CHAPTER 6 - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
The present research study sheds light on the effectiveness of training and development activities in the reputed automobile company in Pune.

The chief objective of the study is to find out the effect on the employees who undergo training and development activities conducted by the organization under research and the present chapter deals with the methodology followed for discovering the objectives, collection of the data and analyzing the same for arriving at the conclusion.

6.2 TOPIC OF RESEARCH AND ITS IMPORTANCE

The topic of research is Evaluation and Effectiveness of Training Activities in Automobile Companies with special reference to FORCE Motors Ltd. The topic is approved by Tilak Maharashtra University.

HRD essentially aims at improving the performance of employees through systematic training, career development and thereby organizational development. It is evident that if HRD issues are not properly handled, then organization may face decreased performance and may start a slow decaying. Productivity may suffer and cultural clashes may increase. Employees may suffer low skills and low knowledge. Attracting and retaining talent becomes difficult task for the organization. It is also true that successful outcomes are possible only with the quality of the training provided to the employees. It is equally important to assess the need of the training, the nature of the training provided, the methods and the selection of the training programmes and ultimately evaluation of the training programmes are important for the sound health of the organization.

It is worthwhile to note that training offers many benefits to employees and to the organization as a whole. Employees become more confident, open to change and supportive of each other. In addition, employees are motivated to achieve improved performance as a
result of training. The benefits employees gain is personal, career oriented and job related knowledge. The availability of training to the employees make them committed for achieving performance and develop strong relations with the organization and stay longer in the organization.

The automobile sector is people based industry where the end product is often produced by a number of employees together delivering the end product for organization and customers. Management of labor intensive industries face daunting task to measure the potential variability in the performance of the staff involved in the end product. Therefore the significance of appropriate training activities for all business within the auto sector is of considerable importance. As training & development practices have the potential to increase the service levels in the industry, organizations want to work out cost and benefits of training and development.

Therefore the purpose of this study is to analyze the Training & Development activities within Force Motors, one of the leading automobile companies, located in Pune identifying T&D systems, its evaluation and its effectiveness on employees and organizations and their performance. To achieve this objective, the study has identified the literature and published studies as best practices in the area of training and development.

6.3 RELEVANCE OF STUDY

The share of automobile and service sector in the increasing of GDP of any country is noteworthy. It is important in a way that it is the sector providing maximum employment to the people, directly and indirectly. This sector has tremendous competition and faces challenges from the market. Advancement in the information technology, the increased use of computer aided designs and quick exchange information has made paradigm shift in the business being conducted. Segmented markets, greatly diversified customers have had great impact on the customer’s choice. Therefore to remain in the competition, it is assumed that the people in the organization play the essential role to build the organization. And to build the world-class organization, the HRD intervention, in the form of continuous training & development is required.
Literature on training & development is very rich in the form of many books and many journals. But after going through many books and articles it was worth investigating whether the result of the efforts of the training and development practices have been undertaken. It is also essential to note the training as process efficiency. There are number of organizations where this kind of support is not provided to the employees in spite of National policy that training has to be provided to the employees to increase their skill sets and to gain through the training strategies. The organizations now have understood the importance of providing the training to their employees so as to get the edge in the area of competition. There is now growing recognition that training has significant role in gaining competitive advantage. Extensive research undertaken within human resource area has found that majority of the organizations engaging in innovative practices include training and development as key elements to attaining best practices.

6.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

OBJECTIVES
The following objectives have been framed for the present research.

1) To review and analyze training activities conducted by selected automobile company.
2) To check the effectiveness of training activities from the view point of trainees.

6.5 HYPOTHESES

The study is intended to test following hypotheses:
1) Selected automobile company adopts systematic approach towards its training activities.
2) Training activities conducted by the selected automobile company prove beneficial to the trainees and help in increasing their effectiveness.

6.6 TYPE OF RESEARCH

Post Facto Research methodology is used in this research. This consists of mainly a descriptive style investigation to find out effectiveness of Training & Development system. The present research study is descriptive by nature and therefore, data are collected from both
primary and secondary sources. Secondary data were collected through comprehensive literature review and internet. Other secondary sources included previous studies, journals, reports, magazines, newspapers and books. The primary data were collected from field visits of various units carrying out training and development programmes.

The present study is also empirical and analytical therefore it relies on observation, interviews and survey.

6.7 SOURCES OF DATA

Collection of data began when the research topic was finalized and research plan was chalked out. The subject being very important from the view point of Human Resource interventions in the organization it was essential to collect data very methodically. Data which was collected had a mix of primary data and secondary data. Primary data is very significant which decides the framework within which the research is to be carried out. The secondary data is to support the primary data. The primary data was collected through opinion survey and main survey. Opinion survey was through questionnaire where as main survey was through questionnaire, observation in the factory under research and through interviews with the participants as well as with the HR manager of the organization under study.

