

# The Evolving Profile of Human Resource Professionals in India

**M. Srimannarayana**

---

*This study identifies the evolving profile of HR professionals in terms of their background and role and functions in the industry. Unlike in the past, HR professionals entered into the profession through direct recruitment and are qualified in the field. Their employment conditions are at par with other professional groups. Responsive to employees they integrate talent management initiatives with business strategies. They believe that performance management, training and development, staffing, compensation and workforce planning are the most critical areas that contribute to the business strategy. Employees' perception and support for HR initiatives, availability of budget, CEO's perception and support and availability of headcount for HR activities limit their effectiveness.*

*M. Srimannarayana* is Professor (HRM), XLRI, Jamshedpur. E-mail: [sriman@xlri.ac.in](mailto:sriman@xlri.ac.in)

## Introduction

The contribution of Human Resource Management (HRM) to the overall achievement of organizational objectives in the present day dynamic business world is increasingly acknowledged (Guest, 1997). The type of support HRM extends was examined in various studies (Pfeffer, 1994; Delaney & Huselid, 1996; Huselid & Becker, 1997; Ulrich, 1998; Harel & Tzafrir, 1999; Jackson, Hitt & DeNisi, 2004; Ulrich & Brockbank, 2005). HR professionals attempt to ensure that line managers acquire the competencies required to perform successfully their HR responsibilities. HR professionals in high-performing firms function as credible activists. They understand the global business context. They create, audit and orchestrate an effective and strong organization. They develop their organizations' capability for change and then translate that capacity into effective change processes and structures. They innovate and integrate HR practices around a few critical business issues. Effective HR professionals ensure that desired business results are clearly and precisely prioritized. They apply technology not only to basic HR

work, but also to help people stay connected with one another and increase HR's role in the management of information (Ulrich, Younger, Brockbank & Ulrich, 2013). All the above are generic qualities of HR professionals that influence the role of HR in general. It is argued that there are certain nation specific factors that determine the HRM practices and the role of HR (Easterby-Smith, Mailna & Yuan, 1995; Sparrow, 1995; Sparrow & Hiltrop, 1994; Hofstede, 1993). The present study examines the evolving profile, role and functions of HR professionals in India.

### **HRM in India**

The origins of human resource function in India go back to the 1920s when it was a concern for labor welfare in factories (Budhwar, 2009). In India personnel management has been of comparatively late growth, and has only developed on a wider scale since Independence. Government legislation has played a vital role in the evolution of personnel management/HRM in India. The business acumen, economic conditions, and social set up have also contributed in shaping personnel practices (Balasubramanian, 1995). The cotton textile industry in Bombay and the jute industry in Bengal had started to employ labor welfare officers before, and during the Second World War. The interaction of government policy and the initiative of the leading employers' associations in the textile industries brought about the rapid development of personnel management in India just before and during the War. It was the problems and the discontent which

arose with the old system of recruitment through jobbers that led the Royal Commission on Labor (1931) to advocate the appointment of labor officers. These officers worked as industrial relations officers and their functions included handling grievances and prevention of disputes (IIPM, 1962).

The provision for appointment of welfare officers in factories under the Factories Act, 1948 has contributed to the growth of the institution of welfare officers in India. Welfare officers were appointed in factories to look after health, welfare and safety of workers. With further industrialization, the personnel officer emerged around 1960s (Kudchedkar, 1979). The evolution of personnel management in India was broadly classified into five phases (Venkata Ratnam & Srivastava, 1991). The beginning phase was 1920s to 1930s. During this period the status of the department was predominantly clerical and the activities were confined to statutory welfare, and paternalistic welfare programs. During the second stage (1940s to 1960s), the personnel profession struggled for recognition, emphasizing on introducing techniques. In the third stage from 1970s to 1980s the profession made attempts to impress with sophistication, emphasizing on regularity conformance, and imposing standards on other functions. The period of 1990s was a promising phase of personnel profession in India with a philosophical outlook, emphasizing on human values, and productivity through people. The liberalization of the Indian economy has created the pressure on Indian HR function to be-

**The liberalization of the Indian economy has created the pressure on Indian HR function to become more creative and innovative.**

come more creative and innovative (Budhwar, 2000). The period 2000 onwards is one of rationalization in which the outlook is strategic with emphasis on organizational performance (Budhwar, 2009). Over a period of time the role of personnel/ HR has been elevated from clerical to administrative, administrative to managerial, managerial to executive, and executive to strategic partner (Venkata Ratnam & Srivastava, 1991; Budhwar, 2009).

