Strategic Orientation of Human Resource Managers in Sri Lanka

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Preferred Stream: Stream 4 – Human Resource Management

Profile: Ajantha Dharmasiri is a doctoral candidate and a faculty member of the Postgraduate Institute of Management, University of Sri Jayewardenepura. Ajantha holds a degree in Electrical Engineering from University of Moratuwa, and an MBA with a Merit from the Postgraduate Institute of Management, University of Sri Jayewardenepura. He is the recipient of the commonwealth AMDISA doctoral scholarship for his ongoing PhD research on strategic role of Human Resources in South Asia. His research areas include strategic human resource management (SHRM), leadership and organizational behaviour. He has over a decade of working experience in diverse environments including Unilever and Nestle.
Strategic Orientation of Human Resource Managers in Sri Lanka

ABSTRACT:
Strategic orientation of HR Managers in the Sri Lankan corporate sector was the focus of this study. Strategic orientation was considered as thinking and action of a person, reflecting the long term plans of the organisation he/she works for. The objectives of the study were to investigate the relationship between the perception of senior managers and the HR Managers on the strategic orientation of HR Managers and to identify the patterns and trends emerging in relation to such perceptions. The research was carried out on a sample of 46 senior managers selected using a convenient sampling technique. A structured questionnaire consisting of two parts, one to be filled by the senior managers and the other to be filled by their respective Head of HR was administered. Validity and reliability of the structured questionnaire were established. Based on the analysis of data, a typology involving senior manager’s perception and the HR professional’s perception was formulated, with appropriate labelling of four quadrants. Two cases were selected representing, both perceptions being “high”, and both perceptions being “low”, for a qualitative investigation. Accordingly, two organizations were selected for in-depth interviews with the Head of HR, the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Finance Officer. Based on the qualitative findings, patterns emerging in relation to the strategic orientation of HR Managers were discussed in detail with recommendations for the enhancement of the strategic orientation of HR Managers.

Key Words (in alphabetical order):
HR Managers, Perception Typology, Strategic Orientation, Senior Managers

BACKGROUND

Human Resource (HR) Managers have to contribute as members of senior management teams striving towards profitable growth. A recent survey on emerging trends in HR (Ruona et al., 2003) revealed that there is much concern about HR’s absence in the “boardroom” and in organisational leadership positions. Also, the question of value addition and particularly “impact on the bottom line” has been raised (Ulrich, 1998). Bing et al. (2003) in describing the challenges to the field of HR state that “the challenge to practitioners is to move beyond a silo mentality in which solutions can only be found within HRD and to embrace a perspective that organisational problems are systemic and require systemic solutions”.

From the diverse literature, it is seen that the focus was more on the HR function in general and not on the HR professional in specific. As such, there exists a knowledge gap where senior managers’ perceptions regarding the strategic orientation of HR Managers not being adequately explored. Further, in investigating such a phenomenon, usage of a combination of quantitative as well as qualitative approaches in this research attempted to fulfil a
methodological gap. Regarding the Sri Lankan context, where sufficient attention on strategic aspects of HR has not been made, this research addresses an empirical gap, as well.

**RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Research Problem focussed here is “low perception of senior managers on the strategic orientation of HR Managers”.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In relation to the research problem, following research questions can be raised.
1. What are the possible combinations of varying degrees of perceptions of senior managers and HR Managers themselves on strategic orientation of HR Managers?
2. Why such combinations occur in relation to the diverse perceptions on strategic orientation of HR Managers?

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of the study were to:
1. Investigate the relationship between the perception of senior managers and that of the HR Managers on the strategic orientation of HR Managers.
2. Identify the patterns and trends emerging in relation to such perceptions.
3. Recommend key strategies for organizations to bridge the perceptions gap on HR Managers’ strategic orientation.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

A HR Manager can be viewed as a senior person engaged in Human Resources activities as an occupation. In other words, a manager with experience and qualifications, handling the responsibilities associated with the Human Resources function of an organisation (Dessler, 2003). In most of the corporate situations, it can be the Head of HR in various designations that can be identified as the HR professional responsible for the HR function of the respective organisation.

According to Schuler & Jackson (1987) SHRM is, “Explicitly linking HRM with strategic management processes of the organization and to emphasize coordination and congruence
among the various human resource management practices”. Wright et al. (1994) defined SHRM as, “The pattern of planned human resource deployments and activities intended to enable a firm to achieve its goals”. The definition of SHRM linking with business strategy has been given by Truss and Gratton (1994) as, “The linking of HRM with strategic goals and objectives in order to improve business performance and develop organisation culture in order to foster innovations and flexibility.” Strategic orientation refers to thinking and action of a person, reflecting the long term plans of the organisation he/she works for. It also includes the involvement in the strategy formulation, implementation and evaluation steps of the strategic decision making process (Wheelen & Hunger, 1988).