The research methodology followed was as below.
1) In order to check the relevance of the topic, detailed discussions were undertaken with the HR managers of the various companies.
2) Taking above discussions with the HR managers of various companies as a base, the questionnaire for Opinion Survey was designed. The opinion surveys were conducted where the respondents were HODs of HR department of companies in and around Pune. The sample size was 50 companies. This opinion survey gave lot of insight to researcher about the managements’ perception about training activities in their organizations and its effectiveness.
3) The researcher thereafter made a point to have few more discussions based on the opinion survey which proved to be groundwork for designing main questionnaire.
4) The pilot study was done with about 40 respondents in the company under research.

5) Researcher had opportunities to attend few conferences on HRD, titled HRD Challenges, HRD Issues, HRD Interventions, Changing Paradigm in HRD, Perspectives in People Management, etc. held in various institutions in and around Pune during the course of research. This was instrumental in bringing improvement in the main questionnaire. What was understood from the deliberations of these conferences and seminar that sustainable organizational excellence is achieved through identifying, selecting and cultivating employee training strategies, which would be instrumental in superior performance. Excellent organizations reveal that the infrastructure of human resources systems and processes for the successful organizations is a consistent assessment, planning training and development tools and, methods. This means that performance appraisal, assessment of potential, competency evaluation, career planning, training and development, selection and, compensation must be linked and act in cohesion for effective use. Companies must therefore make training interventions for talent management a top priority - create and continuously refine their employee value proposition, and source and develop talent systematically by effective training methods.

6) The main survey was conducted in Force Motors Ltd. where in 300 respondents were given the main questionnaire to be filled in from which 282 were returned. The respondents were managerial categories of the company under research.

7) The data collected was analyzed and interpretation was sought.

6.7.1 PRIMARY DATA

6.7.1.1 Survey

The development of questionnaire was very crucial as it is an instrument on which the whole research study is based. While gathering the data, structured open ended interviews were conducted. It was explained to them that the participation in the interview is purely
voluntary and the response would be used purely for academic and research purpose. It was therefore, agreeable for the participants to come out with suitable answers. This was a base for framing the questionnaire as few words and questions which would be ambiguous would make the research study without right results. A ten minutes interview with each employee was undertaken to find out their perception about training activities carried out in their companies. The interviews were conducted considering convenient time for the participants. To make the response easier and simple multiple choice questions were framed. Initially opinion survey questionnaire was prepared so as to prepare a base for main questionnaire.

a) Opinion Survey

Research Question: Based on a survey of literature we formulated the research question that can be succinctly stated as

What are Training and Development objectives and what are methods of evaluation of the training programmes? It was also decided to find out whether these organizations extend permission to carry out research activities about their training and development programmes.

Research Objective: Born out of the question posed was the objective of this study. This was verified through personal interaction with managers and HRD personnel in companies. The researcher wanted: (i) To know and understand the role and importance given to training and development activities in the organization under survey. This was to augment our knowledge and understanding of the problem at hand. (ii) To find out factors responsible for evaluation and effectiveness of training activities. This would imply that a comprehensive review of training activities had to be undertaken. (iii) To suggest ways and methods, if any to improve the training and development activities in the organization, if permission were to be given to carry out research into their training and development programmes. This would lead us to come up with the findings of investigation and posit a set of recommendations.

Based on the opinion survey conducted, the following Hypotheses were formulated.

# 1. Evaluation of training is an essential requirement to understand the effectiveness
of any HRD intervention.

2. Evaluation is not based on a one single method but on a variety of methods.

The opinion survey had 16 questions in 3 parts A B and C. The questions contained training need identification process, learning objectives frequency of evaluation, models used for evaluation, and objectives of the evaluation among others. The sample size for the opinion survey was 50 companies that satisfied the condition (i) of having more than 100 employees on any particular day during the year and (ii) regular training and development activities were initiated by HRD.

**Findings**

On the basis of responses obtained from the questionnaire all companies:

1) Consider training need identification as primary task before designing training programme.

2) Use performance appraisal as basis for training need identification.

3) Agree to well defined mechanism for evaluation of training programme.

4) Have well defined evaluation objectives.

5) Make follow up for outcome after training programmes

6) Preserve evaluation data for future use.

7) Have trained their staff for evaluation methods.

8) Consider evaluation of training as an integral part.

9) Follow Kirkpatrick model of evaluation because it is easy to use.
10) Have suggested that Kirkpatrick model of evaluation is the best model because it is easy to use.

11) Evaluate their training programmes once in year.

12) Have similar objective of training evaluation and that is “To determine the extent of knowledge, skills and changes in the attitude because of training”

b) Main Survey

Based on the opinion survey the main questionnaire was formulated. The questionnaire was discussed with Research Guide number of times to give it a proper shape and make it simpler and lucid to get the maximum information. The questionnaire finally suggested by the research guide was discussed with the HR head of the company under research and but for a minor changes it was given green signal. A pilot testing of questionnaire was conducted in the organization to test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire.

