CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“A dull, decent people, cherishing and fortifying their dullness behind a quarter of a million bayonets.”

Orwell (1934)

Orwell’s quote from *Burmese Days* rightly indicate that with the ticking of the clock over the years, India has observed numerous political and strategic shifts. The rule of the ancient kings, queens and zamindars, the Britishers and now the politicians is a living proof of the vulnerability of the country. There were rulers who won the hearts of the people concurrently there were also kings who were incompetent to manage the people and the resources. No wonder how much competent the ruler was, there was always somebody or the other who led to his/her downfall. The history proves that the country has observed great shifts every now and then because of the people and their false loyalties towards the rulers or the administrative officers. This led to the realignment of power and its managers which not only affected the political, social and cultural aspects but also left the rich and resourceful country under the category of just a “developing” nation.

A country is surely famed by its forests, mountains, roads, rivers, historical monuments and numerous other structures but is truly honored for the quality of its human service! Former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh (2005) in his address in a collector’s conference rightly mentioned, “What really made the difference to the functioning of any system is the mindset of those who made the critical decisions of a nation’s political, social and economic life.” It is a historical fact that in a country like our’s there is a frequent shift in political leaders. Dr. Manmohan Singh also reasoned that, “The politicians come and go. Many a times they don’t have the occasion to think about the long-term consequences of what they are doing.” It is true
that the election procedures are such that the political masters serve a term of only 5 years. In such circumstances the administrative officers are the real leaders and managers of the country as they serve the nation for their entire lives!

The population of the country touches nearly 1.27 billion. With this rising population it becomes difficult to manage the Indian scenario where there is a colossal amalgamation of caste, color and creed. Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru (Madan, 1997) once stated, “We talk about a secular state in India... Some people think that it means something opposed to religion. That obviously is not correct. What it means is that it is a state which honors all faiths equally and gives them equal opportunities, that, a state, it does not allow itself to be attached to one faith or religion, which then becomes the state religion.” India is a country where all the religions are practiced and this in itself is the biggest challenge of all! During the interviews conducted for the present research most of the senior RAS officers reported that India is divided into religions and castes; the villagers give a lot of trouble on caste-basis. “To manage machines is easier than to manage human beings” stated Mr. R.S. Batra, Rt. RAS. Unlike before the general public along with the political leaders now keeps a check of the activities of a state administrative officer. “An administrative officer has to think twice before taking any action as he is answerable to the political leaders as well as to the public in general” shared Mr. N.K. Jain, Rt. RAS.

The world has now become a globalized village where distances do not mean remoteness in the real sense. This has given us a great market as well as competition. The advent of globalization has accelerated a great challenge to the developing countries. We face many obstacles in having a greater share in the world trade and investments. Not only this but also, the expanding businesses in and outside the country, the Chinese invasions, Pakistan’s
notoriousness, American policies and many more such events make it strenuous to manage the nation. The changes that have swept the country especially during the past two decades have shifted the roles of the public sector. In many manufacturing and service sectors, government is moving from being a provider to being a facilitator and a regulator of services. For this it is the need of the hour to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of our public sector entities.

The public entities have to ensure that the poor sectors of the society are raised from their standard and participate in the growth processes. It is the administrative officers who need to look into not only the changing social and industrial patterns but also into the economic realities. At such a point, the civil servants need to practice integrity and are required to be opportunistic towards the state. “No doubt an administrative officer has to take many decisions at spur-of-the-moment” accentuated Mr. R.C. Jain, Rt. RAS during the behavior event interview (BEI) for the research. The administrative officers also need to be capable of mobilizing the resources in order to translate the plans into actions. In such circumstances, a proficient squad is needed to handle the tasks at hand and also to plan for the country’s advancement much ahead of time. The new political party might work some wonders in such a situation but a strong blue-print is required so that a long-term planning and implementation of the same can be done for a risen and powerful nation that has a synergy in all its systems and procedures.