Wright et al. (2001) compared line and HR executives’ perception of HR effectiveness and found out that there is a “perception gap” between the higher self ratings given by HR executives compared to the ratings given by line executives. They further stated that this gap is highest in the strategic aspects of HR.

The strategic role of HRM can be studied from several perspectives: case studies on how business strategies can be translated through HR strategies (e.g. Golden and Ramanujam, 1985) surveys about HR manager’s or top manager’s perceptions towards HR functions (e.g. Bennet et al. 1998; Wright and Snell, 1998) surveys and case studies about how employees experience the HR functions (e.g. Guest 1997). Thus, the literature available on HRM practices is very extensive indeed, it is largely conceptual and concludes that HRM practices can help to create sustained competitive advantage, especially when they are aligned with a firm’s competitive strategy.

Ulrich (1998) proposed a conceptual model on HR roles that adds value in an increasingly complex environment, where the “Strategic partner” role is the one that focuses on aligning HR strategies and practices with business strategy. The presence of such a strategic partner role of HRM is yet to be fully explored in the East and South Asian context. (Khatri, 1999). The strategic orientation of HR has a much relevance to South Asia, where, paradoxically, the best brains and worst poverty are both present (Bhushan, 2000).

In the case of Sri Lanka, where on going ethnic conflict has retarded the economic growth, Human Resource Management has yet to be a potent force in adding strategic value to organisations. (Nanayakkara, 2003). He further shared the findings of a study, involving 47 companies in services and manufacturing sectors in Sri Lanka, overall HRM performance was below the expectation levels and the HR strategy - business strategy link was found to be the weakest.
In exploring the Sri Lankan scenario further, Dharmasiri (2004) stressed the need for conceptual competencies for the strategic role of HR professionals in Sri Lanka, in line with the findings of Yeung et al. (1994) and Rothwell (1996). Among several key HR management research done in the Sri Lankan context, the need for HR managers to understand the cultural perspective in approaching performance (Ranasighe, 1997), the strategic role HR professionals can play in improving employee commitment (Perera, 2002), strategic significance of training where HR professionals need to add value (Manuratne, 2002), how HR can contribute in creating the needed mindset for innovation in Sri Lankan organisations (Ranasinghe, 2002), HR contribution to employee involvement in enhancing organisational performance (Jayawardana, 1999) can be cited.

The study by Wright et al. (2001) in comparing the line and HR executives’ perception of HR effectiveness sheds light to in this respect. Survey responses from 44 HR and 59 line executives from 14 companies had indicated that HR executives consistently rated the function’s effectiveness higher than their line executives. Also, the highest differences were observed on the strategic aspects of HR.

With the discussion so far, the need for HR professional to have a high degree of strategic orientation is evident. At the same time, the level of his/her perception of one’s strategic orientation is of high importance. This is essentially to be aware of one’s competencies needed to play the role of a strategic partner. Also, it is important to assess the extent to which the other senior managers perceive HR professional’s strategic orientation. Accordingly, few possibilities will emerge, that can be appropriately captured with a suitable typology. This is tabulated as shown in table 1.

(Insert Table 1 somewhere here.)

**CONCEPTUAL MODEL**

Figure 1 depicts the conceptual model based on the literature review.

(Insert Figure 1 here)
METHODOLOGY

A combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches was adopted in this research. This was mainly due to the two phases involved, where the first one was more exploratory and quantitative oriented and the second one being more explanatory and qualitative in nature. The semi-structured questionnaire consisting of 24 items in two parts was adapted from Ulrich and Brockbank (2005).

Data Collection

The research was carried out in two phases. In phase 1, the semi-structured questionnaire was administered to a sample of 46 senior managers selected using a convenient sampling technique. The respondents were senior managers represented functions other than HR, who were following MBA degree program at the Postgraduate Institute of Management, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka. They were supposed to get the part 1 of the questionnaire filled by their respective HR managers, and part 2 was for them to fill.

Based on the analysis of phase 1, two organizations were selected from the two opposing quadrants of the perception matrix discussed earlier, representing a business partner and an operational player. In-depth interviews based on an interview guide, were conducted with the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Finance Officer as well as with the Head of HR. Such qualitative data were appropriately analyzed for possible patterns.