### Methodology

This is an exploratory study aimed at drawing a profile of Indian HR professionals in terms of their age, gender, present role, professional qualifications, mode of entry into HR profession, career and membership in professional bodies, and their organizations' characteristics. It attempts to find out the roles and functions performed by the HR professionals in their respective organizations. A questionnaire was prepared covering all the aspects mentioned above. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of items relating to organizations which HR professionals represent. The second part consisted of items on critical HRM areas, HR function and HR's role replicating from the study of Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM, 2008). The third part consisted of questions related to their employment conditions. A

five-item scale was used to measure career satisfaction (Lounsbury, Gibson, Steel, Sundstrom, and Loveland, 2004). The last part of the questionnaire covered questions relating to the respondents' demographic factors. The questionnaire was distributed among 500 HR professionals across India using convenience random sampling method. Out of these, 124 usable responses were received. The information given by these respondents formed the basis for analysis. The information was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively using frequency distribution, percentages and mean scores.

### Demographic Characteristics

As indicated in Table 1, nearly half of the respondents were females which indicate by and large equal participation of men and women in the HR profession in India. Their average age is calculated at 33.8 years. Nearly two-thirds of HR professionals were HR generalists and the remaining were HR specialists in the areas such as staffing, learning and development, compensation, employee relations and organizational development. They had different designations such as business partner, officer, consultant, executive, assistant manager, deputy manager, manager, senior manager, chief manager, assistant general manager, deputy general manager, general manager, assistant vice president, and head. Interestingly about 95% of them had post-graduate professional qualification in business administration/human resource management/personnel management/industrial relations/ social work with special-

ization in personnel management/psychology. An overwhelming majority (89.43%) of them entered into HR profession through direct recruitment and not by transfer or promotion. Over two-thirds of them started their career at executive/ managerial level in HR field. The average experience in HR of the respondents is calculated at 7.6 years. About 45% of them also had experience in non-HR function areas. This is calculated at 2.5 years. Though the

sampled HR professionals were distributed among all the three levels of management, the single largest group of them was in the middle level. As far as membership in professional bodies is concerned, it is observed that one-third of them were associated with professional bodies such of National Human Resource Development (NHRD) network, National Institute of Personnel Management (NIPM), and Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM).

**Table 1 Respondents' Demographic Characteristics**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Field in which career began</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	51.61	HR	76.61
Female	48.39	Others than HR	23.39
<b>Present HR role</b>		<b>Experience in other than HR</b>	
HR Generalist	73.39	NO	54.84
HR Specialist	26.61	YES	45.16
<b>Professional qualification</b>		<b>Level of management</b>	
YES	94.69	Lower	34.68
NO	5.31	Middle	49.19
<b>Mode of entry into HR</b>		Senior	16.13
Direct recruitment	89.43	<b>Membership in professional bodies</b>	
Promotion cum transfer	5.69	Yes	33.06
Transfer	5.69	No	66.94
<b>Level in which career began</b>			
Clerical	4.84		
Supervisory	18.55		
Executive/Managerial	76.61		

### Organizational Characteristics

The distribution of respondents based on their organizational characteristics is presented in Table 2. The single largest group (45.97%) belonged to manufacturing sector covering units such as automobiles, chemicals, engineering, electronics, fertilizers, fast moving consumer goods, oil and gas, power, and steel. This was followed by the respondents of service organizations (33.87%) such as airlines,

banking, business services, consulting companies, education, financial services, health care, insurance, media, retail and telecommunications units. The remaining group (20.16%) respondents belonged to information technology organizations. Ownership-wise, nearly two-thirds of them belonged to the private sector, about one-fourth of them being from the public sector. Nearly three-fifths of the respondent group was working for Indian multinational companies (IMNCs). The remain-

ing was equally distributed between Indian companies and foreign multinational companies (FMNCs). The respondents represented single business units (25%), diversified business units (52.42%) and

holding companies (22.58%). A majority (61.30%) of the respondents belonged to large organizations. The remaining were equally distributed among small and medium organizations.

