found to be the overdone practice and Self directed learning is found to be the under done
- In Airtel: Matching stretch assignment and Stress training are deduced to be as under done practices. There are no overdone practices
- In Aircel: There are neither over or under done practices
- In MTNL: Again none of the practice are found to be either over done or under done
- In BSNL: Job rotation comes out to as an over done practice and Self directed learning is found to be underutilized.

5.4. Perceived impact of employee development practices in telecom industry

To study the impact of the employee development practices, structural model was established. The SEM tests showed that structural relations existed without a doubt between the antecedent variables (Management support and Relevance of employee development practices) and the Employee satisfaction which eventually leads to Job performance. The hypothesized model was tested with the help of LISREL 8.52. Following points were concluded:

- The construct, employee development practice is the manifestation of the variables; management support and relevance of the development practice
- The independent variable, management support has a positive effect on the dependent variable of job performance when mediated by employee satisfaction.
- The independent variable, relevance of the development practices has a positive effect on the dependent variable of job performance when mediated by employee satisfaction.
- Also management support certainly impacts the employee satisfaction to a greater degree as compared to the impact of Relevance of development practice on the employee satisfaction.
- The relationship of management support for employee development practice with Job performance is mediated by employee satisfaction, which implies that management support
has no direct impact on improvement in job performance but has an indirect impact through employee satisfaction.

- Similarly, the relationship of Relevance of employee development practices with Job performance is mediated by employee satisfaction, which implies that relevance of development practices has no direct impact on improvement in job performance but has an indirect impact through employee satisfaction.

- The results provide evidence ($\chi^2 [4] = 8.67; \text{RMSEA} = 0.06$) together with the comparative fit indices (NNFI = 0.97; CFI = 1.00, SRMR = 0.00) supporting the goodness of model fit. Hence it is reasonable to conclude that model fitted successfully in Indian Telecom Industry scenario.

5.5. Implications and Recommendations

5.5.1 Implications

The findings of this research have both theoretical and practical implications. From theoretical point of view the study is innovative because it drew from theories regarding employee development practices, management support, and relevance of employee development practices, employee satisfaction and job performance. The study has also ultimately explored the relationships between these constructs. Furthermore this study extends the concept of employee development from the industry level to the sectors and eventually the firms and also to some extent to the individual level. This adds academic value to the study of employee development practices. On a practical level the study results provide a new insight regarding the management support and relevance of the practices. Human resource practitioners should implement appropriate management support system and apt need analysis method to encourage the willingness of the employees to participate in the development programmes. The results of this study have several implications in the field of human resource development; HRD practitioners are influential in the overall job satisfaction of an organization’s employees and in shaping job performance of the employees, which are important to the entire organization. Thus these practitioners interested in improving these variables in the telecom industry should focus on employee development as a way to do so.
5.5.2. Recommendations

5.5.2(a) Telecom industry

- From the analysis it can be said confidently that in spite of the differences between the perceptions of the employees in the two sectors, they are seeking for developing themselves because they believe that training is very essential for them and can help them in improving their job performance. It is the role of the organization to do the right development for each employee, group of employees, not only to increase the productivity but also to keep its employees satisfied and committed to the organization.

"It is important to segregate your talent population into high potentials and solid contributors and professionals and have different development roadmaps for each of them" - VP-HR, Aircel

- In line with the above statement, blended modules should be prepared combining several practices from the pool of employee development practices according to the capabilities of the employees. For instance, the Stress training appears high on the perception of employees, but the same has been under utilized. Thus the management should pay extraordinary interest in incorporating the practice.

- On the contrary Job rotation, Stretch assignment, and Coaching and mentoring were opined as overdone practices. Practitioners in the organizations should make an effort to make these practices more relevant and employee specific.

- The set of the practices should be introduced to the employees during their induction process and employees should be given the responsibility of choosing their pool of practices because the career of an individual is his responsibility and HR functions are only enablers.

- A detailed longitudinal study which covers the entire telecom industry under the auspices of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) regarding employee development will be useful as detailed information can be made available. The present study will be able to provide authentic information regarding the implementation and significance of different employee development practices as opined by the employees of the telecom industry.

- From a research perspective, satisfaction with employee development should be considered an element of employee satisfaction and be included as a construct in employee satisfaction surveys.

- Researchers studying employee satisfaction from employee development should consider relevance of the practice and managerial support as the constructs of employee development
practices. Out of the two constructs of employee development, Management support should be emphasized.

