Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION
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INTRODUCTION

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1.1 PROLOGUE

With the increase in competition, locally and globally, organizations must become more adaptable, resilient, agile, and customer-focused to succeed. With this change in environment, the HR professional has to evolve to become a strategic partner, an employee sponsor or advocate, and a change mentor within the organization. In order to succeed, HR Professionals must carry out business driven function with a thorough understanding of the organization's big picture and be able to influence key decisions and policies (Mishra, 2010). A message frequently found in corporate mission statements, annual reports and plaques on office walls is that people are a firm’s most valuable resource. Having the right personnel at the right place and at the right time is of utmost importance to the survival and success of any organization (Wan, Ong & Kok, 2002). Hence, the field of Human Resource Management (HRM) has undergone significant changes in scope, functions and activities over many years. There is a radical raise in professional maturity in this field and thus personnel management is now shaped as HRM and further developed as Strategic HRM (Hussain & Rafique, 2012) which is very essential as the business dynamics to which the HR field must respond and contribute are increasingly turbulent (Ulrich & Brockbank, 2005). Recently Waiganjo, Mukulu & Kahiri, (2012) viewed that the real life experience substantiate the assumption that no matter how sophisticated and modern the business activities of the organization may become, it will be extremely difficult to sustain its growth and effectiveness unless there are strategies that complement its operations. Current era is witnessing the amalgamation of several facets of management into the strategic management Hence, HR is no exception. As it has been seen at the global level that there is tremendous change in all the functions of the organizations like production, finance, marketing, etc., to make these functions more effective to adapt to the changes the HR functions should also be changed from time to time. Over the years the HR functions have also been considerably changed and the recent change is being the implementation of Strategic Human Resource Management. The implementation of new technology may result with the downsized workforce in the industry and to manage the changed workforce the effective implementation of policies was an urgent necessity. Hence, the concept of SHRM has evolved to build a bridge between business strategy and the
management of human resources (Bhatnagar & Sharma, 2005) but more recently Hussain & Rafique, (2012) investigated and criticized that the success of the new policies depends on the introduction and implementation of new strategic HRM policies.

Strategic Human Resource Management involves designing and implementing a set of proactive HR policies/practices that ensures that an organization’s human capital contributes to the achievement of its corporate objectives (Wan, Ong & Kok, 2002). The practices of SHRM such as resourcing, training and development, employee relations and reward management are concerned with how people are employed and managed in organizations so as to achieve competitive advantage through the strategic deployment of a highly committed and capable workforce (Waiganjo, Mukulu & Kahiri, 2012).

1.2 HR PROBLEMS

The HRM is a complex multifaceted segment of an organizational setup that has a variety of problems due to constant changes in social structure, political instability and human values. HR Functions stems from the problems relating to the changes in the industrial needs. Armstrong (2004), points out that the organizations often face HRM problems which may fall within the following categories: Recruitment, Training of individuals within the organizations, Assessing the performance of employees and finally Rewarding and retention of employees.

But the major three problems which the HR executives are going to face over the next ten years as per the survey conducted by Esen (2012) are (a) retaining and rewarding the best employees, (b) developing the next generation of corporate leaders and (c) creating a corporate culture that attracts the best employees to organizations. The toughest task what the HR departments are facing is to attract, retain and nurture talented employees (Srivastava & Agarwal, 2012, Esen, 2012 & Sagar, 2009). As the individuals are developing themselves as technical and professional expertise, their demand is increasing and due to which the HR departments are facing the problem of retaining the talented employees (Srivastava & Agarwal, 2012).
Performance appraisal appears to be the most important issue to tackle for a company which is intended to assess the financial performance. Similarly, company’s interest in enhancing HR performance may emphasize the need for empowerment and training (Wan, Ong & Kok, 2002). Due to the changing working environment, the employees are not able to work with their outdated skills and ideas for which the HR departments have to approach for change management through training and development which is one of the challenging task (Coopers, 2009). The problems currently faced may also include the readiness of human resource as a strategic partner, the absence of clearly-defined HR-related key performance indicators, labour scarcity and Government policies relating to labour and education (Jassel, 2012). In addition the other problems like acquiring, maintaining, nurturing and proper utilization of the man power are being faced by the industries. However, by mitigating these problems the organizations can achieve its overall objectives.