The accounts indicate that besides discharging specific responsibilities, the administrative officers need to play a number of roles. A role is defined as- the actions and activities assigned to or required or expected of a person or group. For instance, "The function of a teacher" is a role. The state administrative officers have to play multiple roles at every stage of their tenure. Civil servants like Sivaraman (1970) and others have written about their
personal encounters to the daily issues, these experiences give an insight about processes in government. It is clear from these written evidences that the procedures of the administration are tough. The administrative officers are required to take tough decisions and formulate intricate policies within certain constraints and government norms, protecting the interests of the government and keeping public welfare in mind. One needs to be consistent in his/ her services without letting the emotions rule over. Recalling his tenure of services during the BEI Mr. S.S. Bissa, Rt. IAS, grieved, “I lost two constables when I passed the order of firing in an uncontrolled agitation. Later, I fasted for 100 days in order to repent. That was the decision of person in the role of a collector and fasting was for my personal grief.” “It is brutal to dismantle the houses of the poor. But, the encroachments need to be removed and duty comes first!” conveyed Mr. P.L. Bairwa, RAS. The administrative officers need to be critical as well as innovative while taking the important decisions. Many a times they need to move out of their offices and work into open areas- meeting people, analyzing the situations and trying their level best to resolve the issues at hand. There are days when they have to camp in the local areas scrutinizing the various needs of the public and nurturing them simultaneously.

Someone pointed out that India lives in states. However, the Former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh went to the extent of saying that India lives in districts! The districts are controlled, facilitated and looked after by the state administrative officers. Thus, the state administrative officers need to look at each minute function properly. There are so many tasks at hand and so are the challenges! In such situations, an administrative officer needs to be a great mind focusing on the immediate problems as well as the deeper issues related to them.

It is noteworthy to state that the progress of the state, the happiness and contentment of its people is reflected in its powerful and efficient work force. Conversely, the down-fall of an
empire, dissatisfaction and complacence of the public, the low status of the state are clear indicators of poor leadership and governance. For any state to flourish, the criteria of selection of its working team need to be appropriate, objective, and accurate. The researcher recollects one of the colleagues mentioning, “Although I was amongst the top candidates who scored high in the written examination, I was asked 60 thousand to clear the main interview of RAS in the 1960s.” The success of public sector reforms lies in efficient selection of the administrative officers. The governance of the state is in question for quite some time. This happens because of lack of proper measures and guidelines. There should be clear, reliable and verifiable guidelines that not only suggest as to what roles and competencies are required to carry out the responsibilities of an administrative officer earnestly but also differentiates between a superior performer and an average one. Competency mapping is an answer to such questions.

Competency Defined

The word “competency” is derived from Latin word “competere” that means ‘to be suitable’. The competency concept was originally developed in psychology indicating individual’s ability to respond to demands placed on them by their environment. Numerous researches have been carried out by many academicians on the topic. Therefore, much has been written on the subject of “competency”. Researchers and renowned Psychologists such as Klemp (1980), Boyatzis (1982), Burgoyne (1988), Morgan (1988), Cockerill (1989), Brown (1993), Spencer and Spencer (1993), Woodruffe (1991), Gay (1996), Goleman (1998), Dulewicz (1999), Schroeder (2004), Chong (2011) etc. have all contributed immensely to the vast pool of information on the subject. Some researchers explored as to what role
competencies play in daily working of individuals whereas, others discovered their importance in distinguishing employees on their performance basis.

According to Klemp (1980), “Competence is an underlying characteristic of a person which results in effective and/or superior performance in a job.”

“Competence [is the] ability to handle a situation [even unforeseen]” pointed out Keen (1992). The investigator further elaborated that “Competence is a compound, made up of different parts just like the fingers of a hand [i.e. skills, knowledge, experience, contacts, values, and additionally coordination which is located in the palm, and supervision, symbolized by the nervous system.]

Spencer and Spencer (1993), a renowned name in the movement of competency defined competence as “an underlying characteristic of an individual that is causally related to criterion-references effective and/or superior performance in a job or situation. Underlying characteristic means that competency is a fairly deep and enduring part of a person’s personality and can predict behavior in a wide variety of situations and job tasks. Causally-related on the other hand, means that a competency actually causes or predicts behavior and performance. Criterion referenced means that the competency actually predicts who does well or poorly, as measured on a specific criterion or standard.” In a similar manner it was Parry (1996) who advocated that “A competency is: a cluster of related knowledge, skills and attitudes that affects a major part of one’s job (a role or responsibility), that correlates with performance on the job, that can be measured against well-accepted standards, and that can be improved via training and development.” In another study in search of competency Mirable (1997) stated that, “Competency is a knowledge, skill, ability, or characteristic associated with high performance on a job, such as problem-solving, analytical thinking, or leadership. Some definitions of a
competency include motives, beliefs and values.” Mirabile’s definition is in coordination with definitions given by Keen (1992), Spencer (1993) and Parry (1996).

