CHAPTER - I

AIM AND METHODOLOGY
This chapter describes the problems under study, its importance, and objectives as well as the methodology adopted.

The Present Study

The present study is an attempt to create an awareness among the electricity consumers about their rights and other protection measures available to them in case they suffer from any deficiency in the quality of service rendered by the electricity department. The present study aims at motivating the electricity consumer by involving them as participants in mobilising public opinion so that they can express their satisfaction or otherwise as an organised group with regard to the quality of service by the Karnataka Electricity Board, in
Pavagada Taluk. This research exercise is expected to create a lot of awareness among the concerned about the Consumer Protection Act and Karnataka Electricity Board Act and the consumer protection therein. What the Government is expected to do is identification of the gaps between the objectives of Electricity Board and their accomplishment.

The study is also expected to educate the electricity consumers to take their grievances regarding irregular and erratic supply of electricity and other problems to the consumer forum for their redressal. The study is also expected to create a sort of group pressure on the authorities of electricity department to follow and adopt fair practices in supply of electricity as the findings of this work would be made public.

The present study finally offers a few suggestions to the Government so that the identified lapses can be rectified.

It also suggests certain measures to be taken by the KEB that contribute to the satisfaction of electricity consumers in order to further achieve the electricity policy objectives.

Objectives of the Study

The following are the various objectives of the study.

1. To identify the public grievances against the Electricity Board and thereby to settle them through various machinery available.
2. To create awareness among the electricity consumers regarding the standards they are entitled to in respect of electricity services.

3. To offer a few suggestions to the government for betterment of electricity services to safeguard the interests of electricity consumers in Pavagada taluk.

METHODOLOGY

The data needed for the study are collected mainly from primary sources and some data from secondary sources.

The primary data consists of the opinions gathered from the consumers through administering questionnaires. About 600 questionnaires were distributed among the public in Pavagada taluk. The questionnaires were distributed among the various sections of people belonging to business, agriculture, employees, labour, and others. The researcher could secure responses from 260 electrical consumers out of 600 questionnaires distributed. Thus the opinion expressed by 260 respondents have been taken as representable sample and thus distribution of questionnaires was unbiased.

The secondary sources from which data collected include published literature available in the form of books, journals, Acts and reports and verdicts given by various Consumer fora on the subject.
DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

The collected data are tabulated and presented through percentages.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The subject 'Electricity' concern every one in the economy. Hence the significance of the present study. The present study is important because, electrical energy is one of the most important inputs required for rapid industrialisation. It has also become a necessity in the life of common man. A great effort is being made at the national as well as at the state level to make this vital input readily available. Thus the study assumes greater importance since electrical power is a key input for the industrial and human resource development of any region.

The study becomes all the more important because it aims at providing adequate information and guidance to the electricity consumers by way of enlightening them on various quality aspects of electricity services to be rendered by the electricity boards and also the various legal aspects which are of importance both to the electricity board as well as consumers. This study provides the necessary cautions to the electricity board to overcome its lapses and also creates awareness among the electricity consumers regarding how to safeguard their
interests through consumer courts when there is no response to their grievance from the electricity authorities.

This study is important because it gives an opportunity to the electricity consumers to express their satisfaction or otherwise directly about the quality of services offered to them by the electricity board.

SURVEY OF LITERATURE

A few studies articles in the area of consumer satisfaction in electrical services have been referred for the purpose of the study which are quoted during the make-up of the thesis. Research on consumerism as such is of recent origin and the available literature is limited. This study is essentially a primary one conducted to create awareness about the rights of consumers pertinent to electricity services and their protection.

S.K. Nayyar observed that the power generation programme in the country has made phenomenal progress with the advent of the five year plans. Yet the power shortage continues due to ever increasing demand. The situation should improve as the Government is keen to strengthen this vital sector of economy. The new industrial policy too aims at encouraging greater participation of the private sector in power generation. 1

Village electrification is a crucial component in the strategy for a balanced development of rural India. Adequate attention will be given to improve the quality of power supply and reduce system losses.  

Ravi C. Moorthy found that modern society is totally energy based. Any shortage and imbalance will lead to adverse economic consequences. Each successive budget brings home the fact that the upward spiral of energy cost affects every facet of our lives.