Sample Profile

Considering the above sample, there were 38 male and 8 female senior managers. Their respective HR colleagues comprised of 41 males and 5 females. In terms of these HR Managers, 17 were having more than 10 years of experience. It was also the case in terms of the type of organizations, as they were representing multinationals, local conglomerates, joint-venture organizations as well as family–owned businesses. These details are given in figures 2 and 3.

(Insert figures 2 and 3 somewhere here)

OPERATIONALISATION

With the use of close ended questions in the questionnaire to capture data in phase 1 of the research, the following steps were adopted:

1. Calculation of the average rating of each respondent for the 12 close-ended questions with 5 point Lickert scale. (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)
2. Calculation of the average rating of the corresponding HR professional using the same 12 close-ended questions.

3. Categorization of the average rating in both the above cases using a basic rule.
   \[ (0\% \text{ - } 50 \% = \text{ low}, \ 51\% \text{ - } 100\% = \text{ high}) \]

4. Calculation of the gap between the above 1\text{st} and 2\text{nd} category in terms of the perception typology.

5. Calculation of the actual percentage of each quadrant in the perception typology. In other words, what percentage comprises \textit{image builders} etc.

6. In the four categories according to the perception typology, viz. \textit{image builder}, \textit{business partner}, \textit{operational player} and \textit{individual contributor}, respective organizations were identified.

7. In that distribution of 46 organizations, one in the category of business partner, and another in the category of operational player were selected for an in-depth study.

\textbf{Testing of Validity and Reliability}

According to Babbie (1996), an indicator or measure is considered valid if it is an adequate measure of what it is supposed to represent or measure. As Sarantakos (1993) points out, validity is a methodological element not only of quantitative but also of qualitative research. Qualitative researchers try to achieve validity not through manipulation of variables, but rather through their orientation towards, and the study of, the empirical world. (Blummer, 1979 in Sarantakos, 1993). Table 2 contains such details.

(Insert Table 2 somewhere here)

As observed by Oppenheim (1992), reliability means consistency. According to Sekeran (2003), the reliability of a measure is established by testing for both consistency and stability. In quantitative research, \textit{Cronbach’s alpha} is a reliability coefficient that indicates how well the items in a set are positively co-related to one another. The closer \textit{Cronbach’s alpha} is to 1, the higher the internal consistency reliability. With regard to this study, the corresponding figure obtained by using SPSS ver. 13 was \textbf{0.83}, indicating a \textit{satisfactory} situation.

In the case of qualitative data, aspects such as \textit{coherence} (i.e. the extent to which the methods meet the goals), \textit{openness} (i.e. the degree to which the otherwise suitable methods are allowed to be used, and \textit{discourse} (i.e. the extent to which researchers are allowed to discuss the researched data and interpret them together to evaluate findings) were in focus (Bogumil & Immerfall, 1985:91 in Sarantakos, 1993: 80).
ANALYSIS OF DATA

With respect to the quantitative data analysis, based on the close ended questions administered to 46 senior managers and their respective HR colleagues, the following scenario can be observed.

(Insert figure 4 somewhere here)

The actual percentages obtained can be rounded off, to show the distribution of four different typologies as depicted in figure 5.

(Insert figure 5 somewhere here)

According to the analysis, only 2 out of 10 HR Managers are perceived both by themselves as well as their colleagues as having a high strategic orientation. This is in line with previous research findings where low strategic orientation of HR Managers, particularly a perception of such nature in the minds of other senior managers is an acute issue (Wright et al., 2001).

The data analysis also indicates that 4 out of 10 HR Managers are perceived as operational players, lacking in their strategic orientation. This is also in line with previous research findings, where a heavy burden of administration with short term focus is on the HR Managers was identified as a regular occurrence (Ulrich, 1988).

It was also interesting to note that among the 20% category of business partners, there were few multinationals and a locally owned conglomerate. In the category of 40% where HR Managers were operational players, most of the respective organizations were family owned, with local origin.

Considering the patterns obtained through open ended questions, several recurrent themes could be observed in analyzing the qualitative data. One dominant response from the senior managers in relation to the strategic orientation of their HR colleague was the low awareness of business realities. The biggest issue with the HR professional as stated by the respondents was captured as shown in table 3.

(Insert Table 3 somewhere here)
FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY ON TWO ORGANIZATIONS

The organizations selected from the two opposing quadrants of the perception matrix representing a *business partner* and an *operational player* were both of manufacturing nature. In order to maintain anonymity, the author wishes to call them, Company A and Company B.

Company A is a multinational with a European origin, having established its manufacturing operations in Sri Lanka. Company B is a family owned business group with several manufacturing sites. Both organizations cater for the construction industry, being market leaders in two different product categories.