**Table 2 Organizational Information of the Respondents**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
<b>Nature of business</b>		
Manufacturing	57	45.97
Service	42	33.87
Information Technology	25	20.16
<b>Ownership</b>		
Public Sector	29	23.39
Private sector	91	73.39
Joint venture (Public & private )	1	0.81
Joint venture (private & private )	3	2.42
<b>Geographic Orientation</b>		
Indian company	38	30.65
Indian multinational company	48	38.71
Foreign multinational company	38	30.65
<b>Position of the business unit</b>		
Single business unit	31	25.00
Diversified business	65	52.42
Holding company	28	22.58
<b>Organizational size</b>		
Small organizations (Less than 500 employees)	24	19.35
Medium organizations (Less than 1000 employees)	24	19.35
Large organizations (More than 1000 employees)	76	61.29

### Professionalism in HR

As shown in fig. 1, over half of the HR professionals rated professionalism of HR as 'fair'. This has been followed by 'high' rating. However a small set of HR professionals viewed that HR was seriously lacking professionalism. This indicates that more work is still required in terms of attitudes, values and behavior associated with the profession. However,

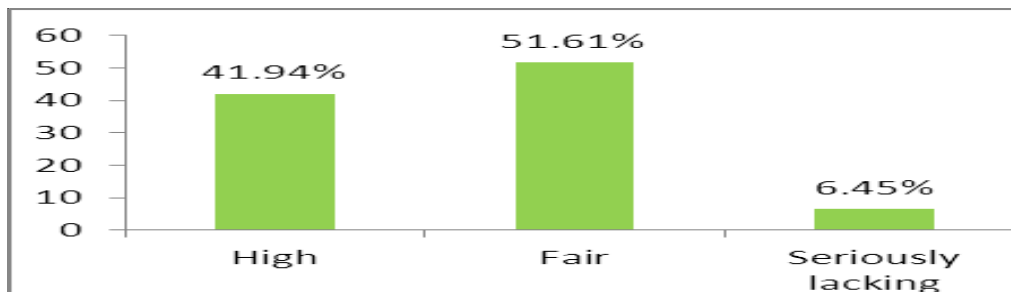
**Over the years, professionalism of HR has increased because of professionally qualified personnel.**

overall, it can be stated that over the years, professionalism of HR has increased because of professionally qualified personnel who occupied HR positions.

### Employment Conditions

The HR professionals were asked to rate a select set of employment conditions such as remuneration, career advancement, learning and development opportunities, and their nature of work, compared with other professionals in their organizations in the functional areas of operations, marketing and finance. The outcome is presented in Table 3.

Fig. 1: Professionalism of HR



**Remuneration:** A majority of the HR professionals stated that their remuneration was at par with their counterparts in their respective organizations. A small group of them rated their remuneration as ‘better’ than of the others. However, nearly two-fifths of them were of the opinion that the remuneration ‘could be better’. When data was analyzed by organizational type, it was found that a majority of HR professionals in the service sector, a significant group in the IT sector, Indian MNCs, small and medium organizations expressed this feeling. It is significant to note that HR professionals in the public sector seem to be happier with their remuneration than the others.

**Career Advancement:** Nearly half of the HR professionals felt that the opportunities for their career advancement were at par with other professionals. About one-tenth of them viewed that their situation was better than of the others. The remainder group of respondents perceived that their career advancement opportunities could be better as compared with other professionals’. A majority of HR professionals in Indian companies, every alternative HR professional in service sector, a significant group from publicly owned organizations,

small and medium companies expressed this feeling.

**Learning and Development:** The single largest group (46.77%) rated that the learning and development opportunities for HR professionals in their organizations were at par with other professionals. 14.52% stated that they had better learning opportunities than the others. However, 38.71% mentioned that the opportunities ‘could be better’. A majority of the respondents from manufacturing units, publicly owned companies and Indian companies considered the learning opportunities ‘at par’ with others. When data was analyzed by organizational type, it was noticed that a significant group of respondents from IT sector, private companies, Indian MNCs, and medium organizations felt the learning opportunities ‘could be better’. Overall, it can be stated that learning and development opportunities offered to HR professionals were comparable with other professionals in their respective organizations.

