

INDUSTRY AND HRD: A MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

Section I

STRUCTURAL REFORMS AND INDUSTRY

5.01 Introduction

Structural reforms cover various aspects, such as transformation from an inward looking sufficient-oriented economy to an outward-looking external demand economy, from regulated to deregulated economy, from a policy of nationalisation to that of privatisation and from agriculture to an industrial economy. The aim of these reforms is to stimulate the performance of the economy through innovative technology, higher productivity and greater efficiency. These reforms have had a deeper impact on the industry than it was anticipated. It therefore becomes pertinent to know what really has been the impact of structural reforms on the industry and also to know how the industry perceives these changes. An effort is made in this chapter to know the perception of the industry in this regard. The chapter is divided into four sections. Section I deals with impact of structural reforms on industry. Section II deals with management's perception about working conditions of the worker and changing industrial environment. Section III deals with management perception on future policies to be adopted and section IV deals with chemical industry in perspective of structural reforms on industrial relations.

5.02 Structural Reforms and its Impact on Indian Economy

Protective regime led to the development of high cost and inefficient industries, which in the absence of competition both internal and external

had no inducement for efficiency and progress. The proponents of globalisation/ liberalisation advocated that inward looking policies and regulated regime for more than four decades were responsible for the crisis in the economy. The only way to resolve this crisis and make Indian economy more competitive was found in adopting structural reform package consisting of liberalisation and globalisation (Sidhu, A.S. and Cheena, C.S., 1999).

Table 5.01
Perception on the structural reforms and its impact on Indian economy

No.	Policy impact on Indian economy.	Number of units
1.	Imbibe high-tech and integration of Indian economy with the world economy	69
2.	Push India into trap of colonial history.	29
3.	Lead India to the path of economic development and prosperity.	35

Majority of the respondents were of the view that changes were made to reform the economy by adopting and reorienting market friendly and outward looking policies. This they feel was necessary to expose the economy to competition and foreign capital, technology and companies for attaining higher degree of efficiency and raising productivity and ultimately to integrate Indian economy with the world economy. 69% respondents were of the view that structural reforms will imbibe high technology. The structural reforms will bring improvement in the standard of living and quality of life of the general population in the long run. This they feel was essential, as competition and coming of foreign capital and technology will integrate the Indian economy with the world economy. The policy is designed to generate a culture of competition and promote high efficiency in production, technology transfer, mutual sharing of fruits of R&D and take

such measures which may remove the evils of closed protected economy evolving inefficiency, low productivity, obsolete technology, distortions in optimum allocation of resources and wasteful production process and unwarranted protectionist policies leading to high cost (Patel, S.K. and Talati, R.C., 1995).

Some of the respondents were of the view that the outlook and attitude towards multinationals is changing and they are seen not only as reservoirs of technology and technology transfer but also as an important resource of capital flow to strengthen our industrial base. The industry believes that this is a golden opportunity when we can integrate our economy with the world economy. Those who favoured multinationals viewed them as distributors of benefits. They are the most powerful agent for internationalisation of know-how and treat the world as a single economic unit. Besides, they can produce more and better products at lower prices. Adding to it these multinationals are powerful agents of modernization especially among less developed countries (UNDP, 1998).

29% respondents were of the view that structural reforms will result into India falling into the trap of colonial history. These respondents vehemently oppose multinationals as profit making companies. Besides, they are using labour saving technology, which is unsuitable for poor country like India. They blamed globalisation that is beneficial to advanced countries only.

Salary structures adopted by multinationals are not in accordance with the overall wage-structure of the country and thus, they have indirectly created some sort of frustration among other employees. Being financially sound, they influence political and administrative functioning too. The coming of multinationals in India is showing its effects on our culture too. "They have gone a long way in spoiling the ethical and moral values in the

society” as one of the respondents remarked.

Structural reforms will lead India to the path of economic development and prosperity. 35 respondents were of the view that there are new avenues, which have been opened due to structural reforms and our industry has now to compete with global industry, which calls for better quality and thus stimulating the country on the path of growth and prosperity.

5.03 Respondents’ Views Regarding Investment

By adopting structural reforms, there has been an inflow of foreign investment in many sectors. Table below shows the respondents’ perception regarding investment by foreign sector.

