The field of Human Resource Management (HRM) as a discipline is relatively recent. It has developed through an evolutionary process. Different civilizations and philosophies contributed to the development of HRM. During the industrial revolution era, the evolution of personnel management started. At the end of this evolutionary process, when personnel management got its complete shape, organizational planning, manpower planning, manpower selection and other allied issues regarding the management of personnel and high talent manpower assumed significance in the organization. High talent personnel emerged as the key human resource. The emphasis then shifted to 'management of human resources'.

The concept of HRM emerged initially from the work done in the U.S.A. in the 1960s and 1970s. Since then the concept gained impetus around the world. In the U.S.A. where the concept of HRM originated, there is a widespread belief that HRM is the dependent variable and business strategy is an independent variable in their relationship. From the assumption that HRM is derived from the interplay of corporate and business strategy led to the emergence of strategic HRM (SHRM). After the emergence of SHRM different perspectives to SHRM and models of SHRM have been developing gradually.

This thesis is a modest attempt in highlighting the latest developments in the area of SHRM in Bangladeshi business firms. The contribution of manufacturing and service sectors to the GDP is increasing gradually in Bangladesh. In 1949-50 the contribution of the manufacturing sector to the GDP was only about 3%. In 1997-98 the contribution of industrial and service sectors to the GDP were 19.4 and 48.9 respectively. Export has grown at a rate of 17.4% over the last 6 years. In 1996-97 total civilian labor force was 7.7 crore; among these, industrial and other labor (except agricultural labor) constitute more than a third of the total labor strength.

The thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter one (Stages of Development of Strategic Human Resource Management) presents the contribution of different philosophies to HRM, the evolution of personnel management (PM), the emergence of HRM, and finally, the emergence of
SHRM. *Chapter two* (Strategic Human Resource Management) explains the conceptual preview of SHRM, different perspectives to SHRM, models of SHRM, elements of SHRM and finally, the approaches to integration among the different elements. These first two chapters provide basis on which the model of research is designed.

*Chapter three* (Research Design) presents the review of available literature and finding a research gap. Then the objectives, scope, synoptic view, methodology and limitations of the study are given.

*Chapter four* (Analysis and Interpretation of Findings) presents the profile of respondents and the profile of the responding firms, the strategy, structure, HR system, and SHRM policies and processes of the responding firms. This is followed by *Chapter five* (Summary and Conclusions) which presents section-wise summary and conclusions of the findings that were analyzed and interpreted in the fourth chapter.

The final chapter i.e. the *Sixth chapter* proposes the direction for future research. Besides the potential areas of SHRM research a set of propositions are also suggested for future researchers.

Beside the questionnaire/interview schedule, which is given in *Appendix-I*, a bird eye's view of the various significant aspects of Bangladeshi economy and industry is presented in *Appendix-II*, and a macro-level situation in Bangladesh with regard to human resource development is presented in *Appendix-III*. These two appendices are provided in order to give the reader an idea of the context in which the research work has been undertaken. Finally, the bibliography providing more than 350 references is given that could be a rich potential source for future researchers.

The findings of the study may give a direction to the industry associations and individual firms about the latest developments in the area of SHRM and act accordingly. For academicians, the study will be useful for critical appraisal of the latest developments in the area of SHRM and it will also prove helpful in providing a direction for future research.

October 18, 1999

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