5.5.2(b) Private sector

- The private sector, in order to gain tremendously to be globally competitive through a leading edge, must exploit the potent tool of employee development practice.
- It should focus on Leadership training, Behavioral training, and Self directed learning with special efforts for Succession planning. Apprenticeship, Job Rotation, Matching Stretch Assignments, Coaching and mentoring should be modified as per the need of the employees

5.5.2(c) Public sector

- From the analysis it can be said confidently that in spite of the low mean score of the employee development practices in the public sector, the employees in the public sector perceive the significance of certain practices. Hence the management should make the efforts for developing them and emphasize that training and development is very essential and can help them in their development in the workplace.
- The employees working in the public sector of the telecom industry agree that development practice should not be a one-time affair, but it should be continuous. They don't think that it is over with one development program. According to the respondents 'retraining' is missing'. This eventually reduces the frequency of the development practices. Development programmes are not systematically planned' but 'according to the need of the situation'. This is also clear from the responses of the employees of both the public sector units, where the mean scores for the implementation of the practices falls below average for all the practices.
- The public sector needs to step up their outlay on employee development and training. The number of hours devoted should be gradually increased. The in-house training institutes have to tone up their work. The employee development and training must cut across all the levels including the top management.
- The module must accommodate Leadership training, Behavioral training, Self directed learning, and Job sharing with a special focus on High visibility assignment, which is the most desirable practice as perceived by the employees. The management should pay heed in improving the frequency of existing practices like E-learning and Apprenticeship.
• The undesirable practices or the overdone practices like Job rotation and Stretch assignments, Coaching and mentoring, Succession planning and Career planning should be redesigned according to the needs of the employees so that they become more meaningful and relevant to them.

5.6. Significance of the study

The present study is intended to assess employee development practices in the selected companies of the two sectors of the telecom industry. The results of this research contribute to knowledge about employee development practices in the telecom industry in several ways. It provides an insight of desirable employee development practices that human capital practitioners could develop to create competitive advantage through their human capital assets by determining what, where, and how improvements may be effected in the overall interest of the companies concerned. It would help the firms to ensure that their employees are satisfied and motivated to perform their roles to the highest standards. Another contribution this dissertation made was to provide a close examination of the difference in the implementation of the different employee development practices and their perceived significance depending upon the nature of ownership of the companies. Next it would also be useful for the firms in providing the deep understanding about the effectiveness of the employee development practices on employee satisfaction as perceived by the employees. In addition to identifying the relevant employee development practices, the study also provides the current knowledge in terms of best employee development practices that could be emulated by public sector from the private sector of the telecom industry and vice-versa.
5.7. Limitations of the study and directions for future research:

- The study was based on a small sample of four companies. Though the public sector was entirely covered, there is a scope to cover more number of companies in the private sector in future, giving proper representation to telecom industry.

- As data collection was posing a problem, purposive sampling was used for selecting the companies in the private sector and the respondents in the company. This can lead to a risk of biased results as researchers have a tendency to treat the data as accurate depiction of the general public, though typically the data is not representative of the entire population. In future more deterministic techniques of probability sampling should be used.

- As the questionnaire is based on gauging the perception of the employees, the same may have posed a threat to internal validity because respondents were asked their feelings about a variety of work-related issues while at work. As such, they may not have answered all the queries truthfully (or responded at all), especially if they felt their responses could affect them or their job in a negative way.

- The results have been derived keeping in mind the objectives of the study. Though the demographic information has been collected but no relationship of the demographic factors and the constructs are drawn. A study analyzing the relationships between demographic factors, perceptions regarding impact of employee development program, perceived employee satisfaction and job performance would be of interest. Again the difference of the choice of the employee development practices in the two sectors based on the demographic variables would add to the scope of future research.

- The study only focussed on the various practices undertaken by the organizations in the telecom industry. It did not focus adequately on the methodology and evaluation of the development practices. This is another perspective which can be studied in the telecom industry.

- The study limited itself to only two constructs of employee development practices. The scope of exploring several constructs persists.

- A study in the same area but across different industries is highly suggested which will help establish whether there is any similarity among the employees working for different industries with regard to their perceptions of the employee development practices or whether the telecom industry is unique in itself.
5.8. Summary

The purpose of this final chapter was to summarize and conclude the findings in the previous chapter. The chapter begins with the objective wise summary of the findings which is followed by the conclusions which are drawn from the findings. The contribution of the research to the body of knowledge is presented. Implications and recommendations based on the results and findings are considered next. Limitations of the study are put forward, side by side the directions for future research are proposed.