Another psychologist Herling (2000) tried to define competence as, “Human Competence… is displayed within a specialized domain in the form of consistently demonstrated actions of an individual that are both minimally efficient in their execution and effective in their results.” In a sense Herling gave a point that superior performers are high in competencies and this can be observed very well!

The topic would be incomplete without mentioning Richard Boyatzis; another renowned name in the field of competencies. Boyatzis (1982) was of a similar viewpoint like Herling (2000) when he brought out, “A competency is an underlying characteristic of an individual that is causally related to effective or superior performance in a job.” The author further elaborated that competence is “an effective mix of motives, traits, skills, aspects of one’s self-image or social role, or a body of knowledge used by an individual.” Motive is termed as ‘a factor or circumstance that induces a person to act in a particular way.’ The repercussion of this definition is that the underlying traits or qualities become competencies when they are activated in particular ways.

Evarts (1987) also supported the above two by saying that a competency is “an underlying characteristic of a manager causally related to superior performance on the job.” Derous (2000) intricate the definition a step further when he mentioned that competence is “an underlying behavioral dimension or characteristic that can result in effective and/or superior individual performance, depending on context, organization, environmental factors and job-specific characteristics.” Now, after decades of research it has been proved that these underlying characteristics have a significant effect on performance and success of the
organizations; companies have started focusing on how to better understand the concept and apply the same to their people and jobs.

Out of all the definitions mentioned above and many more, the definitions by Boyatzis (1982) and Spencers (1993) have been accepted widely and are understood better as compared to others’. Nevertheless, it can be concluded that any skill, knowledge or attribute that is observable and predicts excellent performance in a given context through using appropriate pattern or cluster of actions in order to achieve “critical work functions” is known as competency. In other words competency is a relational concept as it refers to the relationship between performance and skills/capacities. Thus, it can be implied that competencies often serve as the basis for skill standards that indicate the level of knowledge, skills and abilities required for achievements in the workplace settings as well as potential measurement criteria for assessing competency attainment. It is however, crucial to understand that the competencies used by an individual for successful performance extends well beyond their knowledge and skills. For instance, as supported by Wright (1991), a director of Hay Group- “Competency has two distinct meanings. First, it can be used to indicate the areas in which a certain person is competent, that is job-related and is better termed as areas of competence. This is often referred to as a skill. Second, competence can also be referred to as dimensions that lie behind competent performance (e.g. ability to communicate and lead others with using motivational techniques). This is people-related and is referred to as competency.” Thus, competency is a wider term that includes both skill-set as well as behavioral patterns. Burgoyne (2008) seconds the concept by saying, “one of the attractions of competence is that it concerns doing and action, rather than the mere possession of knowledge. It is however, a broader concept than skill and can like wisely be thought of as encompassing knowledge, skill, understanding and
will. It may be more helpful to refer to competence as the underlying quality or characteristic and competency or competencies as the actions which are an observable reflection of the competence.” In a nutshell, the works of Wright (1991), Boyatzis (1982), and Burgoyne (2008) explains that competency is any trait or characteristic that an individual uses in appropriate way in order to gain highly-successful or exemplary performance of some kind. This could either be completion of work in the individual’s personal life or in his/her workplace setting.

Fletcher (2001) elaborates the definition further by reporting that competency can be defined on the basis of “What does organization need for further successes?” according to Fletcher, competencies are business led, measurable and fit for purpose. Fletcher’s model consists of skill, environment and customers as well. This was supported by Ulrich (2012) when he defined competency as “knowledge, skill or ability of employees relevant for organizational performance.”