1.3 HR TRANSFORMATION

The business world is far more complex than it was any time before in the history of our civilization. No organization can run its business competitively by adopting a simple business model that worked several years ago as competitors evolve every day trying to grab the market new share. Hence, the firm has to change its processes, products and services to succeed on the market. HR Professionals have to understand the business strategy and how Human Resources can contribute to the success of the company. HR Transformation is an essential part of the success of the modern company (Mullins, 2002). It answers to the real needs of the company which is necessity due to acquisition of the additional skills which are highly competitive. Changes in the HR Values and capabilities with relative accountability are on the rise in the modern business world. The performance of the HR is not valued on the basis of the task but considered for accomplishment of challenging goals and bridging the performance gaps in the company. However, the current status of the HR Management in the company has been shifted from traditional HR functions to Strategic functions though complete implementation of the innovative ideas has not been incorporated.
The transformation of Human Resources does not have to be necessary a big deal. It is better to manage a well-planned set of smaller changes while keeping the performance of the team at the required level. Even a small step forward can help, if it is followed by another small step. Days of big bang transformations are over. Managing the huge and complete transformation requires highly experienced HR Project Manager. The change of Human Resources is often hidden in the change of behavior and acquiring additional skills and competencies. The transformation of HR must be conducted in the context of the business strategy and business requirements (Sivasubramaniam and Ratnam, 1998). Human Resource has to design the HR transformation strategy that clearly set boundaries for the change project. It has to analyze common obstacles, gaps and the status of the HR Management in the organization. A dedicated internal team has to propose the HR transformation roadmap that will guide the organization through the set of small changes.

Each transformation has to be put into the business context. No leader will approve the change that is not aligned with the general vision of the organization and the standard business requirements. Most organizations identify weak spots in Human Resources that block the possibility to reach higher productivity and performance (Zheng et.al., 2007). Connecting the weak points with the potential gains in productivity is always an excellent start of any transformation journey. The CEO supports changes that are beneficial for the company and does not support individual ambitions of HR Managers without any evidence of benefits for all. HR Manager has to explain clearly why the change in the team is required by communicating clearly the benefits of the transformation and making the people understand the reason for change. Each change and transformation is done through people and their minds since strategic view is a masterpiece of change in soft areas like Human Resources.

1.4 STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT: A NEW TREND

The intellectual thoughts about Human Resource Management field can be traced back to the 1920s in the U.S. The concept of labor as a human resource and the strategic view of HRM policy and practice were described and discussed by labor economists and industrial relations scholars of that period, such as John Commons.
Progressive companies in the 1920s intentionally formulated and adopted innovative HR practices that represented a strategic approach to the management of labor (Lengnick et.al., 2009). Continuing with this line of thought about HR Practices, the study by Som (2007) revealed that various theoretical researches have been focusing on analyzing the organizations work practices as a coherent system. This system perspective is based on the notion that human resource management (HRM) practices often complement each other, so that the adoption of one HRM practice is only effective when it is adopted in combination with one or more supporting work practices. HRM has been used as a set of practices which can be termed as progressive or high performance, high commitment, high involvement or innovative HRM practices (Rimi & Yusuff, 2013).

The scant practice of Strategic Human Resource work could be traced to late 20th century and debates over the importance of HRM integration into corporate strategy was also started and the term “Strategic HRM” was its outcome (Chiu & Selmer 2011). Due to increasing international competition, mergers and acquisitions, advancement in telecommunication technology, along with gradual demographic and social changes, HR professionals are bounded to perform beyond their normal HR activities (Lipiec, 2001).

