

# Job Satisfaction and Organisational Commitment of Soldiers in Sri Lanka Army

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**Abstract**— *This study aimed to explore the relationships between job satisfaction and organisational commitment of the soldiers in Sri Lanka Army. Within the course of this study, it has been discovered that the main factors that create job satisfaction and organisational commitment among the military personnel of the soldiers in Sri Lanka Army are job characteristic, organisational characteristic and workers characteristics.*

*These variables tested with a questionnaire to reflect all the characteristics mentioned in the explanations of variables and mode of research was survey research method. The sample was consisting 320 military personnel have completed the questionnaire, producing a response rate of 100 per cent.*

*Data analysis revealed a positive relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, with all other variables as discussed in analysis. These results largely support the hypothesized associations between variables found in research studies derived mainly from samples of Western theoretical scenario. However, contrary to previous studies, the findings suggest that aspirations to work in a military post are associated with high job satisfaction. The main implications for military training, education and practice are that military administrators should work collaboratively to reduce the gap between theory and practice, specifically to improve the quality of military personnel experience. Positive military placement experience is related to high job satisfaction, and so, potentially, to improved retention.*

**Keywords**— Job Characteristic, Organisational Characteristic and Workers Characteristics.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Dedicated, motivated, committed, satisfied, and skilled personnel (professional) are an essential and

integrated component to any military organisation like any other organisation. No military force will succeed in its mission in the long run if it continues without professional soldiers. Failure in mission of the military force will have an impact on military personnel, their families, fellow staff, the military organisation and finally on the entire country at large. Therefore, it is crucial to understand how job satisfaction and organisational commitment affect the military personnel in a particular military force.

In relation to the job satisfaction, one cannot ignore the job dissatisfaction which has been linked to the numerous negative factors. Montgomery (2007)<sup>1</sup>, has pointed out that the job dissatisfaction may lead to frustration, aggression, psychological withdrawal, poor physical health and shortened life span. Further Montgomery was of the opinion that job dissatisfaction will lead to higher turnover, increased absenteeism, lots of grievances and decreased performance. Military members report lower levels of job satisfaction than civilians (Montgomery, 2007). It is believed that the job satisfaction is unique within the military due to inherent stress and compression associated with military work.

Commitment to an organisation is the psychological state that characterises the relationship that the organisation personnel have with the organisation. Meyer, John P, & Allen, Natalie J (1990), It is associated with three factors that of a strong belief in and acceptance of the organisation's goals and values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation, and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organisation. Committed employees take pride to be continuing as members of the organisation and believe in the goals and values of the organisation, and therefore exhibit higher levels of performance and

productivity while being a proud member of the organisation. In addition, employees who are committed to their organisations tend to be committed to the organisation and absent less often and are less likely to leave their organizations. This scenario is really an asset to the organisation as tardiness, absenteeism, and low productivity are costly for organisations, it is important for organizations to determine what variables affect organisational commitment.

## II. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The job satisfaction and organisational commitment by the soldiers are highly significant to any military organisation. It can be the personnel traits of the soldiers led to serve longer period in the SLA or it may be the commitment that they had towards their military units. On the other hand it may be obligatory issue related to the contractual bond between individual and the SLA. There is no doubt that soldiers of SLA have a very good tradition of serving longer period in their units as well as keeping them for a longer period by the SLA. None can match this position with any other military organisation. Why this has happened? Whether it is job satisfaction or/and organisational commitment of the soldiers. Long term service in a military organisation by soldiers will create professionalism among them. Professional military soldiers are assets to any military organisation especially this was proved by SLA during the recently concluded war against terrorism. Longer service of SLA soldiers in their units and ultimately in the SLA was created professionalism in the context of SLA and this was the real background for this study as it is intended to find out what contribute for longer service by personnel in SLA.

## III. RESEARCH PROBLEM

Organization setup of the military is much formal and hierarchical where the division of labour is highly professional. Military as an organisation expects military soldiers to be strongly attached to their military service and to units or regiment and to acquire professionalism as a soldier. This attachment is normally an end result of the job satisfaction and organisational commitment. This is highly important according to the prevailing situation regarding the performances and desertion problem. Desertion is still prevailing in the SLA though the war is over. This is because of the lack

of jobs, organisational and worker characteristics within the SLA and its personnel. In other hand performances are not highly and strictly evaluated those who have absorbed into the system are be in the SLA just because of the salary and other benefits In this context, problem for this study is to identify what are the factors for the job satisfaction an organizational commitment and how are they affect to the soldiers of the SLA.

## IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this research are to:

- Investigates whether job characteristics, organisation characteristics and worker characteristics are the factors that establish job satisfaction and organisational commitment of soldiers of the SLA.
- To identify the levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment of soldiers of the SLA.
- To identify the differences between the factors of job satisfaction and factors of organizational commitment within the same work environment using job, organisation and worker characteristics as three categories.

## V. HYPOTHESIS

Job characteristics, Organisational characteristics, and Worker characteristics are the factors that have created job satisfaction and/or organisational commitment among the soldiers of the Sri Lanka Army.

## VI. METHODOLOGY

Survey research method was used to conduct this study as the data has to be collected by a survey. Questionnaire was used for this purpose. The questionnaire that was prepared to collect data required for this research was based on Likert style which has five scales to measure participant's responses. The five measures are strongly agreed, agree, strongly disagree, disagree and no Idea and score of five to one was allocated on responses as follows:

**Table 1: Allocations of Scores**

Strongly Agree	Agree	No Idea	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
5 points	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point

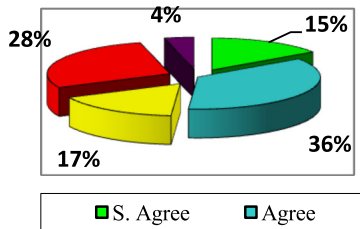
Questionnaire of the Research is focused to evaluate followings:

- Part A - General details of soldiers.
- Part B, C, D E& F - Job Satisfaction.
- Part G -Organisational Commitment.

**VII. DATA ANALYSIS**

**Job Satisfaction**

The job satisfaction was measured with the questionnaire part B which consisted 15 statements adopted from Spector(1997). Spector’s scale had 36 statements which was reduced to 15 in this research. Total responses to job satisfaction questionnaire (Part-B) are given below in following figure.



**Figure 1 : Overall Responses to Job Satisfaction.**

As per the above criteria, military personnel are highly satisfied on following issues:

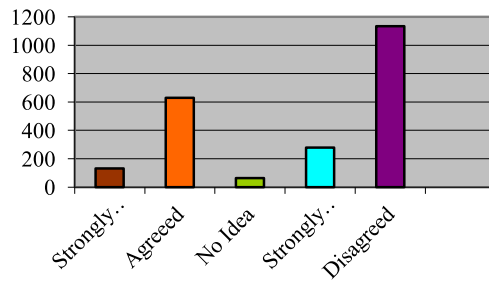
**Table 2 : Levels of Job Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction(Part-B)**

	Statement	Agreed	%	Disagreed	%
1	Job recognition	310	97	08	
2	Rules and procedures are barriers to performance	36		206	85
3	Promotion	290	91	17	
4	Capability of the Leadership	260	86	44	
5	Leadership towards	36		266	88

	subordinates				
6	Isolated within the organisation	08		310	97
7	No interest	28		192	87
8	Interaction	231	76	74	
9	Promotion on performances	231	76	74	
10	Level of Remuneration	53		233	81
11	Job appreciation	41		245	86
12	Loyalty towards the SLA	294	94	20	
13	I enjoy my co soldiers.	255	83	54	
14	Level of benefits	61		247	80
15	Relationship	310	97	08	

According to the above table, respondents have highly agreed with the job recognition, promotion, and capability of leadership, interactions, loyalty, and relationship while they have disagreed on rules and procedure, leadership towards subordinates, isolation and losing interest, remuneration, job appreciation, and level of other benefits.

**Roll Conflicts** Total responses to the roll conflicts questionnaire (Part-C) is given below in following figure.



**Figure 2 : Total Responses to Role conflicts**

More than 50 percent of disagree responses received on role conflict dimensions are given below after ranking them according to the order of highest responses.