**Nature of Work:** It could be seen that, overall, nearly half of the respondents considered that their nature of work in terms of challenges and contribution to the organizational goals was at

par with other professionals in their respective organizations. It is interesting to note that nearly one-fourth of the respondents rated their work as better than of other professionals. The remaining respondents felt that their work 'could be better'. When data was analyzed by organization type, it was found that a significant group of HR professionals working in manufacturing organizations, publicly owned companies, Indian MNCs, and medium organizations were not much happy with their nature of work. It is important to note that the single largest group of respondents belonging to the service sector and small organizations considered that their work was better compared to other professionals in their organizations. Overall, it can be stated that the nature of work of HR professionals is found to be challenging and contributing towards achievement of organizational objectives.

**The nature of work of HR professionals is found to be challenging and contributing towards achievement of organizational objectives.**

**Table 3 Perception of the Respondents on Their Employment Conditions (%)**

Items	Type of Organization											
	Overall	Manu facturing	Service	IT	Public	Private	Indian	IMNC	FMNC	Small	Medium	Large
<b>Remuneration</b>												
At Par with others	54.84	68.42	40.48	48	75.86	49.45	55.26	50	60.53	50	50	57.89
Better than others	5.65	5.26	7.14	4	6.9	4.4	10.53	2.08	5.26	4.17	4.17	6.58
Could be better than others	39.52	26.32	52.38	48	17.24	46.15	34.21	47.92	34.21	45.83	45.83	35.53
<b>Career Advancement</b>												
At Par with others	48.39	52.63	38.1	56	44.83	49.45	36.84	52.08	55.26	41.67	54.17	48.68
Better than others	10.48	8.77	11.9	12	6.9	10.99	7.89	8.33	15.79	12.5	0	13.16
Could be better than others	41.13	38.6	50	32	48.28	39.56	55.26	39.58	28.95	45.83	45.83	38.16
<b>Learning and Development</b>												
At Par with others	46.77	52.63	45.24	36	58.62	42.86	55.26	41.67	44.74	33.33	54.17	48.68
Better than others	14.52	10.53	19.05	16	13.79	14.29	18.42	10.42	15.79	29.17	8.33	11.84
Could be better than others	38.71	36.84	35.71	48	27.59	42.86	26.32	47.92	39.47	37.5	37.5	39.47
<b>Nature of work</b>												
At Par with others	48.39	52.63	40.48	52	51.72	49.45	44.74	45.83	55.26	37.5	50	51.32
Better than others	24.19	10.53	42.86	24	13.79	25.27	23.68	18.75	31.58	37.5	16.67	22.37
Could be better than others	27.42	36.84	16.67	24	34.48	25.27	31.58	35.42	13.16	25	33.33	26.32

**Career Satisfaction**

In addition to career advancement opportunities of HR professionals compared with other professionals, this study made an attempt to assess the career satisfaction of HR professionals in absolute terms. A five-item scale has been used to measure career satisfaction (Lounsbury et al, 2004). The items are:

1. I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career
2. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals
3. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for income
4. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for advancement

5. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for the development of new skills

