CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The economy of any nation pivots on natural resources men and women workers and technological progress. In the modern era, the economists have announced “human resource” as an advent in the international arena in a thumping fashion. The human resource is indubitably the most dynamic backbone of any economic enterprise; “the resource of all resources” will take a giant leap over all resource components. Business experts highlight the issues such as global competition, the fast changing information and technology; composition of workforce etc., the business performance has successfully transited from the slow growth economy a fast growing one.

There was a shift from the tradition bound personnel management to people oriented service. The conventional personnel management is more bureaucratic whereas the human resource management attaches more importance to humanism and humanization. New techniques and styles of managing have been developed. Personal administration, industrial relations and labour welfare have become the integral parts of the broad human resource practices. Human resource professionals must concentrate more on the deliverables of their work and less on just
getting the work done. They must tackle the complex, social, economic legal and ethical issues. An efficient human resource is a strategic asset.

EVOLUTION OF HRM

The development of human resource management in UK and USA was largely voluntary. But in India, it emerged because of Governmental intervention and compulsion. In the beginning of the 20th century, various malpractices in the recruitment of workers and payment of wages were prevalent; they caused a colossal loss in production. The Royal Commission on Labour in India (1931) under the chairmanship of J.H. Whitely recommended the abolition of the “Jobber” system and the appointment of labour Officers in industrial enterprises to perform the recruitment function as well as to look after the welfare of the employees. After independence, the labour welfare Officer was identified with the personnel manager created by legislation under Section 49 of the Factories Act 1948. The role of a personnel manager was that of a custodian of personnel policy implementation, in compliance with different enactments of the factories legislation. Over the years, a new approach – the human resource management has emerged; it focuses more on developmental aspects of human resource with a pragmatic flexible approach.

MAJOR CHALLENGES FACING TODAY’S HR PROFESSIONAL

HR professionals are primarily responsible for developing HRM practices that enhance competitive advantage. HR professionals have two responsibilities
(1) to ensure that their own talents are treated ethically and (2) to ensure that their own talents are appropriately utilized by their companies.

A. Organizational Ethics Related to HRM

Almost all HRM decisions have ethical consequences. Despite the abundance of laws designed to ensure fair treatment at the workplace, employees are often treated in an unethical manner. In some instances, employers skirt the law; in others, the “letter of the law” is followed, but employees are nonetheless treated unfairly by management or by other employees.

i) Unethical Behaviour

According to a recent survey, the most serious ethical problems involve managerial decisions regarding employment, promotion, pay, discipline and favoritism.

ii) Workplace Ethics and the HR Professional’s Job

HR professionals play three roles in the area of workplace ethics. Firstly they must observe the actions of organizational members to ensure that all individuals are treated fairly and legally. Secondly HR professionals investigate complaints bearing on ethical issues, such as sexual harassment or violations of employees’ privacy rights. Thirdly HR professionals serve as company

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2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
spokespeople by defending the company’s actions when confronted by a regulatory agency or the media.

Furthermore, HR professionals themselves should act ethically. In an ethical dilemma, HR professionals must be willing to take a strong stand, even if it means putting their jobs at risk. If they choose to turn a blind eye, they become part of the problem and thus must take the blame.4

B) Organizational Utilization of HR Professionals

HR Professionals should also ensure that their organizations appropriately utilize their talents. HR professionals can contribute significantly to a firm’s competitive advantage. Unfortunately, many firms set up roadblocks that prevent HR staff from making such contributions.

The HRM function has traditionally been viewed as the Rodney Dangerfield of business “They don’t get any respect”. The enormous benefits attached to better HRM practices are often ignored because many managers perceive that HRM cannot contribute to competitive advantage to the same extent that more innovative technologies and business strategies can. As an HR professional at Texas Instruments noted:5

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In the past, the HR function has been like a spare tire kept in the trunk. In an Emergency, it’s taken out, but as soon as the emergency is over, it’s put away. HR’s failure to earn credibility with upper management has created two specific problems for HR professionals. First, upper-level managers often reject their advice and do not select HRM’s best practices. Second, HR professionals are rarely asked for their advice on broader management issues.

C) Increasing the HR Professional’s Sphere of Influence

A recent survey of over 200 HR professionals has found out that most of them (58 percent) do not consider themselves full-fledged participants at the firm’s “executive table”; they are often left in the dark when important executive decisions are made. To ensure that companies use their skills fully, HR professionals must dramatically increase their sphere of influence within their organizations. Their role should be that of a full business partner.

