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## **FACTORS AFFECTING JOB SATISFACTION OF NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS IN SRI LANKA MILITARY ACADEMY**

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### **Abstract**

Job satisfaction plays a significant role to retain an effective employees. Satisfied employees are adherence towards their work which lead to improve their performance. The success of an organisation is highly depends on the performance of the employees. Military service is one of the most stressful jobs which needs to perform duty at any time and at any risk situation based on the demand. Consequently, retaining productive officers in long term is one of the main challenges faced by many military organisations. Premature retirement among Non - commissioned officers (NCOs) in Sri Lankan army (SLA) is high, although SLA invest huge money for recruitment, induction, training, career development, maintenance and retention of those officers. Therefore, its effects to the operational effectiveness in the field. The purpose of the study is to investigate the factors which affect job satisfaction and to measure the level of job satisfaction among the NCOs in Sri Lanka Military Academy (SLMA). 320 Non - Commissioned officers were selected as sample of the study. Questionnaires were distributed in Sinhala language among the selected participants. A multiple linear regression analysis was carried out to analyse the collected data. The findings of the study reveal that pay, benefits, relationship with supervisor, communication are significant, where p values are less than 0.05. And also reveal that there is a positive relationship between these factors and job satisfaction. Further, respondents were dissatisfied on pay and relationship with supervisors. Management should give more attention on the factors such as pay, benefits, relationship with supervisor, over workload, work pressure and operating procedures in order to increase job satisfaction level of NCOs which lead to reduce turnover and absenteeism.

**Keywords:** Job satisfaction, Military personnel, Non - commissioned officers (NCOs) and Premature retirement

### **Introduction**

Job satisfaction is the feeling of wellbeing of employees about the job. Satisfying employees' need in an organisation is prime necessity in order to retain employees which is directly proportional to turnover and absenteeism. Thus, understanding employees' preference is important in order to satisfy their need. Apparently, the level of employees' performance and commitment towards the work are highly influenced if the employees are satisfied by the internal and external environment of the organization. Military service is one of the most stressful jobs which considered as 24 hours service. Military personnel need to perform duty at any time and at any risk situation based on the demand. Non - commissioned officers (NCOs) of Sri Lanka army play a significant role in both peace and war time. Nation's security and peace is highly dependent on the military personnel. As a result, it is needed to build a strong-armed force in order to protect and keep peace in a nation. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the preferences of military personnel to satisfy their needs. There are variety of factors that can influence on a person's job satisfaction. Some of these factors which influence among the NCOs can be mentioned as pay, benefits, promotion, job

description, training opportunities, working condition, workplace relationship, communication and rule and regulation.

### **Research Problem**

Sri Lanka Military Academy (SLMA) is the main institute of Sri Lanka Army (SLA) where the officer cadets are recruited and trained for the work forces. Non - commissioned officers (NCOs) take a vital role in order to train and support the new officer cadets, national security, counter-terrorism, protecting borders from illegal activity, peacekeeping operations and helping communities affected by natural disasters. For these reasons, SLA invest a lot of money on NCOs in terms of induction, training, career development, maintenance and retention in the military service. As per SLA annual performance report 2016, SLA invest Rs 11,880,729.00 for battalion and special infantry operation training which is Sri Lanka India joint training known as Mitra Shakti training held at regimental headquarters in Sri Lanka. Although a lot of investment, it has been experienced that premature retirement and absenteeism rate among NCOs in SLA is high. In 2017 & 2018 absenteeism rate of SLA were 6.5 % and 4.8% and it has been increased by 6.5% at present. Retaining officers in long term is one of the main challenges faced by the SLA. Consequently, job dissatisfaction has been repeatedly identified as the main reason why NCOs leave their jobs. There is a problem of attrition and the increasing dissatisfaction rate among the NCOs in SLA [5]. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a clear understanding of the factors that caused job dissatisfaction among the NCOs in SLA. The problem statement of the study is “*which are the factors affecting job satisfaction of NCOs in SLMA*”.

### **Research Question**

1. What are the factors which affect job satisfactions of non-commissioned officers?
2. What is the level of job satisfaction of non-commissioned officers?

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To determine the factors which affect job satisfaction of non-commissioned officers
2. To measure the level of job satisfaction of non-commissioned officers

### **Theoretical and Empirical Evidence**

Job satisfaction refers to an individual's general attitudes and perceptions toward his or her employment [8]. Job satisfaction can be an important predictor of work behaviours such as organizational commitment, absenteeism, turnover, and motivation and employee relation. The concept of job satisfaction is important for an organization in two reasons. Firstly, job satisfaction can be an indicator for someone's general and mental well-being. Secondly, job satisfaction leads to improve employee's performance and consequently more committed towards the organization [1]. Factors which lead to job satisfaction are salary, communication with co - workers, training and health and safety at workplace [4]. Job dissatisfaction may lead to frustration, aggression, psychological withdrawal, poor physical health and shortened the life span of employees [7]. Older personnel in the military have demonstrated a greater job satisfaction as compared to the young soldiers [7]. Indian armed forces are facing a 'battle on two fronts. First, failing to attract bright youngsters to join the forces and second, the serving officers are seeking for premature retirement [3]. Affect theory postulate that

satisfaction is determined by a discrepancy between what a person wants in a job and what he/she has in a job [6]. According to Hygiene Two Factor theory, it revealed that hygiene factors such as company policy, supervision, relationship, working conditions and salary do not create much satisfaction to employees even though these factors are present at the workplace [2].