The CEO of Company A, an expatriate was prompt in summarizing the strategic orientation of the Head of HR, in saying, “he knows what is expected of HR, and strives hard in delivering that”. The CFO endorsed such sentiments, but was expecting more contribution from his HR colleague. Salient points captured from Company A are as depicted in table 4.

(Insert Table 4 somewhere here)

CEO of Company B was lamenting on the lack of assistance he gets from his Head of HR. The depth interview revealed the apparent gap between what HR professional think is important for the organizational wellbeing, and what the CEO really expects. The CFO had a slightly different viewpoint. His major concern was the low understanding demonstrated by the Head of HR on the business decisions and realities. Salient points captured from Company B are as depicted in table 5.

(Insert Table 4 somewhere here)

In the case of Company A, the comments expressed point to a convergence where the importance and impact of strategic contribution of HR is aptly highlighted. In contrast, the respondents of Company B were of diverse viewpoints on strategic orientation of their HR professional. It is interesting to note that much of the criticism from the CEO and the CFO are pointed towards the competencies of HR professional. The author wishes to identify this as *competency deficit*.

On the other hand, the perception of the HR on his strategic orientation in Company B is more toward the lack of opportunities for involvement and contribution. This could be a
A sensible organization should focus on both these deficits in order to effectively utilize the strength of HR, for better long term results.

**Recommendations for Organizations**

As discussed earlier, the two possible types of shortcomings, viz. competency deficit and opportunity deficit need to be addressed as key priorities to effectively utilize the function of HR for strategic results.

Overcoming the **Competency Deficit**:

- Establish the required competencies for the HR professional to be a strategic partner through a competency mapping exercise.
- Subsequently, identify gaps and fill them through appropriate training interventions.

Overcoming the **Opportunity Deficit**:

- Ensure the regular participation of the HR professional in strategic decision making process.
- Recognize his/her contribution as a vital element in the face of increasing competition, and act accordingly.

Based on the findings of the study, following recommendations can be made for the organizations to reduce the perception gap on the strategic orientation of HR Managers.

1. **Strategic Involvement of HR**: Ensure that HR professional is involved in the strategic decision making process of the organization.

2. **Strategic Alignment of HR**: Ensure that HR policies and practices are aligned to the organizational strategic direction, and are reflective of organization’s long term goals.

3. **Strategic Contribution of HR**: Ensure that HR function, and particularly the Head of HR is accountable for people-related strategic matters and thus should achieved agreed targets. Quantification of targets with appropriate matrix will be a perquisite for this.

**LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The convenient sample of 46 senior managers is inadequate to generalise the findings. Hence, the study can be replicated covering a broader sample. Also, patterns emerging through the qualitative data will be more precise with the involvement of such a larger sample. In case of studying organisations representing quadrants in the perception matrix, more organisations can be included to enhance the generalisability of the findings.
CONCLUSION

The strategic orientation of the HR Managers in the Sri Lankan corporate sector was the focus of this study. Strategic orientation was considered as thinking and action of a person, reflecting the long term plans of the organisation he/she works for. As the research revealed, when both the senior managers as well as the HR professional perceive a high degree of strategic orientation of HR professional, a value-adding relationship with the top team can be maintained, resulting in HR professional becoming a business partner. In order it to happen, both competency deficit (related to HR professional) as well as opportunity deficit (related to the respective organisation) have to be adequately addressed.

It is expected that the findings will be of assistance, for both the HR Managers as well as the senior managers of any organisation, in achieving greater results with synergy.

REFERENCES


Nanayakkara G (2003), Patterns of Human Resources Practices in Sri Lanka and a Cultural Explanation, paper presented to Faculty Seminar at the Graduate School of Economics, Nagoya University, Japan.