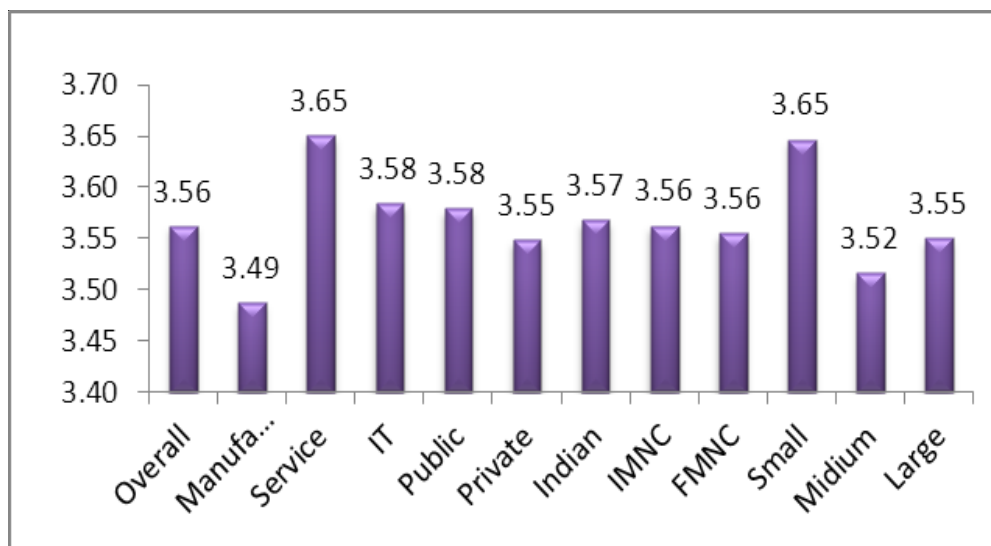
The responses were collected on a five-point scale. The overall average score on all the five-items was calculated as 3.56, which indicates that the HR professionals, by and large, were happy with their career. As presented in Figure 2, comparative data indicates that HR professionals in the service sector and small organizations were more satisfied than the others, whereas those in manufacturing and medium organizations were relatively less satisfied.

**HR professionals, by and large, were happy with their career.**

**Mentoring HR Professionals**

Mentoring HR professionals by senior people is a means through which

**Fig.2 Career Satisfaction of HR Professionals**



HR professionals can be updated about the expectations of their stakeholders. This would help HR professionals to contribute to the organizational success. It is significant to note that as presented in Table 4, an overwhelming majority (84.55%) of HR professionals received mentoring. Organization-wise, not much significant difference was observed. However, it can be seen that almost all (92.17%) HR professionals, who belonged to foreign MNCs, received mentoring. They received mentoring from different sources. Senior HR professionals were found to be a major source of mentoring their juniors. This was followed by members of the senior management team. CEOs were also found to be a source of mentoring for a few HR professionals. It is also observed that there were a few HR professionals who received mentoring from external consultants arranged by their respective organizations. Another few received mentoring from a combination of senior management team and external consultants.

**Critical HR Areas**

Managing employees involves a combination of activities. However there are certain critical HR areas that contribute to business strategy. According to SHRM (2008) study conducted in USA staffing, training and development, employee benefits, employee relations and strategic planning were the top five critical HR functional areas that contributed to business strategy. The HR professionals of the present study were asked to identify the most critical HR areas that contribute to their respective organizations' present business strategy. The results showed some difference in the critical HR areas of USA and India. It can be seen from Table 5 that, overall, the top five critical HR areas that contributed to an organization's present business in India were: performance management, training and development, staffing, compensation, and workforce planning. There were slight differences observed in the critical HR areas based on the organizational characteristics. Performance management and

**Table 4 Mentoring HR Professionals (%)**

Responses (N=123)	Type of Organizations											
	Overall	Manufacturing	Service	IT	Public	Private	Indian	IMNC	FMNC	Small	Medium	Large
Yes	84.55	82.14	88.10	84	82.76	84.44	83.78	79.17	92.11	83.33	83.33	85.33
No	15.45	17.86	11.90	16	17.24	15.56	16.22	20.83	7.89	16.67	16.67	14.67

training and development and employee relations were critical HR functional areas in the manufacturing sector. Staffing, compensation and performance management were the critical HR areas in service sector whereas training and development, performance management and staffing were the critical areas in IT sector. Ownership-wise, it is observed that employee relation was the critical HRM area for public

sector companies. There was not much difference in the critical HR areas based on the geographical orientation of the organizations. However, strategic planning emerged as the critical HR area in small organizations.