HR professionals must form a partnership with operating managers. Both parties recognize that one cannot build sustainable competitive advantage based solely on the type of products offered or the type of technology used. The only thing that will uphold a company’s future competitive advantage is the caliber of people in the organization. HR professionals and line managers should both be concerned with how to effectively provide an environment in which people can do what they are capable of doing.

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7 Caudron. HR leaders brainstorm.
To be full business partners, HR professionals must shift from being the narrow specialists of the past to being members of general management teams. HR professionals must work side by side with managers as partners in handling all kinds of business activities, not just function-specific ones. The vice president of Scott Paper Company notes that the human resource executive must be “at the management table initiating ideas to make us more productive”\textsuperscript{8}. “HR is no longer sitting on the sidelines. We’re trying to figure out how to put together a catalogue and how to improve the turnaround time to our customers”\textsuperscript{9}.

**The International Scenario and Human Resource Management**

There are numerous difficulties in attempting to create a model of HRM even within the cultural context of one country, the United States, and there are further complexities in attempting to apply such models to other national settings. This is also compounded by the variety of organizational and managerial styles in different organizations in different sectors depending on the products they make and the services which they provide within the diversity of national and regional cultures. Not surprisingly, ‘underlying theory which describes and explains variations in comparative human resource systems has been slow to develop’ (Begin, 1992)\textsuperscript{10}.

\textsuperscript{9} Ibid.
In the European Community alone, there are significant differences in human resource practices. For example, in many Italian organizations recruitment is often based on the contacts of family and friends, whilst although such practices do exist in Northern Europe, they are generally frowned on as a form of nepotism.

In France, graphology is widely used in the selection process but hardly used in Scandinavia or the UK where there is more scepticism about its effectiveness. In Germany and Sweden there are large numbers of directors and senior executives who have engineering qualifications whereas in the UK they are more likely to have accountancy backgrounds.

In addition, labour market policies differ widely across Europe and there can be significant variance in policies and practices between countries, which appear similar in their socio-economic and political structures, for example between Denmark and Sweden (Brewster, Hegewisch, Holden and Lockhart, 1992).  

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The Indian scenario and human resource management

In the 50s, there was a strong belief that employees were not expected to question 'why' but only 'to do-and-die'. In the 60s, terms like “manpower”, “staff” and “personnel” came to be used and instead of controlling the employees, it became more and more acceptable to manage personnel as studies revealed that productivity of the workers could be improved if they were organized for the work. Moreover, in the late 70s, people realized that beyond a point, productivity depended on people. In addition, workers started demanding whatever they expected from the employers over and above their salaries. 'Personnel' came to be called 'human resources'. Sharing the global thinking, Indian managers and behavioural scientists accepted and introduced such theories, models and concepts as theory X/Y/Z, two-factor theory of motivation, contingency model, social-comparison processes, Porter-Lawler model, socio-technical system, job enrichment, managerial grid, participative management, empowerment, quality of work life, total quality management and Kaizen.

At the same time, experts observed that there were some strategic challenges of current times such as accelerating rates of change in all aspects of business---increasing competition, globalization of business, technological change, changing work culture, resource constraints, and transition from industrial to information society, unstable market owing to economic conditions,
increasing demands by corporate stake-holders, and a complex psychological environment. We are now witnessing the emergence of a global village. However, are we prepared for the ensuing challenge?

Hierarchy, status, authority, responsibility, and accountability are structural concepts. However, in the Indian context, emotions, feelings, empathetic perceptions, impressions and the affective components have influenced people more than anything else. In a work environment, people do not like being treated as puppets, blamed, belittled or bossed over. On the other hand, managers feel that they only should 'think' and workers must only 'do'. The idea that the boss is always right still persists. The boss-subordinate relationship creates stressful situations, hampering the environment conducive to human resource management. The subordinates expect that the boss should have integrity, higher performance skill, commitment, guidance and leadership qualities, and patronizing tendencies, accessibility, wider vision, sense of empowerment, and credibility. On the other hand, the boss expects that his subordinates should have a commitment to job, integrity, competence, reliability, initiative, loyalty to the organization, self-discipline and a good sense of accountability and involvement. HRM basically refers to a balanced interaction between these two sets of expectations. A good HRM environment ensures harmony between the boss and the subordinates. However, a healthy corporate philosophy ensuring uniform policies at all levels of an organization is necessary for good HRM.
Indian organizations are experiencing a transition. The workforces of the 50s and 60s have retired. The middle-level is now at the top with the hangover of all possible middle-class values. The new generations of MBAs are pouring into industrial organizations. Young executives in their mid-30s are heading HRD/HRM divisions in big companies. Moreover, due to the unprecedented advancement in information technology, there is a growing need to understand and manage this transition, and give a direction to this change process. In order to achieve an effective HRM strategy, we have to integrate HRM with HRD, IR, and organization development (OD). The HRM strategies in India in the 21st century have to focus on better individual-organization interface and greater emphasis on organizational effectiveness than on personal success.