**Table 3: Summary of Disagreement to the Statements(Part-C)**

Question	Disagree	Disagree Rank
I have to do things that should be done differently	280	1
I do things that are appropriate to be accepted by one person and not accepted by others	218	5
I work with two or more groups who operate quite differently	242	4
I receive assignments without the manpower to complete them	278	2
I receive assignments without adequate resources and material to execute them	265	3

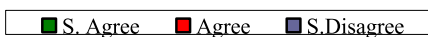
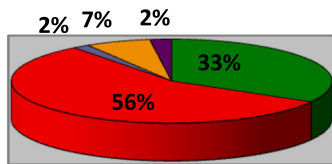
According to the above table it can be stated that there is no role conflicts on the above five dimensions among the military personnel. The two role conflict dimensions received according to the responses are given below.

**Table 4: Two Role Conflict Dimensions(Part-C)**

Statement	Agree	Agree Rank
I work on unnecessary things	290	1
I receive incompatible requests from two or more people	200	2

According to the above table, military personnel have significant role conflicts on above two dimensions.

**Role Ambiguity** According to the part D of the questionnaire, summary of responses received on role ambiguity is given below.



**Figure 3: Summary of the Answers to Part-D of the Questionnaire**

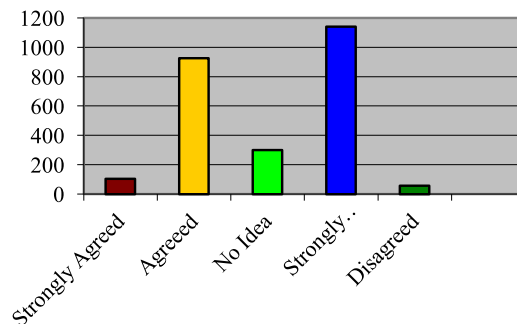
All six statements in the questionnaire (part-D) have set to measure role ambiguity. If majority of answers are agreed, then there seems to be negative role ambiguity and if majority of answers are disagreed then there is a positive role ambiguity. According to the above figure agreed responses are almost 100 percent. Further above figure indicates that the total agreed responses is 92 percent of the valid responses (without no idea) indicating that military personnel do not experience high level of role ambiguity. Details of the responses received for individual six dimensions of role ambiguity are as follows:

**Table 5: Responses to Role Ambiguity(Part D)**

Statements	Agree	Disagree
I feel certain about how much authority I have.	305	10
I have clear, planned objectives for my job.	26	17
I know that I have divided my time properly	253	15
I know what my responsibilities are.	310	8
I know exactly what is expected of me.	311	9
I receive clear explanations of what has to be done.	215	68

This table further shows that all role ambiguity dimensions have agree by majority of participants and has indicated that they do not have role ambiguity in the SLA.

**Skill Variety** Summary of responses received to part E of the questionnaire (Skill Variety) is as follows:



**Figure 4 : Summary of Responses to Skill Variety**

All eight statements in the questionnaire (part-E) have set to roll variety requirements when participants carry out their duties. If majority of

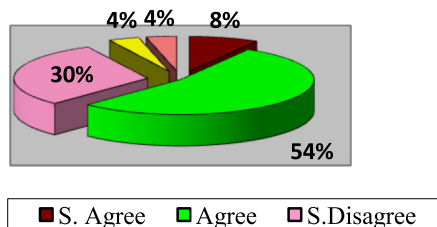
answers are agreed, then there seems to be a strong skill variety and if majority of answers are disagreed then there is no skill variety in participant's jobs. According to the above figure 53 percent of participants have disagreed with the eight statements while 47 of them have agreed with the statements. This indicates that requirement of variety of skill at the SLA is prevailing at a reasonable level of 47 percent. There are four statements which has been mostly (more than 50 percent of respondents) have disagreed. They are shown below:

**Table 6: Disagreed Skill Variety Dimensions (part E)**

Statements	Agree
The job requires me to use a number of complex or high-level skills.	225
The job is highly specialized in terms of purpose, tasks, or activities.	180
The tools, procedures, materials, and so forth used on this job are highly specialized in terms of purpose.	183
The job requires very specialized knowledge and skills.	225

This indicates that with the development of new technology, military personnel too required variety of skills. This position was very well proved by the agreeing by the majority of participants to the first two questions of the questionnaire which read as "The job requires a variety of skills" and "The job requires me to utilize a variety of different skills in order to complete the work" This is again proved that there are skill varieties are there in the SLA.

**Task Identity** According to the part F of the questionnaire, summary of responses received on task identity are given below.