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The trend towards the modern HR Management starts with the strategic business partnering where in the power will be turned into “assets” and assets will be turned into “actionable initiatives”. Each leader has the engaging vision, but HR can be useful in spreading the vision and ideas across the entire organization. The HR department has tools that make sure that all employees receive the same message and collects the feedback from staff and managers; together with the business leader in elaborating the vision further. The main partnership of the HR Manager is with the CEO which was the beginning of the journey gives benefits to both HR Manager and the CEO. This partnering continued to spread throughout the organization which has been accepted by all levels. In this partnering process the HR Manager not only acts as a leader but a proactive business partner. He develops strong business relationships
with other business leaders and becomes an integral part of the leadership team, however, sojourn has taken many years to become the valuable partner in the organization.

1.6 STRATEGIC HR CHALLENGES

For Human Resources (HR) to be a profession, those working in the discipline must master a set of competencies (Brockbank, Ulrich & Beatty, 1999) hence, HR departments that aspire to make unique and valuable contributions must adopt their departmental capabilities and the competencies of their HR professionals to the dynamics that influence the human side of the business (Quinn & Brockbank, 2006). If a company wants to have a wise investment in HR practices such as staffing, training, compensation, organization design, performance management and culture change which will again help a business to reach strategic and financial goals, HR professionals must have knowledge and activate agendas to make strategy-HR linkage happen (Brockbank, Ulrich & Beatty, 1999). The strategy-HR linkage can better achieved by making interventions of HR practices with organizational goals hence, the HR professional development interventions should meet three criteria:

(i) Firstly raise the aspirations of the HR professionals to add greater value to the business,

(ii) Secondly to develop HR professional competencies that have greatest impact on business performance and

(iii) Finally to provide the opportunity to apply concepts, research and tools in the context of raised aspirations (Quinn & Brockbank, 2006).

HR Professionals must begin not by focusing on the activities or work of HRM but by defining the deliverables of that work. In terms of deliverables there are four key roles i.e., Strategic partner, Administrative expert, Change agent and Employee champion, that HRM professionals must fulfill to make their business partnership a reality (Bhatnagar & Sharma, 2005), but Teo & Rodwell (2007) viewed that there are two facets of HR’s changing role – HR’s involvement in strategy and the transfer of HR activities to line management. Overall HR managers are urged to focus less on operational personnel activities and need to become strategic business partners (Ulrich, 1997).
The focus of the HR is creating change which should be purposeful goal directed and must bring positive change in the organizations (Huselid & Becker, 1999). They should also consider adopting strategies to improve their relationships with line management and can put more energy and resources into legitimizing their roles and status within their organizations, especially among the senior management group (Teo & Rodwell, 2007). On the whole it is proved that HR professionals roles has been increased which is supported by Ulrich (1997) that in the past few years, roles for HR Professionals were often viewed in terms of the transitional form such as operational to strategic, qualitative to quantitative, policing to partnering, short term to long term, administrative to consultative, functionally oriented to business oriented, etc.. But HR professionals cannot perform their roles effectively, unless and until they are supported by top management. Hence the challenge for the HR professional is to (Huselid & Becker, 1999) ensure that the CEO understands that the only way for the organization to achieve that growth is by its people, the true source of competitive advantage.

Business competitiveness is a recurring theme which is much sort term by academicians, consultants and practitioners. The frequent and uncertain changes, greater competition between firms, the need for continuous innovations, quality enhancement and cost reduction force companies to face the challenge of improving their competitiveness and consequently their performance (Waiganjo, Mukulu & Kahiri, 2012). The realization of this competitiveness has propelled Strategic Human Resource Management as a major field of study (Wright, 2005). SHRM is related to HR’s alignment with the firm’s strategy and focuses on what a firm does with its human resources. Ngo, Lau & Foley (2008) substantiated that the use of strategic HR practices is positively related to both financial and operational performance but SHRM perspective makes evident the importance of human resource practices for organizational performance, such as employee turnover, productivity and financial performance. SHRM effectiveness significantly reduces employee turnover and increases overall market performance assessment (Richard & Johnson, 2001).