Looking at all the above mentioned definitions and many more, three perspectives come forward-

1. Some researchers believed that competence is an internal personality trait that resides within the individuals (Goodstein & Davidson, 1998; Pascarella, 1999; Bass, 2000). Something like the “Great Man Theory” of leadership which states that leaders are born with some innate traits which make them effective leaders. Keeping this approach in mind it can be understood that the success of the organization depends upon those great men who are born with some traits in order to be competent. This, the most important step for efficiency and effectiveness of an organization, is to identify those people who have these traits and who do not possess the same.
2. A second group of researchers were of the opinion that competence is a set of skills or learned behavior (Bratton, 1998; Parry, 1998; Perry, 1998; Brunner, 1999). They believed that competencies are internal to the individual, but are learned over time. The researchers also tried to distinguish between skills and behaviors (Elkin, 1991; McAuley, 1994; Armstrong & Baron, 1995). Although redundant in their approach, they focused on establishing a difference between identifiable skills and patterns of behaviors. This second perspective implies that an employee will have certain desirable traits and will manage to add on the required traits with due course of time via trainings and other self-improvement techniques. The recruitment board however, needs to be careful while selecting such candidates and the management needs to take further steps in order to train and promote the employee.

3. The third perspective emphasized that competence is a standard of behavior that does not reside within the individual, but it rather is a function of how the organization performs (Krohe, 1997; Javidan, 1998; Kochanski, 1998; Pitt & Clarke, 1999). This perspective thus, used the strategic business unit/ the work group as an external benchmark of competence to an individual’s performance. This means that it is the strategic business units (SBUs) that see to the performance of an individual. However, lucrative in its approach, the method is germane to only self-sufficient business units where risk of deliverance of services can be afforded easily.

Winding up the perspectives, it can be re-iterated that Boyatzis (1982) and Spencers (1993) left a great impact on the competencies as far as the definitions are concerned. Their’s were the easiest ones when it comes to understanding level from all the perspectives!
For the present study the competencies can include an individual’s knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Criterion referenced

Criterion referenced means that the competency truly predicts who does something well or poorly, when determined on an identifiable criterion/standard. The method compares the people with clearly successful and interesting lives with those who are not so successful so that the characteristics associated with the two can be identified. The famous psychologist James (1971) quoted; the first rule for scientists should be that “a difference which makes no difference is no difference.” Thus it can be concluded, a characteristic that makes no difference in performance cannot be labeled as a competency.

Two criteria are used most frequently in competency studies. They are as under:

- **Superior Performance**: This is defined statistically as one standard deviation above average performance, roughly the level achieved by the top 1 person out of 10 in a given working situation.

- **Average Performance**: This usually means a “minimally acceptable” level of work, the lower cut off point below which an employee would not be considered competent to do the job.

It is important to distinguish the difference between the two because they have significant implications for recruitment, selection, placement and promotion of a person. For example, surface characteristics such as skill and knowledge – are generally easier to teach and develop, whereas those below the surface, viz. self concept, traits and motives are more difficult
to develop. It makes more sense to recruit or select for these competencies than to try to train people for them in the short term. Competencies at a deeper level can be taught but only in a long run by planning a number of job moves.

Top it all; competencies differ in the amount to which they can be instructed. Content knowledge and behavioural skills are easiest to teach. Altering perception, self-concept, values and motives are harder. Changing motives and traits is possible (McClelland and Winter, 1971). But, the process is lengthy, difficult and expensive. From a cost-effectiveness stand point, the rule is “higher for core motivation and traits characteristics and lower to develop knowledge and skills.” It is seen that usually the selecting bodies do the reverse: they hire on the basis of educational credentials and assume that candidates come with or can be indoctrinated with the appropriate motives and traits. But, as a matter of fact, McClelland (1973) argued that, “The grades in school and performance on standardized aptitude tests correlate with each other but do not predict successful performance in a number of professions.” Thus, it is more cost-effective to hire people with the “right stuff” (motive and traits) and train them in knowledge and skills which are needed to do the specific jobs. Or, in the words of a famous personnel director, “You can teach a turkey to climb a tree but, it is easier to hire a squirrel.”

It is however, important to understand that the competencies an individual uses for successful performance extends well beyond using only their knowledge and skills. It is a term that describes a pattern or cluster of actions taken to achieve a result.