Table 5.02
Flow of foreign investment

No.	Respondent's View Regarding Investment	%
1.	Investment will flow in the core sector	33
2.	Investment will flow in the consumer durables	60
3.	Investment will flow in infrastructure industry	30

Majority of the respondents were of the view that foreign investment would flow in consumer durables (60%) followed by core sector (33%). Lastly, 30% respondents were of the view that investment will flow in infrastructure industry.

5.04 How the Foreign Investment Would Come

Foreign investment has clearly been a major factor in stimulating economic growth and development in the recent times. The contribution that multinational corporations can make as an agent of growth, structural change and integration has made foreign investment an important tool of

economic development. Foreign investment has been neglected in India's development strategy before 1991 (Battacharya, B., and Palaha, S., 1996).

Many respondents feel that foreign investment would come in different sectors but they would come with some condition of their own as multinationals are investing with just one objective i.e. to earn quick profits.

All the respondents feel that in future foreign investment might come with certain conditionality like, more stake in the company's shares and matters, changes in labour laws, with changes in the work environment. They also felt that in the long run this conditionality would be conducive for country's growth and development.

5.05 Impact of Modernisation on Workforce

New technology tends to alter the volume and structure of employment. Technological change, coinciding with an increase in a country's labour force, creates major problems in the labour market. With technological change some new jobs are created and some jobs become redundant. Beyond doubt, technology has a profound impact on employment. There is a reduction in the number of unskilled jobs and requirement of higher skills for newly created jobs. This has also been shown in chapter four:

Table 5.03

Views on the impact of modernisation on work force

No.	Impact of modernisation on workforce will result in	%
1.	Increase in manpower	8
2.	Decrease in manpower	87
3.	No change.	5
	Total	100

Respondents' perception about the impact of modernization on workforce reveals that majority of the respondents (87%) perceive decrease in workforce as modernisation will take place. The respondents were of the view that new industrial policy has given the employer the right to employ at will subject to the payment of compensation for retrenchment and closure. Unemployment remains a major cause of concern. On the contrary, they fear that new policy may actually worsen the situation at least in the short run. Performance during the last 10 years has been nowhere near the expectations and the numbers of jobs created as well as the rate of employment have been on decline. There is a widespread belief that slow growth combined with policies encouraging high-tech modernisation of industries which are more capital and less labour-intensive have resulted in increasing unemployment. This is throwing a challenge for HRD departments, since the workforce will have to reorient itself to the changed situation by improving skills through training and re-training. 5% of the respondents perceive that there would be no change in the workforce. They feel that there is a misconception about shortages of skill in factories and the inability to use the old workforce without extensive retraining. They feel that the same workforce could be used by training and retraining with relatively few additions of specially trained engineers and technicians as per the requirement.

There is also a feeling among some industrial units that workers are acting as a barrier to the introduction as well as success of structural adjustment program. Our industry is in crisis; the problems of large-scale unemployment and the resulting social and economic problems now loom large over Indian industries.

5.06 Multi-Skilling and Employment

Of late concepts such as flexibility and teamwork have entered the industrial vocabulary when talking about change. This in a sense calls for multi-skilling and team spirit among the workers. Fast changing demand and competition in the product market necessitates efficiency and capability of the industry to respond to market conditions. In large scale and medium scale industries managerial hierarchy is at the verge of collapse. Decision making process is more horizontal rather than vertical. Decentralisation of the decision-making is the need of the time. Work processes are re-engineered to achieve greater efficiency and cost effectiveness. The new competitive environment requires knowledge, re-training and new attitude towards work. Multi-skilling is encouraged to improve work efficiency and in turn industry will get competitive edge in the market place (Dayal, I. and Aggrawal, V., 1995).

Table 5.04

Views on introduction of multi-skilled workforce

No.	Introduction of multiple workforces in the present environment.	%
1.	Agree	82
2.	Cannot say	18
	Total	100

The respondents feel that the rate at which the industrial scenario is changing. the worker of today needs to be adaptive and multi-skilled. Numerous industries have moved in the direction of training employees to have multiple skills, 82% of the respondents have agreed that the success of industry depends not only in adopting to changed industrial environment but

also on workers being multi-skilled so that a worker can adopt to different situations and perform various activities. To increase the productivity, it is required that labour is utilised in an optimum manner for which multi-skilling is a prerequisite.