**Strategic planning emerged as the critical HR area in small organizations.**

**Table 5 The Most Critical HRM Areas That Contribute to the Organizational Current Business Strategy**

Rank	Critical HR area	Overall (%)N= 102
1	Performance management	70.04
2	Training and development	67.98
3	Staffing/employment/recruitment	66.95
4	Compensation	59.74
5	Workforce planning	56.65
6	Employee benefits and services	54.59
7	Employee relations	54.59
8	Organizational development	49.44
9	Legal compliance	48.41
10	Strategic planning	48.41
11	Change management	46.35
12	Communications	46.35
13	Human resource information systems (HRIS)	42.23
14	Health, safety, security	35.02
15	Administrative/transactional	33.99
16	HR measurement	25.75
17	Diversity management	22.66
18	Handling trade unions	22.66
19	HR Research	7.21
20	International HRM	7.21

Note: data sorted in descending order. Percentages do not total 100% due to multiple response options

**Functions & Role of HR Professionals**

In general, HR department performs multiple functions, roles and responsibilities. The respondents were asked to in-

dicate their agreement with various functions of HR department. As shown in Table 6, HR department was predominantly responsive to employees at all levels. It integrated talent management initiatives with business strategy. It also

conducted the administrative work, understood the core of an organization's business, and actively shaped the organization's culture. The lowest percentages were given to statements such as facilitating change within the organization, and contributing to the strategic vision and directly impacting on business processes. There were slight differences in the functions of HR department be-

tween the findings of this study and SHRM (2008). Conducting administrative work received first position in SHRM (2008) study. But in this study responding to employees at all levels received first position and administrative work received fourth position. Interestingly, in both the studies 'understanding the core of the organization's business' received second position.

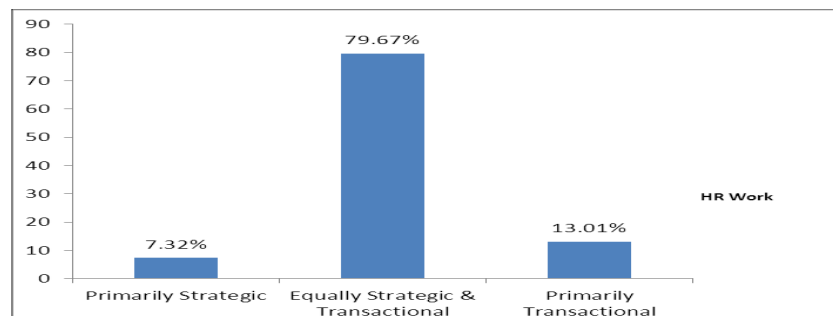
**Table 6 Perception of the Respondents on HR Functions**

Rank	HR functions	%
1	HR responsive to employees at all levels	81.55
2	HR understands the core of the organization's business	80.58
3	HR integrates talent management initiatives with business Strategy	80.58
4	HR conducts the administrative/transactional work pertaining to employees	77.67
5	HR actively shapes the organization's culture	71.84
6	HR contributes to the strategic vision	66.99
7	HR facilitates change within the organization	65.05
8	HR has a direct impact on business processes	59.22

HR professionals of the study were asked their views on the present role of the HR departments. A great majority (79.67%) of them viewed that the role of HR in their organizations was equally strategic and transactional. 13.01% reported that the predominant role of the HR department was transactional. The remaining 7.32% of them mentioned that

their HR department's role was primarily strategic. SHRM (2008) study also found the same overall trend. But there is a slight difference between the present study and SHRM (2008) study in this regard. SHRM (2008) study indicated that nearly two-thirds of HR departments were equally strategic and transactional, whereas this study found that nearly

**Figure 3 Nature of HR Work**



four-fifths of the organizations were under this category. Difference emerged when data was analyzed by organization type in this study. All the organizations which were primarily strategic, were private sector companies. Service organizations were more likely than other sectors.

### Measuring HR Impact

Accountability in HRM is one of the important trends. There are attempts made in Indian industry to measure the HR activities undertaken in various organizations to some extent. But the focus of measurement is largely on traditional HR measures, not on business impact measures (Srimannarayana, 2009). As illustrated in Table 7, less than half (46.77%) of the HR professionals pointed out that their organizations calculated the impact of HR contribution. These organizations used different methods to measure impact of HR activities. They included balanced score card, HR audit, HR metrics, employee engagement/pulse/Gallup/feedback surveys, personnel costs, before and after HR program surveys, and ROI calculations for a few HR programs. When data was analyzed by organizational characteristics-wise, some differences emerged. It is observed that IT organizations, multinational companies, and large units were more likely into measuring HR impact than their counterparts.