1.2 DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS

Human Resource Management

“Human resource management” refers to the management of men and women workers. It includes a set of policies and practices. The policies and practices of the traditional personnel management also come under the purview of human resource management.

Human Resource Management Policies

“Human resource management” policies mean general guidelines on human resource functions for action in private sugar mills in Tamil Nadu.
Human Resource Management Practices

“Human resource management practices” means the actual practices covering the service conditions of workers, including conventional personnel management practices, which are implemented in the private sugar mills in Tamil Nadu.

Employees

“Employees” refer to people working in the private sugar mills in Tamil Nadu either on permanent or on seasonal basis. It includes Officers, supervisors and workmen.

Employees' Satisfaction

“Satisfaction” denotes a set of attitudes to a particular thing. Thus, the term satisfaction for the purpose of the study connotes the attitude of the employees of the private sugar mills towards their treatment by the superiors.

Workmen

“Workmen” refers to people working in the private sugar mills on regular or seasonal basis and drawing the salaries as per the Wage Board Settlement of Sugar Industries. Workmen include highly skilled, skilled-A, skilled-B, semi-skilled and unskilled workers.

Officers

“Officer” means an employee who was appointed prior to June 1999 and who is drawing salary as per the norms of the State Government.
Nature of Employment

“Nature of employment” means the type of work in sugar industry. It can be broadly categorized into regular and seasonal. In regular employment, the employees are provided job throughout the year, whereas in seasonal employment the workers are engaged only during the crushing season. However they are the permanent employees of the sugar mills.

1.3. IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN PRIVATE SUGAR MILLS

Private institutions consist of a significant quantum of human resources. The effective and innovative human resource management is equally important for all types of private enterprises. The reasons lie partly in the peculiar growth of small-sized enterprises and partly in the lack of awareness of problems of human resources. Most of the private sugar mills are small in size and operations. Therefore, they are not aware of the human resource management practices. However in large-scale private sector like private sugar mills the chairman and the board of directors are expected to be aware of the human resource management practices.

With the passage of time, human resource management in private had become the result of wide spread dissatisfaction of the employees. Unsatisfactory working conditions, limited scope for personal growth, lack of professionalism in the field of human resource management and similar

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drawbacks have led to the dissatisfaction of the workers. Private sector, being one of the major sectors of the economy, cannot afford to be complacent with the status quo for the coming years. In private sector, little effort has been made to formulate and disseminate knowledge and skills of human resource management system due to the reasons explained above. Therefore, efforts are to be taken to solve the problems mentioned.

The absence of a strong human resource management has caused the emergence of most of the drawbacks of private sector and created problems of stability and growth and has also retarded the process of development. Introduction of a proper human resource management system has now become necessary, as the conditions of the economy have changed considerably, requiring introduction of new technology. Human resource management is both the foundation and fountain of developing sound infrastructure-professionalised management in private sector. In this way, the human resource management plays a crucial role in the implementation of strategic management of private sector, which is human-centered, value-led and culture-dependent. The private sector institutions in the country are yet to develop systematic personnel policies. There are no arrangements at present for long-term manpower planning and consequently for staff development. Lack of a systematic approach to recruitment of personnel, training and placement has been one of the impediments in professionalization of management.
1.4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Sugar industry is the second largest agro-based industry in India, next to textiles. In 2005-06, there were 577 sugar production units in India of which 203 were in the private sector. A large part of rural population was involved in the functioning of sugar factories. They usher in radical changes by providing facilities like agriculture, extension of irrigation, education, health, dairy and poultry. Moreover, they have modernized agriculture. Subsistence farming has now assumed commercial proportions. The result is a socio-economic transformation of the rural India. They harness and reinforce the capacities and energies of men and women human resource in a meaningful and fruitful way. In the Indian sugar industry there is low productivity of man power. The reasons are: financial stringency, steadily declining profitability lack of integration between employees and mills and demoralization and lack of job security.