Three large-scale industrial units under survey have made rule to promote an employee to higher grades only if the employee has capability to perform more than one job. Thus, workers are given training to enlarge their task competence to perform 'whole job' or a range of tasks that cut across traditional skill and job boundaries.

5.07 The Impact of Structural Reforms on Wages

One of the most promising ways of retraining the workers in the ever-changing environment is through better wage structure and improvement in earnings. The structural reforms have an impact on wage structure of industry.

Table 5.05
Perception about the impact of structural reforms on wages

No.	Impact of structural reforms on wages.	%
1.	More flexible and consistent with changing scenario.	39
2.	Introduction of productivity linked incentive	49
3.	No change	12
	Total	100

The above table represents the impact of structural reforms on wage structure. The study reveals that majority of the respondents (49%) have agreed that improvement in productivity should be shared with workers in the form of incentives. 39% have opined that it should be more flexible and consistent with the changing scenario. Only 12% of the respondents were of the view that the wage structure will not change at least in the short run.

5.08 The New Industrial Policy and Employment Scenario

With an increasing investment in the industry and demand for more skilled manpower, employment scenario has changed. The industry sector is not able to absorb labour at a satisfactory rate in the economy. The gap between output and employment growth is increasing. Labour absorption substantially lags behind the output.

Table 5.06
Respondents' views about impact of reforms on employment and output

No.	Employment and output scenario.	%
1.	Higher level of production with higher level of employment.	24
2.	Higher level of production with higher level of unemployment.	54
3.	Higher level of production with higher level of underemployment.	23
4.	Higher level of production with no change in employment.	7

Respondents' perception about the impact of structural reforms on the employment scenario shows that it is leading to changes not only in economic sphere but also in social sphere. Quality of production is needed to face the global competition. 24% of the respondents feel that this will be accompanied by higher level of employment. These respondents believe that the employment effect of structural adjustment is likely to be positive. There would be aberrations in the short run, but in the long run employment opportunities are bound to increase. Employment is not only expected to increase rapidly but the employment generation is also likely to increase and will be more skill intensive. 54% of the respondents feel that structural reforms would result into higher level of unemployment since these changes

are in favour of technological changes, which is capital friendly rather than labour friendly. Underemployment will also increase as some respondents feel. They feel that underemployment is bound to be more widespread than unemployment. As more workers are being thrown out of job, they are making additions to already existing unemployment. They are prepared to take up lower jobs. In short, more than 75% of the respondents feel that structural reforms are leading to unemployment and underemployment. In fact, data from the industry has also shown this.

Section - II

MANAGEMENT'S VIEWS ON EMPLOYEES'S WORKING CONDITION AND EVER CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

5.09 Adequacy of the Various Ongoing Programs in the Industry

The skills of the workforce can be developed through training programs at the firm level and this depends on the efforts made by the industry. It is universally recognized that no amount of technological improvement or financial investment can lead an industry towards prosperity unless all the employees therein are committed to change and strive to make it happen. To keep the pace with ever-changing environment, the way of work, attitude, skill and knowledge requirement of employees also needs an improvement. Hence, it needs no emphasis that there is the obvious necessity of bringing simultaneously a qualitative transformation in the human assets if the industry wants to cope with the challenges of new industrial environment (Jayant, K.P. and Jena, R.K., 1996).

Table 5.07
Impact of the training programs on work culture

No.	Impact of programs on work culture and management.	Agree	Cannot Say	Disagree
		%	%	%
1	Training and Development programs of the company are adequate to face challenges in future.	86	13	1
2	The skill improvement programs will help in creating better work culture.	90	-	10
3	The existing management style in the company needs to be changed after structural reforms.	50	28	22

The respondents were of the view that the workers of today have to orient and gear themselves to face the challenges of present as well as the future. They are required to learn new skills and a different type of culture created after the introduction of structural reforms. Majority of the respondents (86%) were confident that their firm has adequate training and development programs for their employees. Some of the respondents felt that this program in their firm needed some improvement. All of them agreed that with the rising competition one needs to have efficient workforce, which is prepared to face the challenges. 13% of the respondents were not clear whether the training and development programs adopted by them were adequate or not.