The risk of selecting state administrative officers on the basis of surface competencies and thinking that the deeper competencies will be taught later might prove harmful to the services as the civil services need on-the-spot decision making in their daily functioning very especially in job profiles like Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM), Additional District Magistrate
(ADM) or Assistant Collector and Executive Magistrate (ACEM). Anything can happen anytime and for this people with the right set of competencies are required. As Collins (2001) puts it, “First Who... Then What. We expect that good-to-great leaders would begin by setting a new vision and strategy. We found instead that they first got the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus, and the right people in the right seats and then they figured out where to drive it. The old adage ‘People are your most important asset’ turns out to be wrong. People are not your most important asset. The right people are.”

Types of Competencies

Spencer and Spencer (1993) categorized competencies into two-

- Threshold
- Differentiating

*Threshold Competencies or Minimal Competencies*- these are the competencies that are minimally required for any job to be performed. They usually involve essential characteristics like knowledge or basic skill. They do not distinguish a superior performer from an average one. These are teachable.

*Differentiating Competencies*- also known as “competitive-edge competencies”. Differentiating competencies are present in superior performers and absent in average performers. They are hard to be taught.

Competencies have also been categorized into following three categories-

- Generic or Key Competencies
- Functional or Technical Competencies
- Leadership or Managerial Competencies
Generic of Key Competencies- are also known as global behavioral competencies. These competencies are considered essential for all staff no matter as to what role he/she is playing in the organization. Being utmost important across all levels, the generic competencies support organizational culture, desired behavior and expectations regarding employee performance.

Functional or Technical Competencies- are also known as flexible behavioral competencies. These usually vary from position to position. To put forth, these competencies are job-specific competencies. These can create unique differences between jobs.

Leadership or Managerial Competencies- are also known as “competitive-edge competencies that are level driven.” These competencies are essential for staff on managerial levels. As Boyatzis (1982) pointed out- “Selections that are based on a commonly established model of competencies create a higher probability of success and quicker ramp-up to high performance in a particular organization.”

Competencies have been further classified into:

Predictive Competency- is derived from the work of McClelland (1973), a Harvard psychologist and founder of McBer Consultancy. Predictive competencies involve testing the characteristics and aptitudes that are likely to differentiate superior performers from average ones.

Organizational Core Competencies- are identified characteristics of an organization as a whole and has nothing to do with a particular individual’s characteristics. The concept-‘organizational core competencies’ was propagated by two business academicians- Prahlad and Hamel (1990).
Core, specific and versatile competencies- Core competencies are also known as “core capabilities” or “distinctive competencies”. The concept was originally advocated by Prahalad and Hamel (1990), two business authors. According to both the investigators, a core competency is a precise factor that is central to the way the company or its employees work. The core competencies:

1. Cannot be easily imitated by the competitors.
2. Can be recycled extensively for many goods and marketplaces.
3. Must add to the advantages of the end consumers i.e. to the magnitude of the goods/assistance to its clientele.

Core competencies reflect a bottomless devotion to functioning across institutional boundaries. Specific competencies are competencies that are required additionally- over and above, or alongside - the core competencies. Mostly, because they are considered as essential and necessary by a particular type of role or may be because they are those that may be specified as 'necessary' by a particular country, according to their national regulations or laws. Versatile competencies on the other hand are the competencies that are ‘core’ to all the categories of roles (Khandwalla, 2004).

To perform the tasks/ roles that are mentioned elsewhere efficiently the administrative officers require a variety of core, specific and versatile competencies. It is important to note that rightly identified competencies determine efficiencies and effectiveness and add value to the organizations, whereas, wrongly identified competencies may dilute it.
Competency Models

Ginzberg and Volta (1981) have emphasized, “...human capital, defined as the skill, dexterity and knowledge of the population, had become the critical input that determines the rate of growth of the economy and the well-being of the population.” The competencies once identified are arranged into a systematic fashion, this then is used frequently as a model to recruit, select, promote, appraise or train the employee in a particular skill-set.

A competency model is the exact answer to the question that looks for the right kind of person who will be effective in an organization or in specific jobs. It is a ready-to-use template which is likely to help in selection, promotion, firing and design of an assignment for management developmental activities. The model informs the employees- the ways they ought to behave and the responsibilities they ought to carry to run the organisation effectively. It can easily predict success or failure of a prospect. It forms the basis of organization’s policies, systems and procedures mingled with its culture and values.