Over-staffing is lugubrious attribute to an un-economical working of private sugar factories. Most of the shortcomings are due to differences in the characteristics and attitudes of employees, unrest among certain workforce and strained industrial relations. The private sugar mills require professionally competent as well as co-operative oriented human resource. To enhance the management excellence, review the existing practices and evolve suitable parameters. This begets a conducive work environment in private sugar mills.
1.5. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study is to evaluate the human resource management practices of top five private sugar mills in Tamil Nadu based on their turnover. The reason for the selection of private sugar mills is that Tamil Nadu State stands fourth in sugarcane production next to Karnataka, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh. However, in the percentage of sugar extracted from cane, Tamil Nadu stands first. In this study the researcher has identified the following specific key areas of Human Resource Management to know their impact on Private Sugar mills in Tamil Nadu.

1. Human Resource Planning
2. Recruitment and Selection
3. Training and Development
4. Wages and Salary Administration
5. Working Conditions
6. Motivational Measures
7. Promotions and Transfers
8. Labour Welfare Measures
9. Workers’ Participation in Management
10. Performance Management
11. Employees’ Grievance Handling
12. Industrial Relations.
The researcher has focused on the above key factors only and has not covered other aspects which earlier studies have concentrated on. Realizing the imperatives of improving human resource management practices of the private sugar mills in the context of better future for a developing economy like India, an attempt has been made to look into remarkable human relations through effective human resource management practices.

1.6. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The specific objectives of the study are as follows

1. To study the progress of sugar mills in India and Tamil Nadu.

2. To identify and analyze the existing human resource management practices in selected private sugar mills in Tamil Nadu.

3. To study the personal profiles of the organization which influence the human resource management practices in the selected private sugar mills in Tamil Nadu.

4. To examine the different dimensions of human resource management practices in the selected private sugar mills in Tamil Nadu.

5. To create a model for human resource management practices in private sugar mills in Tamil Nadu.

6. To suggest appropriate measures to enhance the human resource development in private sugar mills in Tamil Nadu.
1.7. HYPOTHESES

1. There is no association between personal profiles and human resource management practices in private sugar mills.

2. The present human resource management practices are at a satisfactory level.

3. There is relationship among the dimensions of human resource management practices.

1.8. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

There are 19 private sector sugar mills in Tamil Nadu. Only five sugar mills were selected on the basis of turnover for this study. The total strength of workers was 3426 as on 31.03.2007 in all five private sugar mills. By adopting the stratified random sampling technique (proportionate), 500 respondents were selected on the basis of employees’ category as strata. Tippet's random number table was used to select the sample respondents in each stratum. The employees were classified into three categories namely Officers, supervisors and workmen. Ten Officers, 15 supervisors and 75 workmen were selected from each sugar mill.
The human resource management practices vary from mill to mill. There are no standard yardsticks in the employment of workers. Mills with higher capacity use smaller number of employees than mills with lower capacity. Moreover, the number of employees also varies depending upon the season. Hence, the samples based on some proportion or percentage will not be relevant. Therefore, a fixed number of employees have been selected from each category for this study.

The current study is pragmatic in nature based on survey method. The primary data were collected from employees from five private sugar mills. A pilot study was conducted during July 2007, with 25 workers and 10 Officers in three private sugar mills. The secondary data were collected mainly from journals, reports, books, and records of the private sugar mills. More relevant secondary sources were collected from Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, ICSSR (Indian Council of Social Science Research) New Delhi and Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore.
The ultimate objective of the study was evaluating the human resource management practices of private sugar mills in Tamil Nadu. In order to analyze prevailing human resource management practices in the private sugar mills, various statistical techniques such as Chi-square, Correlation, Multidimensional scaling, Factor Analysis, ANOVA, Multiple Regression, Cluster analysis, Multi Dimension Scaling (MDS) have been used with the help of SPSS. To arrive at possible solutions simple percentage analysis was also employed.

The primary data were collected during 2007-2008. The secondary data cover a period of 10 years from 1998-99 to 2007-08.

1.9. PROFILE OF SUGAR MILLS

**E.I.D. Parry (India) Ltd.**, contact address is No. 138, Keel Amngunam Road, Nellikuppam- 607 105, District - Cuddalore, Ph.- (04142) 272231, 272232, 272239, 273437, Fax- (04142) 272242, E-mail: adminnkm@parry.murugappa.com, Nearest Railway - Nellikuppam 0.5 Km, Nearest District - Cuddalore 12 Km, Nearest Airport- Chennai 165 Km,, Co. Office - Dare House, 234, N.S.C. Bose Road, Chennai 600 001, Ph.- (044) 25340251, 25341053, Fax- (044) 25340858, 25340986, Holiday- Sunday, Courier- Professional.