Today a worker needs to be flexible and adaptable. 90% of the respondents agreed that their company had good skill development programs that will help in creating better work culture.

50% of the respondents felt the need for a change in governance. One important finding of the study was that it is not just the training of the

employees that is essential but the nature of governance also needs to be changed. They were of the view that the industry today demands greater precision in decision-making. The present structure of industries, both at the administrative or managerial levels as well as the operational level will be forced to bring a change in governance. The human resource manager has to be more innovative to function as a catalyst of change. Some of the units have made changes in leadership styles and are encouraging Voluntary Learning Groups. In case of large and some medium scale units, performance evaluation is carried out periodically. To quote the director of a firm; “There are four C’s that can make a manager successful in the present business environment. These are change, challenge, competition and confidence. They have to have a global focus.”

5.10 Specialisation and Division of Labour

In addition to the recent evolution of new forms of organisation, technology has another dimension too. Almost all the respondents were of the view that technology has certain general features such as specialisation and division of labour. As technology improves, specialisation and division of labour also increase.

Table 5.08
Will reforms lead to more specialisation and division of labour?

No.	Will reforms lead to more specialisation and division of labour?	%
1.	Yes	99
2.	No	-
3.	Cannot say	1
	Total	100

They feel that due to specialisation there will be growth of groups of specialists. degree of expertise may be enhanced i.e., emphasis on

specialisation may improve skill, last but not the least specialisation will make the worker recognise his/her dependence on others and contribution in the product.

5.11 Domestic Production and Globalisation

Modern industry is highly competitive. Therefore, success of it depends upon its ability to improve productivity. The most important contribution towards increasing productivity can be made by sound, positive and constructive efforts. In order to manage change for productivity, industrial employees need to understand and see their own industry as a potentially flexible and dynamic system. Only then a vision of the future productivity improvement can be developed (Balu, V., 1996).

Table 5.09
Whether product of the company will be able to compete globally?

No.	Product of the company will be able to compete globally.	%
1.	Agree	44
2.	Cannot Say	51
3.	Disagree	5
	Total	100

A large number of respondents (51%) are not sure whether their product(s) will be able to compete globally or not because of intense competition, 44% of the respondents agreed to it. They feel that competition for excellence and quality for the product involves industrial capability, it largely depends on the industry itself rather than money and imported technology. "This will ultimately require readiness to take risk for achievement, initiative, sense of independence, sense of self-esteem, sense of vigilance and anticipation and readiness to give and take help, pride in

one's own product and productivity, social and personal action" (Mahajan, V.S., 1997).

5.12 Upgradation of Technology for Globalisation

Today is the world of change so changing technology will determine the market leaders. Technology will have to be continuously upgraded because it is innovation and continuous investment that will make the economy more competitive. The introduction of 'appropriate' technology keeping in mind the special requirement of our environment is one of the greatest challenges in order to be globally competitive (Balu, V., 1996).

Table 5.10
Respondents' perception on despite adequate natural resources and cheap labour available it may still be necessary to up-grade the technologies to be globally competitive

No.	Technological up-gradation to be globally competitive.	%
1.	Strongly agree	1
2.	Agree	98
3.	Disagree	1
	Total	100

98% of the respondents were of the view that it may be necessary to up-grade technologies continuously to be globally competitive. They were of the view that, it is a universally accepted fact that lack of access to technology can act as an obstacle in the production process. This may lead to inefficient production, thus reducing the industry's ability to compete with the national as well as international competitors. "Those who are leaders in technology capture markets of the world". The respondents were of the view that to remain productive and competitive in the world market, all industries should pay particular attention to technology used by them to

provide quality goods and services. They will have to constantly upgrade and adopt new technology. Industries will have to broaden the base for their R&D cycle, improve production technology and use more sophisticated marketing and sales approaches. They must learn to anticipate change and rapidly adjust technology (product and process). Technology has to be created and/or selected and applied systematically; if not, it can have its own adverse effect. There should be a link between the HRD and technology so that it leads to economic as well as social development. Some of the respondents expressed their concern about the immediate problem of surplus manpower, unemployment, skill shortages, professional obsolescence and resistance to change during the process of modernisation. To implement any technology in a smoother way requires the support of the work force.