Better fit of strategic HR roles with the organizational learning capability lead to better organizational performance (Bhatnagar & Sharma, 2005), whereas effective implementation of key strategic HRM practices should be able to bring in higher
levels of organizational performance. Different aspects of performance could be affected by different strategic HRM variables (Wan, Ong & Kok, 2002). Sound HR work can contribute to a firm’s performance when it is aligned to business objectives and HRM practices when strategically implemented could improve organizational productivity and that strategic HRM systems may help to sustain corporate future developments (Chiu & Selmer 2011). Organizations by implementing SHRM gain the above mentioned advantages along with that the employee relations climate can also be used as a proxy to evaluate how strategically & effectively an organization manages its human resources (Ngo, Lau & Foley, 2008). It is observed that by taking the competitive advantage the firm can have three basic strategic options namely cost reduction, quality enhancement and innovation which is in line with the argument made by Waiganjo, Mukulu & Kahiri (2012). Strategic Human Resource Management is not a ‘big company’ issues. Organizations of all sizes are seeking to maximize their HR investment. It can be implemented under different types of ownership like state-owned enterprises, Foreign-invested enterprises, Private owned enterprises, etc., (Ngo, Lau & Foley, 2008) and evidenced that firms with higher levels of SHRM receive greater benefit in terms of organizational performance, regardless of ownership type.

1.7 UPCOMING TRENDS IN HR

The only way to have a competitive advantage will be to keep reinventing the fundamentals of HR practices (Livemint, 2017). After the transformation from personnel department function to HRM and HRM to SHRM there is growing image about the HR functions on the basis of the role and significance. This trend stems from the global practices in the field of HR and their connectivity with that of the organizational functions. The upcoming trends can be noticed in the area of talent acquisition, staying relevant, digital way, diversity, adapting for the space and also with regard to the data analytics which are as follows:

1. Challenge in talent acquisition

The impact of automation, though already visible in the past few years, may become cause for worry, especially in a country like India. As more jobs get automated, talent acquisition will enter a new phase where people need to possess
specific skills to get employment. Once that talent is part of the workforce, retaining it will also require constant effort from the HR team.

2. **Staying relevant**

   Organizations have traditionally trained their employees to work according to the instructions given to them but now the responsibility is shifting towards employees. Skilled people will be good at certain roles, companies will have to look at people who are curious to learn. They are the ones who can seamlessly move from one role to the other. There is a need for mix of apprenticeships as well as massive open online courses or certifications to stay relevant in the rapidly changing professional scenario.

3. **Digital will be key**

   HR department will have to employ analytics to understand the needs of people in a more customized, individual-specific manner and provide solutions through the use of mobile technology and newer platforms such as mobile-friendly platforms for communication, performance management, continuous feedback and surveys, easier HR systems, automated processes, etc., The digitalization of HR processes facilitates the HR Managers to be more strategic and can act as business partner as he spends less time in dealing with day to day activities.

4. **Redefining diversity**

   Every firm’s success and competitiveness depends upon its ability to embrace diversity wherein more attention should be given on tackling the maximum capacity of individuals by recognizing and empowering their unique perspective. With the practice of people spending almost their entire working lives in one company coming to an end, the freelance industry will get a boost. A diverse workforce will now mean a mix of full-time and freelance employees, young and old, and all genders, however, the trend of workforce diversity may result with more complexities in employee engagement.
5. Changes in work ‘Space’

High monitoring practices by firms may intrude upon an employee’s privacy causing undue stress and may lead to low employee productivity or even may end up with attrition. Work place monitoring has raised serious concerns about employee privacy as it is the foremost complaint among employees however, not many offices have been able to juggle collaboration with workplace privacy. Hence, firms should create work environment of both open and structured spaces without compromising on losing the talent due to lack of work privacy.