It was observed that initially most of the studies were conducted on managerial jobs. Some researchers (Mintzberg, 1973; Campbell et al, 1970; Barnard, 1938; Drucker, 1954; McGregor, 1960; Levinson, 1980; Blake & Mouton, 1964; Bray et al., 1974; Stogdill, 1974; Bass & Berger, 1979; Kotter, 1982) in context to competency models suggested that developing model precedes observations of employees, their duties and responsibilities. The researchers also explained that models of management come from systematic observation of the employees and a thorough research into the types of people in the management jobs. This takes a number of years. Nevertheless, it is important to note that developing a competency model involved rigorous planning backed by step-by-step action plan.
The present study took almost a year’s planning, 2 years of data collection backed by step-by-step revisions, another year to integrate the data and form the competency model. Initially it seemed to be an easy task but the actual implementation took years of hard work.

Relevance of the study

It is hard to find organizations, be it in public sector or corporate sector; where the staff is satisfied with their employers and happy with the work they are doing. Yuvaraj (2011) believes that in the changing scenario, competency mapping is the need of the hour. Hence, every well-managed firm must have a well defined system for the same. It is crucial to bring people into the organizations that have the skills and behaviours that top performers have, by providing consistent criteria for hiring. Nevertheless, it is noted by Dayal (2010) that the business organizations have developed by a number of approaches, practices and policies but the systems of the government have been unsuccessful to evolve. Vigorous management training courses are designed by management schools to prepare competent corporate managers. But, the competency criteria for selection of employees in state administrative services are not sufficiently and objectively explored (Cooper et al., 1998). Hence, the preparation courses in particular with the state administrative services are not so well-tailored due to the lack of clarity, documentation and/or implementation of the competency criteria for the state administrative services.

In 1991, competency assessment method was brought to use by more than 100 researchers in 24 countries (Spencer & Spencer, 2008). Regrettably, in Indian administrative services no systematic, objective and comprehensive studies of competencies were carried out till 2011. But, a national conference on human resource management towards competency-based performance management for the civil service was organized by GoI and UNDP in 2011.
GoI- UNDP (2012) brings to light that the civil reforms are now keen on developing, implementing and managing the competencies for the civil servants. The report also enlightens the readers about the initiatives taken by GoI in context to human resource development (HRD). The GoI initiative has tried to explain the context in which a civil servant in the country needs to work. The discussions and learning from the representatives of other countries as well as Tata group and success stories of the civil servants no doubt helped in developing the competencies that are required for a civil servant in India. But, even after three years of the conference (specifically organized to identify the competencies of the civil servants), the results of another study by AIMA- KPMG reports a wide gap between the competencies of the government establishments. The study was conducted in the present year (AIMA- KPMG, 2014) and mentions that the government establishments fall short on nine dimensions out of ten.

Dr. Norman Mahraj, Commissioner, Public Service Commission, once pointed out that a study undertaken by the Public Service Commission (PSC) revealed poor recruitment and selection practices as being one of the causal factors for poor performance in the public service. This is a clear indicator of the serious need for investigation on the recruitment, selection and placement of the civil servants. Somewhere deep down the line the implementation of the competencies is still missing. This can be attributed to the indiscriminate framework of the competencies that are mandatory for superior performing civil services. The competencies of a person need to be according to the context and situation he/she works in. Different states of the country have different real-life situations and serve different purposes. But, most of the public sector recruitment boards and their experts seem to be using their work experiences to locate suitable candidates from a vast pool of aspirants. A lack of sound policies and procedures or
model to screen the applicants leads to haphazard, invalid and intentionally biased selection criteria.