5.13 Industrial Efficiency and Reforms

Table below represent the respondent's perception on overall efficiency of the industrial units through import of technology, basis R&D (in-house), or the combination of both.

Table 5.11
Respondents' views on industrial efficiency and reforms

No.	Increase in efficiency through	%
1.	Import of technology	6
2.	Basis R&D (in-house)	24
3.	Both 1 and 2	70
	Total	100

70% of the respondents have preferred the mix of imported technology and in-house R&D. It is a better opportunity for our R&D departments to prove their worth and the use of foreign technology will make this industry better equipped with latest information.

24% of the respondents feel that R&D (in-house) is the best method to achieve higher efficiency in the Indian industry. Those who believe in R&D (in-house) were of the view that if the primary objective is to maximise short run profits, the R&D efforts by the firm to bring about technological change will be limited. They favour R&D (in-house) to import of technology because they feel that foreign technology, at times, can lead to inefficiency due to lack of proper assimilation or absorption in the given industrial environment. In order to increase productivity growth by means of technological change, greater investment in R&D is required.

Section - III

FUTURE STRATEGIES TO BE ADOPTED

5.14 Product Diversification and Structural Reforms

Lack of growth due to internal or external factors can make the industry stagnant for want of new challenges and may even lead to loss. If an industry desires for diversification, it needs to evolve an appropriate strategy so that it can make a choice from a set of possible investment opportunity that are most likely to produce the desired growth. 83% of the industries under survey were of the view that in view of structural reforms, they are planning to diversify their product. During the survey it was observed that an industry seeks diversifications for a number of reasons. Firstly, they believe that diversification will reduce the vulnerability of business to change in the competitive environment. Since today industry is facing competition both nationally as well as internationally. Spreading the investment over several businesses will reduce the element of risk. Secondly, they feel that through diversification their firm could exploit its strength in innovation, managerial and financial resources. Finally, they all strongly believe that diversification is the only major technique to growth in

this environment of competition.

The respondents feel that only those industrial units who are fast enough to adopt themselves to the changing environment will be able to survive. For survival and growth every industry has to raise certain self-introspecting questions.

Table 5.12
Diversification of products in view of structural reforms

No.	Diversification of products related to	Number of units	%
1.	Expansion in production.	25	30.1
2.	Setting up a new plant for the existing products	1	1.2
3.	Rationalization of existing plant	11	13.3
4.	New range of product(s)	45	54.2
5.	Expansion in market (geographical)	62	74.7
	Total	83	83

New technology is breaking the sustainability of brand, product and service packages. 30.1% of the respondents would prefer to go for expansion in production, 1.2% would set up a new plant for the existing product. 13.3% would go in for rationalization of existing plant, 54.2% would opt for new range of product(s), while 74.7% perceive that they would go in for expansion in market (geographical). All the respondents perceive that these strategies are necessary to keep to the expectation in the changing environment.

5.15 Quality Products and Cost

Respondents perceive technological up-gradation, skill improvement, and motivational measures to achieve improvement in production in terms of quality and minimum cost.

Table 5.13
Respondents' perceptions about how to bring about improvement in their products in terms of quality and cost minimisation

No.	Improvement on production through	%
1.	Technological up gradation	17
2.	Skill improvement	16
3.	Motivational measures for labour and employees	5
4.	All the above	77

If India were to take its rightful place in the community of nations in the global economy, the identified technological weaknesses would have to be removed. A continuous effort at technological upgradation would have to be launched to become internationally competitive in terms of cost and quality (Chaudhri, S., 1994). According to some respondents, skill improvement is the only way that can provide for an effective adaptation to the changes induced by an industrial environment, which directly affects the industrial ability to accomplish its goals and to survive in an ever-changing environment. This has led to the skill improvement as a formal industrial process. 17% of the respondents agreed to technological up-gradation. They were of the view that upgradation of technology would increase output by improving the efficiency of capital with much less labour, material, energy, etc. With the improvement in technology quality product at lower cost can be expected. 5% of the respondents have favoured motivational measures as one of the ways for the improvement of their products in terms of quality and cost minimisation. A more positive motivational environment can do this. For this, management ought to develop team along with effective communication for bringing about improved production. Not only this, there must be a continuous flow of information and good communication among employees at every level and across the industry to have motivated and

satisfied employees. If employers failed to provide this kind of environment, their employees will work less efficiently.