### Methodology

The population of the study was all the non-commissioned officers working in Infantry, Support, Service and Special Forces in SLMA. The sample size of the study was 320 Non-Commissioned officers. Researchers used stratified sampling method to divide the population into separate strata based on the officers’ ranks and their units of work comparatively. In this study, the researcher has considered, job satisfaction as dependent variable which is measured through job characteristics and organisational characteristics as main indicators. And relationship, task status and extrinsic factors are considered as independent variables which are measured through pay, benefits, promotion, contingent rewards, relationship with supervisor, relationship with co-workers, operating procedures, communication, responsibilities, over workload, work pressure and training. Questionnaires were distributed in Sinhala language among all the randomly selected participants as a primary data collection of the study. Cronbach's alpha value of .867 and .796 shows that questionnaire used for job satisfaction is reliable.

### Results and Discussion

All participants were males. Out of 320 respondents, majority (46 %) of the respondents were completed ordinary level (O/L) examination and 41% were completed grade 8 examination and 13% were above the ordinary level.

### Multiple linear regression analysis

**Table 1. Coefficients of regression analysis**

Model		Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.139	.144		.963	.336
	Pay	.053	.043	.064	1.256	0.013
	Benefits	.057	.543	.763	3.313	0.048
	Promotion	.080	.046	.096	1.719	0.087
	Contingent Rewards	.342	0.56	.754	2.453	0.54
	Relationship with Supervisor	.509	.056	.509	9.074	0.000
	Relationship with co workers	.362	.058	.643	6.973	0.147
	Operating Procedures	-.067	.053	-.055	-1.256	0.210
	Communication	.148	.063	.129	2.364	0.019
	Responsibilities	.073	0.48	.478	1.468	0.054
	Over Workload	-.149	.039	-.151	-3.814	0.098
	Work pressure	-.352	.056	-.342	-4.861	0.654
	Training	.685	.047	.063	2.872	0.724

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

A multiple linear regression analysis was carried out in order to measure the significant levels and also to find out the impact of the considered factors on NCOs' Job Satisfaction. Based on the analysis, pay, benefits, relationship with supervisor, communication are significant, where p values are less than 0.05. It also revealed that how many units of job satisfaction increases for a single unit increase in each factor. Findings of the study show that 1point increases on pay, benefits, promotion, contingent rewards, relationship with supervisor, relationship with co-workers, communication, responsibilities, training correspond to .053, .057, .080, .342, .509, .362, .148, .073, and .685 increases on the job satisfaction. However, operating procedures,over workload and work pressure have a negative relationship with job satisfaction. One point increase on these factors lead to decreases job satisfaction by -.067, -.149 and -.352. Basedon this analysis, the model has developed as:

$$\text{Job satisfaction (y)} = .139 + (.053 \times \text{pay}) + (.057 \times \text{benefits}) + (.080 \times \text{promotion}) + (.342 \times \text{contingent rewards}) + (.509 \times \text{relationship with supervisor}) + (.362 \times \text{relationship with co-workers}) + (-.067 \times \text{operating procedures}) + (.148 \times \text{communication}) + (.073 \times \text{responsibilities}) + (-.149 \times \text{over workload}) + (-.352 \times \text{work pressure}) + (.685 \times \text{training})$$

### Level of job satisfaction of ncos

**Table 2. Level of job satisfaction of NCOs**

Factors	Level of satisfaction
Pay	2.10
Benefits	2.84
Promotion	3.86
Contingent Rewards	3.90
Relationship with Supervisor	1.83
Relationship with Co workers	4.97
Operating Procedures	3.46
Communication	3.13
Responsibilities	3.51
Over Workload	2.86
Work pressure	3.42
Training	3.62

According to table no. 2, findings of the study reveal that respondents were dissatisfied on pay and relationship with supervisor which fall in the range of 1.80 to 2.59 (dissatisfied). Furthermore, in Infantry unit, it is evident that only 23 officers out of 120 were satisfied with the pay. It finds from the study that 61 % of respondents were unhappy with the relationship with their supervisor in support unit. Consequently, in Service and Special Forces units, 56% and 65% of respondents shows that they were unhappy with the relationship with supervisors. Nevertheless, respondents are satisfied on promotion, contingent rewards, responsibilities, operating procedures, work pressure, training and relationship with co – workers.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of the study highlight that pay, benefits, relationship with supervisor, communication are statistically significant factors affecting job satisfaction of NCOs in SLMA. Consequently, pay, benefits, promotion, contingent rewards, relationship with supervisor, relationship with co-workers, communication, responsibilities, training have

positive relationship with the job satisfaction. It also demonstrates that officers are dissatisfied on pay and relationship with supervisor. It suggests that decision makers should give more attention on the factors such as pay, benefits, relationship with supervisor, over workload, work pressure and operating procedures in order to satisfy the need of NCOs. Management should develop strategies as implementing performance-based pay system, improving benefits and recreational programmes and building healthy work relationship at workplace. Further, researchers recommended that to organise more workshops on career development, work pressure and managing secondary duties without effecting on the primary duties.

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