Nathawat and Joshi (1999), argued that the selection procedures for various jobs (public, private and service sector), here in India, though very elaborate, apparently objective and fool-proof theoretically, are not so in reality. There seems a lack of a broad vision, proper competency criteria and standardized tools and techniques with the employers, on one hand and the lack of competent and focused candidates, on the other. Therefore, it is a big challenge for the psychologists to identify the required competencies for the administrative jobs. But unfortunately, psychologists on the panel for selection of the state administrative services recruitment board are a rare instance. The more specialized job of the psychologists has been performed by the non-psychologists on the board. The interviewing procedure selects the candidates on subjectivity bases and is less valid in its approach. Moreover, if the psychologists are employed, they invariably play the role of subject experts in the panel, judging the knowledge of the candidates rather than assessing their competencies. This is due to the absence of any specific desirable competency criteria for superior/star performance. Such lack of transparency in the selection procedure and absence of proper criteria might lead to favoritism, nepotism, and cronyism. The unclear procedures later lead to favoritism and bias at the time of placement decisions. All these malpractices and lack of proper criteria in public sector employment give a great set-back to the lengthy process of hiring an employee in the government. The most serious consequence of all this mismanagement is the threat of attracting and retaining higher caliber personnel in public sector.
Armstrong (2005) from United Nations (UN) reviews that there is an agreement world-wide for the importance of revolutionizing the public sector. This shall not only strengthen the veracity but also bridge the gap between transparency and ambiguity. The accountability shall ameliorate combating corruption. Such restructuring of the public sector institutions are central to defending the public resources, improving the performance of public sector enterprises and leads to the proper coordination of development and supply of fundamental services.

The present study provides clear guidelines for the required competencies for the identified job roles of a state administrative officer rather than globalizing them. Thus, what is most significant in present scenario is- a competency model for state administrative services so that clarity about the roles an RAS officer could be gained. It also becomes necessary to identify the set of competencies that are required to play those roles efficiently.

Part second of the study was to compare the findings of the present study with those of Khandwalla’s (2004) study on corporate senior managers. Identifying the competencies of the senior managers was not the motive of the present study. It is just the corollary part of it. Nevertheless, it is an attempt to compare and contrast the roles and competencies of both the services- administrative services and the corporate sector. The corporate sector works for profit maximizations whereas; the public entities look after the welfare of the people and maintain law and order in the territory. It can be said that both the systems are independent as well as interdependent. The senior managers are the ones who lead the corporate world. The state administrative officers on the other hand lead the administrative services and manage the people of the district. Both the senior managers and the state administrative officers are important for the country in order to achieve a balance in the economy. One cannot function properly in the absence of the other. The study by Khandwalla (2004) clearly identifies and describes the roles
and competencies that are required for senior managers of the country. The study was done in a reputed institute of the nation with high profile managers. Thus it serves as an important source of information for the researcher. Other studies till date in the field do not elaborate the roles and competencies to such an extent. In other words, studies have been done on roles and competencies of managers but are not so empirical. Hence, Khandwalla’s study was chosen to be a source of comparison between the both. The systems and procedures of one can assist the systems and procedures of the other if there are any similarities in the identified roles and/ or competencies.

The study systematically and objectively explored and addressed certain basic issues for e.g. what are the competencies for the state administrative services? Do superior performers have a different set of competencies than average performers? Do entrants of the administrative services and the corporate sector need different competencies? And if so, what are those competencies? And, what are their priorities in the administrative services? What are the various types of competencies? What are “core”, “specific” and “versatile” competencies? How are they related to different roles? Is there any relation between the perceived role effectiveness and the perceived competencies? What are the methods of measuring them? Do different set of aspirants with different competencies and for different purposes apply to these two different services- corporate and administrative?

Many questions arise when thoughts about competencies come to mind. To select the right candidate for an institution like public sector is a challenge indeed! It is crucial to select someone who will direct the country rather than damage it! The present study is designed in a fashion that it answers the questions mentioned above.
Keeping all this in mind the present study was tailored to address the following basic issues:

1. What are the roles of the state administrative services?

2. What are the competencies for the state administrative services?

3. What are the competencies that differentiate the super performers from average performing state administrative officers?

4. Is there any relevance of the perceived role effectiveness and the perceived competencies?

5. How are the roles and competencies of the state administrative services different from the roles and competencies of the corporate senior managers?

The present study systematically investigates the roles that a state administrative officer performs, the competencies that are mandatory for the state administrative services and the competencies that differentiate a superior performer from an average one. It also scrutinizes the competencies of the corporate senior managers as identified by Khandwalla (2004) and compares them with those of the state administrative services.

The next chapter would elaborate the studies conducted till date in this field and make an effort to understand the methods used by various researchers as well as what competencies are identified for which profile.