Section-IV

STRUCTURAL REFORMS AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The progress and prosperity of an industrial unit depends to a larger extent on healthy industrial relations. Harmonious industrial relations are a pre requisite. An attempt was made to know the perception of the management regarding the impact of structural reforms on industrial relations.

5.16 Globalisation and Industrial Disputes

Table 5.14

Whether entry of foreign investors in the market would lead to closure of domestic industries resulting in increasing number of industrial disputes?

No.	Whether foreign investment leading to closure of domestic industries and increasing industrial disputes	%
1.	Yes	46
2.	No	36
3.	Cannot say	18
	Total	100

According to 46% of the respondents, entry of the foreign investors in the market would lead to closure of some domestic industry especially small-scale industry, resulting in increasing number of industrial disputes. They were of the view that, while the capital, technology, managerial competence and marketing capabilities of the foreign investors could be utilised for country's development, their activities are resulting in and continue to result in critical problems for the domestic economy.

Besides this, not to forget the problems related to lack of demand for domestic products, losing hold on market due to foreign competition, ever changing technology, making addition to ever increasing unemployment. All this is adding to social tension.

Others feel that this is the only way to make our industrial base stronger and gain good reputation in the international market. With strong industrial base, industrial relations will improve.

5.17 Should Employers Have an Absolute Right to Hire and Fire the Employees?

“The need of the hour is to have lean, mean and thin organisations but one has to keep in mind that this is done with human face. One cannot just fire anybody. Even our laws do not permit to do so” is a common saying in industrial circles.

Table 5.15
View on right to hire and fire the employees

No.	Employers right to hire and fire the employees.	%
1.	Yes	46
2.	No	51
3.	Cannot Say	3
	Total	100

46% of the respondents were of the view that the hire and fire policy should be adopted. Since in this competitive environment every firm would like to have employees who are committed to their work and are prepared to adapt to new changes. “Proper steps in this direction are needed so that there is proper human resource development of the loyal people”. Flexibility in the labour market, in concrete form, would mean relatively complete

freedom to industry in hiring and firing of workers. These measures are logical corollaries of the philosophy of structural reforms, which views the enthronement of the market as a vehicle of efficiency and growth. It stands to logic, in this framework, that an industry should be free to use only as much labour, as it requires for efficient production and dispense with labour when found surplus on efficiency (Papola, T.S., 1994). 51% are against hire and fire policy. They are of the view that in Indian industrial context, it is inhumane to have hire and fire policy. Industry has some social obligations to fulfil. It is worthwhile to note that all of them of those disagreeing for hire and fire though adopted the policy of downsizing but the surplus labour has either been transferred to sister concerns or reabsorbed after training.

5.18 Future of Chemical Industries

Table 5.16
What is the future of chemical industries?

No.	Future of chemical industries.	%
1.	Bright	65
2.	Uncertain	9
3.	It's a matter of time	26
	Total	100

65% of the industrial units feel that the future of chemical industries is bright, 9 % of the industrial units feel that it is very uncertain because for the last few years this industry is incurring heavy losses. This is mainly due to lack of demand for their product, lack of finance, high cost of production for various reasons, etc. These firms are small-scale units; the respondents perceive that in the very near future all small-scale chemical industries would be wiped out, as they are inefficient compared to large firms and multinationals. 26% of the respondents feel that it is just a matter of time for

the chemical industry to be able to adjust itself. According to them, Indian chemical industry not even had learnt the art of facing internal competition, is suddenly exposed to international competition.

5.19 Concluding Remarks

Structural reform is an essential part of the process of industrial growth and development. These reforms are expected to lead India to the path of economic development and prosperity. For this, work process is re-engineered to achieve greater efficiency and cost effectiveness through up gradation of technology. Workers are expected to adapt to new environment through training and retraining programs. The exposures of previously protected industries to international competition have posed serious threat to the survival of firms. In the process the labour movement has been eroded without an alternative source of strength having been developed to replace it. In spite of changes in the industrial environment firms believe that future of chemical industry is bright.

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