### TABLE 1. Perception Typology of HR Professional’s Strategic Orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior Managers’ Perception of Strategic Orientation of HR Professional</th>
<th>HR Professional’s Self Assessment of one’s Strategic Orientation</th>
<th>Emerging Title</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Operational Player</td>
<td>More involvement in operational matters; perhaps loaded with administrative responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Individual Contributor</td>
<td>Deficiency in team work; more of a thinker than a doer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Image Builder</td>
<td>Deficiency in required competencies; communication acts as a cover up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Business Partner</td>
<td>Having the required personal competencies; rising up to the organizational opportunities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 2. Testing of Validity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Validity</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Method Adapted for Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Face Validity</td>
<td>Whether the instrument <em>seems to measure</em> what it is expected to measure. (Sarantakos, 1993)</td>
<td>Reviewing the contents in comparison with relevant literature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Validity</td>
<td>The items or questions included in the measuring instrument are a well balanced sample of the content domain (Oppenheim, 1992)</td>
<td>Precisely setting the questions to represent the content domain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical Validity</td>
<td>Whether a particular indicator or measure of a given variable correlate well with a different set of indicators and measures of the same variable in a consistent and predictable manner (Bryman, 1989)</td>
<td>Not attempted, as the questionnaire was not use for co-relation analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct Validity</td>
<td>Whether the instrument taps the concept as theorized. (Sekaran, 2003)</td>
<td>This was covered by adapting the contents by Ulrich &amp; Brockbank (2005).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 3. Senior Managers’ Responses on HR Managers’ Strategic Orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He/she knows HR but lacks overall business perspective.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refers to a competency gap.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He/she is aware of strategic expectations of HR but no prompt response.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refers to either lack of initiation or a deficiency in resources.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He/she acts like a loaner without contributing to team work.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearly indicates a compartmentalized approach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He/she has serious issues on credibility, and as such has lost respect among key people.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could be a deeper relationship issue or an inability to handle conflicts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey Data

### TABLE 4. Salient Points from Depth Interviews in Company A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Comments by the CEO on HR Professional’s strategic orientation</th>
<th>Comments by the CFO on HR Professional’s strategic orientation</th>
<th>Comments by Head of HR on his strategic orientation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contribution by HR professional towards formulation of organizational strategies</td>
<td>▪ Shares innovative ideas</td>
<td>▪ Showing the implications of key strategies on people</td>
<td>▪ Have the required competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Brings out HR dimension of key aspects</td>
<td>▪ Constructively critical</td>
<td>▪ Organization is providing required opportunities for the strategic involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Raises concerns on impact of people by the key strategies</td>
<td>▪ Better if he can be more analytical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution by HR professional towards implementation of organizational strategies</td>
<td>▪ Develops HR strategies in line with organizational strategies</td>
<td>▪ Obtains feedback from colleagues for HR related strategy implementation</td>
<td>▪ Challenge of obtaining other managers’ support in implementing HR strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Is prompt in getting the HR team involved in implementation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution by HR professional towards following up and progress review of organizational strategies.</td>
<td>▪ Regularly attends strategy review meetings.</td>
<td>▪ Provides important feedback for colleagues on their strategy implementation.</td>
<td>▪ Regular attention needed in effectively following up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Constructively critical.</td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Close monitoring to avoid execution failures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey Data
**TABLE 5. Salient Points from Depth Interviews in Company B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Comments by the CEO on HR Professional’s strategic orientation</th>
<th>Comments by Head of Finance on HR Professional’s strategic orientation</th>
<th>Comments by Head of HR on his strategic orientation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Contribution by HR professional towards formulation of organizational strategies | - Needs to improve on overall understanding of the business  
- Lacks original thinking | - Contribution to collective brainstorming on key strategic issues is very less. | - As the organization is “production oriented”, people matters become secondary. |
| Contribution by HR professional towards implementation of organizational strategies | - Have to push for tighter timelines.  
- Needs to be focused on the implementation of agreed strategies. | - Difficulty in reaching consensus on implementation timelines. | - Organizational culture is not conducive for HR to foster.  
- Over emphasis on quantification of results. |
| Contribution by HR professional towards following up and progress review of organizational strategies. | - Rarely attends progress review sessions  
- Always busy but value addition needs drastic improvements. | - Have to send reminders on progress review.  
- Contributions for course-corrections in less. | - No role to play by HR as most of the key decisions is of non-HR nature.  
- There is an issue with organizational priorities. |
FIGURES (5 No.s)

FIGURE 1. Conceptual Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior Managers’ Perception of Strategic Orientation</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HR Professional's Self Assessment of one’s Strategic Orientation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image Builder</td>
<td>Business Partner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational Player</td>
<td>Individual Contributor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data

FIGURE 2. HR Service of the Respondents

- More than 10 years: 37%
- Less than 2 years: 1%
- Between 2 to 5 years: 16%
- Between 5 -10 years: 46%

Source: Survey data

FIGURE 3. Business Domains of the Respondents’ Organizations

- Manufacturing: 36%
- Services: 18%
- Banking and Finance: 25%
- Marketing: 17%
- Others: 4%

Source: Survey data
FIGURE 4. Perception Typology Applied to the Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior Managers' Perception of Strategic Orientation</th>
<th>HR Professional's Self Assessment of one's Strategic Orientation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image Builder</td>
<td>Business Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational Player</td>
<td>Individual Contributor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.6%</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data.

FIGURE 5. Distribution of Four Perception Types

Source: Survey data