6. Focus on data analytics

As companies become more reliant on technology, every step of the employee life-cycle will be recorded and the extent of data available with the HR team will go beyond the date of joining and remuneration increase. Apart from training, data analytics will also enable HR department to correlate reasons for attrition, client loss and facilitate to take necessary redressal measures against it, however, more digitization, augmented reality and robotics at the workplace are pressurizing HR departments to be more proactive and analyzer.

1.8 SHRM - INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

Indian economy, after decades of confinement has experienced a revolutionary change which is also been witnessed due to the liberalization effect gave rise to the sudden and increased levels of competition for Indian firms. Each organization a leader in its own industry had undergone extensive restructuring processes to brace itself for the impending competition that has arisen with the phased deregulation of the industries due to liberalization and privatization policy adopted by the Indian Government way back in 1991. The general trend in Indian industry, due to the liberalization of the Indian economy is encouraging for the SHRM practices (Bhatnagar & Sharma, 2005) which has enforced for the transformation of the HR function from ‘Personnel Management’ to ‘Human Resource Management’ and further given birth for the term ‘Strategic Human Resource Management’. Som (2003) opined about how innovative HRM practices are being adopted by Indian firms to brace competition in the post liberalization period and also highlighted about the
need for new skills, new policies and innovative HRM practices. However, when compared to the other countries, India is still lagging behind in understanding and implementing SHRM completely in the organizations which is evidenced by the study of Chiu & Selmer (2011) who examined empirically the proposition that HR professionals are strategic business partners and also affirmed that the strategic role of HR will be increasing in the future due to the continuous changing environment.

In India, HR professionals are not fully involving themselves in achieving organizational objectives. Mechanism for reinventing traditional HR roles and improving the effectiveness of HR professionals as business partners were proved disappointing and they appeared to be particularly weak at predicting performance in a business partner role (Caldwell, 2008). HR managers should be equal partners in the business strategy formulation, with representation of HR on the board of directors of the organization, which is not happening in India (Bhatnagar & Sharma, 2005). Hence, Human Resource function must redesign itself to deliver the strategic value that today’s business environment demands and refocus its energies to become a change catalyst and leader.

1.9 RESEARCH GAP

The review of literature on Strategic Human Resource Management has revealed that India is lagging behind in total adoption of Strategic Human Resource Management. However Karnataka has no exception in total implementation of the Strategic Human Resource Management Policies. Yet, some of the large organizations have implemented it in the early 1990. After 1990 the adoption of the SHRM has got the momentum even in Karnataka also. The review of literature further reveals that the studies carried earlier were mainly focused on the importance of Strategic Human Resource Management, its effects on the organizational performance, role of Human Resource Managers, effects of Strategic Human Resource Management on Human Resource executives, line managers and employees, competitive advantage, organization value addition, corporate reputation etc., by taking perceptions of Human Resource executives, Line managers and employees. No study has been comprehensively carried out to know the impact of Strategic Human Resource Management on productivity and performance including human resource related issues by taking perceptions of HR Managers and HR Consultants as Human
Resource Professionals in the area of Strategic Human Resource Management in India in general and no study has been carried out in Karnataka in particular by linking ‘Strategic Human Resource Role’, ‘Human Resource Competency’, ‘Strategic Recruitment and Selection’ and ‘Integration of Human Resource Management with Organizational objectives’ as they play a paramount role in the implementation of Strategic Human Resource Management. Hence, the present study has been carried out to fill this gap in research concerned with Strategic Human Resource Management and also to assess the level of transformation of human resource into strategic human resource practices. In view of the above, the study has its significance.