Purushotham and Elangovan felt that there was a definite need for the development of a suitable agency for supplementing Boards to speed up the pace of rural electrification by undertaking the distribution function.

Aarabinda Ghosh stressed that the availability of power is an important for the economic development of a country is based on it.

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Agarwal concluded that energy appears to have become a major constraint to development especially for those countries which are deficient in fossil fuel and the balance of payment situation continues to be difficult. Ramachandran suggested that increased exploitation of energy resources is the only answer to economic survival especially in a competitive free economy.

Shukla conceived that rural electrification has brought about a welcome change in the social fabric of the rural areas with special reference to the economic structure, living style and outlook of the village people. The rapid spread of television and radio network and modern means of amenities were possible because of extension of electricity to the new areas. Qusim opined that from the First Plan to the Seventh Plan, there has been a phenomenal increase in both energy production and energy consumption. Despite such an increase in the commercial energy the per capita energy consumption in India in still one of the lowest in the world.

P.K. Jatti and Sahoo\textsuperscript{10} found that though electricity has reached the door of the villagers, still the extent of use is too low and it mainly benefits people of the upper strata of the society which may further widen the gap between the rich and the poor. Arokiaswamy\textsuperscript{11} opined that electricity is the cheapest and most convenient form of energy for lighting purposes.

Krishan Kumar\textsuperscript{12} highlighted that even though the first electric station in India was commissioned in 1897 in Darjeeling little or no attention was paid to rural areas at the initial stages. Chatterjee\textsuperscript{13} explained that due to lack of adequate power supply, it is also difficult to invite entrepreneurs to start new units in any region.

Lalitha\textsuperscript{14} stated that the country is facing power shortage due to many reasons; besides whatever power is available is not being duly distributed among various sectors of the economy.


\textsuperscript{12} Krishan Kumar, Rural Electrification miles to go, Kurukshetra August 1, 1974.

\textsuperscript{13} Chatterjee, S.N., Power shortage in West Bengal, Kurukshetra Octo 16, 1974.

\textsuperscript{14} Lalitha, D.R., Distribution of Electricity for agriculture, Kurukshetra, April 1, 1974.
towards balanced growth. Damle\textsuperscript{15} viewed that ever increasing demand of industries and other consumers of power the power utilities throughout the country find it difficult to meet the demand because the corresponding investment in generation of power is not adequate and there is always a gap.

Paraskar\textsuperscript{16} explained that supplying electricity to villages presents a challenge to get maximum reliability of supply at a cost that is acceptable and reasonable in financial terms. Chatterjee\textsuperscript{17} analyses that the irk some power cuts have hindered agricultural development of West Bengal as no energised pump can be used for multi-cropping or irrigation.

It has been indicated that one of the great challenges that faces the country at the present time is equating the facilities available in rural sectors of the economy with those available in the urban sector.\textsuperscript{18} Khan\textsuperscript{19} suggested that unlike

\begin{itemize}
  \item Chatterjee, S.N., Power shortage in West Bengal, Kurukshetra, Oct. 16, 1974.
  \item The role of the Rural Electrification Corporation in Rural Development, Monthly Commentary on Indian Economic Conditions, Annual 1984.
\end{itemize}
private electricity undertakings the State Electricity Boards have to perform a social objective of providing electricity to the entire populace of the state for raising their standard of living. Chatterjee\textsuperscript{20} sought the adoption of improved techniques of agriculture largely depend on adequate supply of power in the rural sector.

Joshi\textsuperscript{21} conceived that attempts at obtaining electricity from the waves started from the early 19th Century but no commercial project has been completed till now. Wall\textsuperscript{22} stressed on establishment of sound policies and procedures for consideration. Damle\textsuperscript{23} stated that the demand for power from industries is growing at a very fast rate and poses to the Board a challenge on all fronts i.e. generation, transmission and distribution of power.

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\textsuperscript{20} Chatterjee, S.N., Power shortage in West Bengal, Kurukshetra Oct. 16, 1974.
\textsuperscript{21} Joshi, G.V., Energy that is pollution free and renewable, \textit{Yojana}, May 31, 1991.
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