### Barriers to HR Effectiveness

As HR management is a supportive function, its effectiveness depends on various factors. The respondents were asked to identify the organizational obstacles that hinder HR efforts and limits HR effectiveness. As illustrated in Table 8, the major barriers found to be non-managerial (48.39%) and managerial (47.58%) employees' per-

**The major barriers found to be non-managerial (48.39%) and managerial (47.58%) employees' perception and support for HR initiatives.**

Table 7 Measuring HR Impact (%)

Response	Type of Organizations											
	Overall	Manufacturing	Service	IT	Public	Private	Indian	IMNC	FMNC	Small	Medium	Large
Yes	46.77	31.58	54.76	68	20.69	56.04	23.68	58.33	55.26	33.33	45.83	51.32
No	53.23	68.42	45.24	32	79.31	43.96	76.32	41.67	44.74	66.67	54.17	48.68

ception and support for HR initiatives. The other barriers include: availability of budget for HR initiatives, limited headcount in HR department, and CEO's perception and support. When compared to SHRM study (2008), some differences were identified. According to SHRM (2008) study, budget and HR headcount were the major obstacles. HR departments might not be in a position to take some of the HR initiatives due to these problems. But as far as the present study is concerned, these were also barriers, but not major ones. Support from the employees, managerial or non-managerial, was the concern. When the data were analyzed organizational characteristics-wise,

**Table 8 Barriers for HR Effectiveness (%)**

Type of Organizations		Overall	Manufacturing	Service	IT	Public	Private	Indian	IMNC	FMNC	Small	Medium	Large
Management/executive team's perception and support	Available budget for HR activities	47.58	35.09	69.05	40.00	37.93	50.55	36.84	50.00	55.26	45.83	66.67	42.11
Non-managerial employee perception and support	Available headcount for HR activities	29.84	33.33	26.19	28.00	20.69	31.87	28.95	29.17	31.58	33.33	20.83	31.58
CEO's perception and support		48.39	57.89	40.48	44.00	58.62	47.25	55.26	43.75	50.00	50.00	37.50	52.63
		13.71	15.79	14.29	8.00	17.24	13.19	15.79	12.50	13.16	29.17	8.33	10.53
		25.81	22.81	19.05	48.00	34.48	24.18	31.58	22.92	26.32	12.50	20.83	32.89

Note: Percentages do not total 100% due to multiple response options

not much difference was observed except one, that is, the major barrier for IT sector was CEO's perception and support for HR initiatives.

### **Conclusion**

The analysis of demographic data of the HR professionals leads to the conclusion that unlike in the past, people enter into HR profession by way of direct recruitment and with professional qualifications in the field. The profession which started with the appointment of former military personnel as labor officers in India is now manned with professionally qualified people. The employment conditions such as nature of work, learning and development opportunities, remuneration and career advancement are at par with other professional groups and they are happy with their career. They receive mentoring on career-related issues from different sources such as senior HR professionals, senior management team, CEOs and in some cases, from external consultants arranged by their respective organizations.

**Performance management, training and development, staffing, compensation, and workforce planning are the most critical areas that contribute to the business strategy.**

The analysis of data relating to HR functional areas leads to the conclusion that HR professionals believe that performance management, training and development, staffing, compensation, and workforce planning are the most critical

areas that contribute to the business strategy. HR professionals are responsive to employees at all levels and perform administrative work. They attempt to integrate talent management initiatives with business strategy, understand the core of an organization's business, actively shape the organization's culture, facilitate change within the organization, and contribute to the strategic vision. In this context, it may be stated that the HR profession, which was confined to recruitment, grievance handling and labor welfare in its earlier stages, now contribute effectively in achieving organizational success.

HR professionals believe that there are obstacles to HR effectiveness. Employees' perception and support for HR initiatives, lack of enough budget and HR staff, and CEO's perception and support limit HR effectiveness. Finally, it may be stated that if the HR professionals can progress well with measuring impact of HR initiatives and show tangible benefits they can bring positive changes in the perception of all their stakeholders and overcome the other obstacles to HR effectiveness.