1 set of knives 1 fibrizor 16 rollers 940 x 1981 8 rollers 1050 x 2100
Performance of Sugar Factory Plant \( A \) W \( S \) MITH, B \( W \), NHEC, KCP. UTT AM & KIRLOKAR.

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Shree Ambika Sugars Ltd., (Unit II), contact address is Pennadam R.S. Post, Tittagudi Taluk, District- Cuddalore 606 111, Ph.- (04143) 222215, 222234, Fax- (04143) 222253, E-mail: headpndm@tasugars.com. Nearest Railway- Pennadam R.S. 1/2. Km., Nearest District- Perambalur 50 Km., Nearest Airport- Trichy 120 Km., Co. Office.- Post Box No.3328, No.112, Uthamar Gandhi Salai, Chennai- 600 034, Ph.(044) 28276001, 28270915, Fax- (044) 28270470, Holiday- Sunday, Courier Services- Professional.

2 sets of knives 1 fibrizor 15 rollers 915 x 1981 with GRPF for 1st & last mill TRPF II, III & IV mills

Performance of Sugar Factory Plant BW

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Rajshree Sugars and Chemicals Ltd., (Unit II) contact address is Mundiyampakkam, Villupuram Taluk & District Pin code - 605 601, Ph.- (04146) 232401, 232402, Fax- (04146) 232403, E-mail: mpakkam@rajshreesugars.com, Website- www.rajshreesugars.com, Nearest Railway- Mundiyampakkam 01 Km, Nearest District- Villupuram 08 Km, Nearest Airport- Chennai 150 Km, Co-ofice.-"The Uffizi" 338, Avinashi Road, Peelamedu, Coimbatore 641 004 Ph.- (0422) 2580981/83, Fax- (0422) 2577929, Holiday- Sunday, Courier Services- Professional.

hammer 1 fibrizor I & II mill- 36 x 78 III & IV mill 33 x 66 - 12 rollers with TRPF V mill - 42 x 84-3 rollers with TREF

Performance of Sugar Factory Plant WIL, KB, KRUPP, NHEC & HDO.

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Mahatma Gandhi Salai, Chennai-34, Ph.- (044) 28276001, Fax-(044) 28270470,
Holiday- Sunday, Courier Services- Professional.
3 sets of knives 1 shredder915 x 1980-I mill 850x1700-II to Vmill 1067x2131-VI mill.

Performance of Sugar Factory

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3 sets of knives 1 mincer 12 rollers 765 x 1525 3 rollers 840 x 1680
Performance of Sugar Factory Plant WIL

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1.10. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study has the following limitations:

1. The study was conducted in the State of Tamil Nadu. As the industrial environment varies from place to place, caution may be exercised while extending the findings of the study to other areas.

2. The study is confined only to human resource management practices and other related issues are beyond the purview of present study.

3. The human resource management practices are a vast subject consisting of a number of practices. The most common practices that are implemented in the private sugar mills only were considered in this study. Further, the conclusion drawn is specific and cannot be universalized.

4. As stated earlier, a period of ten year from 1998-99 to 2007-08 has been selected for this study because of the constraints of time and only five mills have been selected and studied. Hence the conclusion drawn in specific and cannot be universalized.
1.11. CHAPTER SCHEME

This study has been presented in six Chapters.

In the First Chapter, Introduction and Design of the Study, introduction to the importance of human resource management practices in private sugar mills, operational definitions of concepts, statement of the problem, scope of the study, objectives, hypotheses, scope of the study, research methodology, profile of sugar mills and limitations have been discussed.

The Second Chapter deals with review of literature and presents the previous studies related to the objectives of the present study.

The history and progress of private sugar industries in India and Tamil Nadu is presented in the Third Chapter. History of sugar industry, sugar industry scenario, progress of sugar industry, number of sugar factories in operation, sugarcane production, sugar production, sugarcane crushed and recovery and other related details are presented in this Chapter.

In the Fourth Chapter, profiles of employees and the human resource management practices implemented in the private sugar mills in Tamil Nadu are reviewed.

An analysis of prevailing human resource management practices of the private sugar mills have been dealt with in the Fifth Chapter.
The Sixth Chapter gives summary of findings and recommendations of the study. The problems encountered by the employees and appropriate measures to be taken to improve the human resource management practices of private sugar mills are presented in this chapter.