

Readiness of senior HR managers in global companies operating in Sri Lanka to embrace the role of strategic partner

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Many writings say that the contemporary organizations do not practice the expected Strategic Human Resources Management role though it is so vital for them to practice in gaining competitive advantages. Professor Edward E. Lawler says that in 1995 the HR Professionals were reported spending 23% of their time 'being a strategic partner' no more than that. Professor Gunapala Nanayakkara highlights, based on his research, that the HR Strategy-Business Strategy link is very weak in Sri Lankan organizations.

The study was carried out in line with four objectives to identify and analyze the current practices and their readiness of contemporary HR managers in the selected organizations. The study objectives were; (1) to investigate the *readiness of senior HR managers* in multinational companies operating in Sri Lanka by way of analyzing personal characteristics such as knowledge, competencies and experiences needed to be a successful strategic partner, (2) to explore the extent of involvement in the strategic management process *as a strategic partner* by the selected HR managers as of today that indicates potentials in the future, (3) to observe any relationship in between the personal characteristics and the involvement in the strategic management process that together will enhance the prospectus of being successful strategic partner in the future and, (4) to identify the factors that can affect the above relationship. Around 30% of the multinationals operating in Sri Lanka was selected as the sample and study was mainly a quantitative one with employing the survey method to gather data with the use of questionnaires.

Key words: Readiness, Senior managers, Strategic management process, Strategic partner role, Multinationals

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