### **Limitations**

Though the study provides meaningful insights into the profile and functions of HR professionals in India, there are certain limitations to this study. The source of information is self-reports of HR professionals. The limited size of the sample is another limitation. The distribution of the sample of organizations in terms of nature of business, and owner-

ship is not even. In spite of these limitations, the study has made an attempt to draw a profile of HR professionals covering different sectors of organizations in different locations in India.

### Acknowledgements

The author wishes to thank the students of PGDHRM 2013-15 for the help in data collection

### References

- Balasubramanian, A. G. (1995), "Evolution of the Personnel Function in India - A Re-Examination – Part II", *Management and Labor Studies*, 20 (1): 5-14.
- Budhwar, P. S. (2000), "Indian and British Personnel Specialists' Understanding of the Dynamics of Their Function: An Empirical Study", *International Business Review*, 9: 727 -53.
- Budhwar, P. S. (2009), "Human Resource Management in the Indian Context", in Budhwar, P. S. and Bhatnagar, J.(Eds.), *The Changing Face of People Management in India*, Routledge, London.
- Delaney, J. T. & Huselid, M. A. (1996), "The Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Perceptions of Organizational Performance", *Academy of Management Journal*, 39,(4): 949-69.
- Easterby-Smith, M., Mailna, D.& Yuan, L. (1995), "How Culture Sensitive is HRM? A Comparative Analysis of Practice in Chinese and UK companies", *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 6(1): 31-59.
- Guest, D. E. (1997), "Human Resource Management and Performance: A Review and Research Agenda", *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 8: 263 -76.
- Harel, G. H.& Tzafrir, S. S. (1999), "The Effects of Human Resource Management Practices on Perceptions of Organizational and Market Performance of the Firm", *Human Resource Management*, 38(4):185-200.
- Hofstede, G. (1993), "Cultural Dimensions in People Management", in Puick, V., Tichy, N. M. & Barnett, C. K.(Eds.), *Globalizing Management*, John Wiley and Sons, Inc. New York: 139-58.
- Huselid, M. A.& Becker, B. E. (1997), "The Impact of High Performance Work Systems, Implementation Effectiveness, and Alignment with Strategy on Shareholders Wealth", *Academy of Management Proceedings*: 144-48.
- IIPM (1962), *Personnel Management in India*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay
- Jackson, S., Hitt, M. & DeNisi, A. (2004), *Managing Knowledge for Sustained Competitive Advantage: Designing Strategies for Effective HRM*, Jossey Bass, San Francisco.
- Kudchedkar, L. S. (1979), *Aspects of Personnel Management and Industrial Relations*, Tata McGraw-Hill, New Delhi
- Lounsbury, J. W., Gibson, L. W. , Steel, R. P. Sundstrom, E. D. & Loveland, J.L (2004), "An Investigation of Intelligence and Personality in Relation to Career Satisfaction", *Personality and Individual Differences*, 37( 1): 181-89.
- Pfeffer, J. (1994), *Competitive Advantage through People*, Harvard Business School, Boston.
- SHRM, (2008), *HR's Evolving Role in Organizations and Its Impact on Business Strategy*, [www.shrm.org/Research/SurveyFindings/Documents/HR](http://www.shrm.org/Research/SurveyFindings/Documents/HR)
- Sparrow, P. R. (1995), "Towards a Dynamic and Comparative Model of European Human Resource Management: An Extended Review", *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*,. 6(1): 481-505.

- Sparrow, P. R. & Hiltrop, J. M. (1994), *European Human Resource Management in Transition*, Prentice Hall, London.
- Srimannarayana, M. (2009), "Measurement of Human Resource Activities in India", *The Indian Journal of Industrial Relations*, 45(2): 265-76.
- Ulrich, D. (1998), "A New Mandate for Human Resources", *Harvard Business Review*, January-February : 124-134.
- Ulrich, D. & Brockbank, W. (2005), *The Human Value Proposition*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston.
- Ulrich, D., Brockbank, W., Younger, J. & Ulrich, M. (2013), *Global HR Competencies: Mastering Competitive Value from the Outside In*, Tata McGraw Hill, New Delhi.
- Venkata Ratnam, C. S. & Srivastava, B. K. (1991), *Personnel Management and Human Resources*, Tata McGraw-Hill, Delhi.