1.10 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The HRM function in the organizations has to be proactive and need to be strongly linked to the overall business so as to succeed in a highly competitive business environment. One of the important tasks faced by the present-day managers is integrating people with the strategic goals of the organization. Organizations are finding difficulty in identifying the people who can work by aligning their personal goals with organizational goals, however, India is still lagging behind in understanding and implementing Strategic Human Resource Management completely in the organizations. In this backdrop, the study has been carried by identifying the following problems:

1. It is highly disappointing to mention that the role of HR Managers is not a strategic partner but an overseer of employees. Strategic partner role takes last priority due to the insufficient participation of HR Managers in defining business strategy process. However, multifaceted roles played by him have not been given due recognition. Even then the concept is completely acclaimed by the industries as a boon for workers and management.

2. It is observed that the Traditional Human Resource Management has not solved all the issues related to human resource because many problems like welfare concerns, job stress, work-life imbalance, etc., still persists and not resorted to be solved. Another side of criticism that is normally seen is that HRM or even SHRM are not employee friendly and the new SHRM has marginalized the human relations.
3. Most HR changes are organization wide and are intended to enhance organizational performance and support the achievement of primary business objectives. Organizations are not effectively managing strategic HR change due to lack of HR involvement at initial and planning stages.

4. The organizations are incurring high cost in employing the right candidate at the right time as it has to create a huge pool of talented candidates with huge investment. In order to reduce this burden the organizations are going for outsourcing their part or full of their HR activities. However, increase in outsourcing of HR activities is failing to build a good and positive relationship between employees and employer.

5. There is a lack of knowledge regarding the identification of the factors influencing the integration of human resource management with organizational objectives.

1.11 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The aim of the study is to understand and analyze the Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) in present context and also analyzing the impact of SHRM on organizational performance by taking perceptions of HR Professionals in Karnataka. The study is has been carried out with the following objectives:

1. To study the evolution and growth of Strategic Human Resource Management

2. To analyze the shift in HR functions from traditional practices to strategic HR practices

3. To explore the extent to which the strategic role is performed by HR Managers

4. To evaluate the perception of HR Professionals about Strategic Recruitment and Selection practices.

5. To examine the professional HR competencies in HR Managers and HR Consultants

6. To enquire into the perceptual differences between HR Managers and HR Consultants about Strategic Human Resource Management.

7. To develop the conceptual research model of Strategic Human Resource Management
1.12 HYPOTHESES FOR THE STUDY

The following research hypotheses have been developed in order to satisfy the research objectives:

1. “There is no significant difference in the perception of HR Professionals (HR Managers and HR Consultants) about the strategic role performed by HR Managers”.

2. “The perception about the Strategic Recruitment and Selection practices is same among HR Professionals”.

3. “There is no significant difference in the professional HR Competencies between HR Managers and HR Consultants”.

4. “The perception about integration of HRM with organizational objectives is same among HR Professionals”.

5. “The conceptual research model is not a good fit to the data”.

1.13 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study focuses on specific areas like the level of awareness of Strategic Human Resource Management among the HR Professionals viz., HR Managers and HR Consultants (HR Consultancy Services), the extent of implementation of Strategic Human Resource Management and its outcomes, Strategic role played by HR Managers, HR Competencies, Integration of Human Resource Management with the organization objectives, transformation of HR practices into Strategic HR practices and finally to know about the inter linkage between three independent variables namely ‘Strategic HR Role’, ‘Strategic Recruitment and Selection’ and ‘HR Competency’ and one dependent variable ‘Integration of HRM with organizational objectives’ which can be considered as conceptual research model.

1.14 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A research design is a plan, structure and strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answer to research questions. It specifies the proper methods and procedures for conducting a particular study. The Research design consists of the following:
1.14 (a) DATA COLLECTION: The study is based on both primary and secondary data.

Primary Data: The primary data was collected by administering a structured questionnaire and also by interviewing HR Professionals.

Secondary Data: The secondary data has been collected from various National and International Journals, Working papers, Theses, Newspapers, Books and from various websites.