The main questionnaire has 49 questions spread over 9 parts which contained broadly personal information, training and development characteristics, training need identification, training objectives, contents of the course, equipments & facilities, trainer qualities, Opportunities for application of training, benefits and effects of the training programme and some general comments. The 300 respondents were requested to fill up the questionnaires out of which 282 were returned. The respondents were managerial categories of the company under research.

This was quantitative data which was collected. The qualitative data which was collected was through discussions and interviews with the personnel of the company under research.

6.7.1.2 Discussions and Interviews

In this method, the discussion with the HR managers was fruitful where the researcher learned few things about the challenges and problems about the training interventions
conducted in the organizations. Interviews were conducted during the opinion survey and at the time of main survey. The information on training and development activities conducted was obtained from the records available from this organization and from those who had attended training programmes.

6.7.2 SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data was compiled from different books, and articles from magazines, newspapers, journals and periodicals, through seminar proceedings and websites to formulate the conceptual framework. Secondary data was helpful in defining objectives and formulating hypotheses. The abundant literature on training and development helped in understanding major issues and insight and was helpful in having in-depth understanding.

6.8 SCOPE OF RESEARCH

Scope of research is to analyze the Training & Development activities within Force Motors, one of the leading automobile companies, located in Pune identifying T&D systems, its evaluation and its effectiveness on employees and organizations and their performance. It is restricted to the employees of Force Motors Ltd. Pune and managerial categories have been included in this study.

6.9 UNIVERSE AND SAMPLE

Pune is one of the premier industrial centers of India. It is home to one of the world's three largest two-wheeler manufacturers, Bajaj Auto. Other global automobile names like Telco, Mercedes Benz and Bajaj Tempo also have huge manufacturing facilities here. Apart from the auto giants, a large number of engineering, electronic and electrical industries have setup base in the large, medium and small scale sectors. The industrial township of Pimpri Chinchwad, adjacent to the main city, is dotted with over 4,000 manufacturing units. This vast and well established industrial base has imbibed the city with a 'professional' ethos and work culture in the city. The research was carried out in Force Motors Ltd. as they have varied degree of manufacturing activity. They have three wheeler productions also along with four wheeler productions. Their range of production is from small commercial vehicles to
trucks and shortly they are entering into the field of passenger car and sports utility vehicle. The sample size for the main survey was 282 managers of Force Motors Ltd.

6.10 PRE-RESEARCH PROCESS

After defining objective of the present research, following process was adopted to carry out research.

1. Different libraries were visited namely YASHDA, British Library, Brihanmaharashtra College of Commerce (BMCC) of Pune.
2. Relevant documents, reports etc. were obtained.
3. Different HR heads were met personally and shared ideas with them.
4. Suitable research methodology was studied for adoption.

6.11 CONDUCTING THE SURVEY

To understand the research approaches and techniques as well as the subject of the research sufficient time was spent by the researcher. To get the best results, it was necessary to use more than one research technique. Therefore, adequate time had to be devoted to understanding the wide range of research methods and practices. Sources like books, magazines, journals, periodicals, websites and published reports of conferences were studied for the collection, analysis and presentation of data. Research notebook was maintained for writing down progress and recording the insights during the research. The researcher relied mainly on books, magazines, journals, periodicals, websites and published reports of conferences for understanding the scope of the subject.

6.12 METHOD OF ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Descriptive and analytical methods were used for analysis of the data. The data collected through questionnaire is analyses quantitatively. The data was first tabulated in a suitable format keeping in mind the responses. Percentages were worked out to draw the inferences. Cronbach alpha method and Pearson Correlation Coefficient method was mainly used for analysis of the data. There were four closed ended questions in which opinions were asked from the respondents. In case of the open ended questions, the answers were
categorized and inferences were drawn by considering percentages of common answers. There were 38 Likert scale questions for which Cronbach alpha method was used. The researcher had to use the judgement based on the percentages and the observations.

The qualitative data which was gathered through discussions and interviews was analyzed using the basis of researcher’s judgement.

6.13 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The study is limited to:

- Different sector companies from Pune region for opinion survey.
- Force Motors Limited - A large scale automobile company for main survey.
- Representative sample of 282 of managerial categories.
- 300 questionnaires were distributed out of which 282 were returned duly filled.
- The study is based in the company in Pune region.

6.14 CONCLUSION

Based on the researcher’s own experience, observation, discussion with the research guide, academicians and experts in the field, interviews and secondary data and the data gathered through questionnaires submitted by Force Motors employees, it is thought imperative to introduce the company under research. Therefore, the next chapter gives introduction to Force Motors Ltd., Akurdi, Pune. The chapter includes training and development policies and objectives of the company.
References