1.14 (b) POPULATION AND SAMPLE SELECTION: The population for the study constituted HR Professionals i.e., HR Managers working in manufacturing and service industries with more than 500 employees and HR Consultants working in HR Consultancy firms and rendering HR consulting services for both manufacturing and service industries in Karnataka. A perusal of the websites of Indiastat and Fundooadata revealed that there were 7,384 HR Managers in the year 2015, spread over in different regions of the state and also the email address and websites of HR Consultants was verified individually and such identified HR Consultants stood at 627. With a view to obtain the large number of responses in Karnataka the structured questionnaire was administered to 650 respondents consisting of 500 HR Managers and 150 HR Consultants. These questionnaires were sent through postal mail, courier, e-mail and personal contacts. Out of 500 HR Managers only 100 were able to send the responses which stood at 7 percent and out of 150 HR Consultants 100 respondents have returned the filled in questionnaires constituting 23 percent. Out of the total population i.e. in the universe total sample respondents selected stood at 2.5 percent. Out of HR Managers the sample represented 1.3 percent and 15 percent with respect to HR Consultants. The sampling technique used for the study was Stratified Random Sampling technique. Below table shows the total number of questionnaires distributed, returned and the response rate.

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<th>Target Group</th>
<th>Distributed</th>
<th>Returned</th>
<th>Response Rate Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HR Managers</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>100 (50.00)</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR Consultants</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>100 (50.00)</td>
<td>66.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>200 (100.00)</td>
<td>31.00</td>
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(Figures in brackets indicate percentages of total sample group)
The response rate was 31 percent of the total number of questionnaires delivered. Further, the rate of response from HR Managers was 20 percent and 66 percent from HR Consultants. Below chart shows selection of samples made from manufacturing and service sectors.

1.14 (c) LOCALE OF THE STUDY: The study has been conducted in Karnataka covering four divisions of Bengaluru, Belagavi, Kalaburagi and Mysuru, where there are more conglomerations of industrial units.
1.14 (d) DATA ANALYSIS – STATISTICAL TOOLS

A structured questionnaire prepared and a pilot survey has been conducted to pretest the questionnaire. After making necessary changes, the final questionnaire was administered to the selected respondents. The data obtained has been collated and analyzed with the help of various statistical tests like Mean, Standard Deviations and various appropriate statistical tests by using EXCEL and also SPSS package to make analysis and interpretation more reliable and to arrive at meaningful conclusion. Smart PLS software has been used to test the conceptual research model (developed) with the help of Partial Least Square method.

1.15 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Like any other research work in the field of social sciences, the present research is also not free from limitations. The main limitations are as follows:

1. The research is limited to the perceptions of HR Managers and HR Consultants.

2. The study area is restricted to Karnataka State. The HR Professionals’ perception may differ in other states/countries due to regional differences.

3. The results of the study cannot be generalized as it is based on the perceptions of 200 respondents.

4. In majority of the cases, the respondents were not available for further clarifications or discussions as they are working at the managerial level and usually too busy to allow outsiders/visitors.

5. The study has encountered with limited use of Strategic Human Resource Management practices in firms located in Karnataka as it is not completely implemented.

1.16 EPILOGUE

Due to increasing international competition, mergers and acquisitions, advancement in telecommunication technology, along with gradual demographic and social changes, HR professionals are bound to perform beyond their normal HR activities. In order to tackle the HR problems, challenges and issues, the organizations
are forced to go for a HR change which can act as a measure to overcome from the HR hurdles. The HR change can be brought through implementing a tool called Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) from which the HR function can be linked to the organizations’ strategies to achieve long term strategic goals. The present study has been carried out on the ground that it is imperative to manage the people in an efficient manner and to overcome the HR problems through implementation of Strategic Human Resource Management.

1.17 CHAPTERIZATION SCHEME

The framework of the thesis has been presented in five chapters which are as follows:

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<td>SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION</td>
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