**Figure 5: Overall summary of Task Identity**

Details of the responses received on task identity section of the questionnaire are given below.

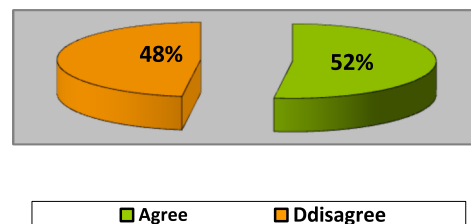
**Table 7: Valid Responses to Selected Responses(part F)**

	Statement	Agreed	%	Disagreed	%
1	The job involves completing a piece of work that has an obvious beginning and end.	245	89	31	11
2	The job is arranged so that I can do an entire piece of work from beginning to end.	238	77	71	23
3	The job provides me the chance to completely finish the pieces of work I begin	116	39	179	61
4	The job allows me to complete work I start.	157	50	156	50

According to above table the responses to statements one and two indicated that the SLA has clearly identified job tasks (89 per cent and 77 per cent of participant have agreed). According to the nature of the duties involved in military, in most occasions the soldiers who have started will not be able to complete the entire job. This situation has clearly indicated by respondents by responding 61 percent disagree and 39 percent agreement and the equal agreement and disagreement to the 4<sup>th</sup> statement.

**Organisational Commitment**

According to the part G of the questionnaire, summary of responses received on organisation commitment are given below.



**Figure 6: Summary of the Answers to Part-G of the Questionnaire**

Details of the responses received to these organisational commitment scales is give below:

**Table 8: Organisational Commitment Scores(part G)**

VII. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

	Organisational Commitment Scores	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	No idea
1	I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help the SLA be successful.	165	1108	2	12	6
3	I feel very little loyalty to the SLA	10	16	65	482	24
6	I am proud to tell others that I am part of the SLA	660	712	1	12	6
1 3	I really care about the fate of the SLA	770	400	12	80	42
1 5	Deciding to join the SLA was a definite mistake on my part	20	68	87	408	24

Table 8 gives the details of number of responses received for each statement (after adjusting the no idea responses) on relevant five statements on organisational commitment. The statement “I feel very little loyalty to the SLA” came first in the rank. 98 per cent participants (n=312) have stated that they are disagreeing with statement.

Question number one of the questionnaire part-G that of “I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help the SLA be successful” was confirmed by the 97 per cent of participant (n= 318).

Ninety two per cent (n = 312) disagreed with the statement “deciding to work for the SLA as a definite mistake on my part” which is a sign of a strong affective commitment to the SLA by participants. Eighty three per cent (n = 306) agreed, with the statement “I really care about the fate of the SLA”. Just 70 per cent of the respondents (n = 312) reported that they were proud of being a member of the SLA.

According to details given in table no five under which job satisfaction was measured it was found that the military personnel are highly satisfied on following issues. Further it was found that military personnel have highly agreed with the job recognition, promotion, and capability of leadership, interactions, loyalty, and relationship while they have disagreed on rules and procedure, leadership towards subordinates, isolation and losing interest, remuneration, job appreciation, and level of other benefits.

As participants were disagreed with the role conflict statements. All seven statements in this questionnaire based on role conflicts. In generally, majority (65 per cent) of participants was disagreeing with the statements and accordingly it has been proved that military personnel do not experience high level of role conflicts. This does not mean that there are no roles conflicts in military forces as thirty four percent of participants have disagree with the statements. This gives an indication there are role conflicts in the SLA. When there is a roll conflicts soldiers will get frustrated and they will be losing their job satisfaction as well as organisational commitments.

Part D of the questionnaire contains positive statements relevant to role ambiguity. According to responses received ninety two percent of the valid responses (without no idea) indicating that military personnel do not experience high level of role ambiguity.

According to the responses on skill variety (Part-E) analysed it was found that 53 percent of participants have disagreed with the eight statements while 47 of them have agreed with the statements. This indicates that requirement of variety of skill at the SLA is prevailing at a reasonable level of 47 per cent. There are four statements which has been mostly (more than 50 per cent of respondents) have disagreed. This indicates that with the development of new technology, military personnel too required variety of skills. This position was very well proved by the agreeing by the majority of participants to the first two questions of the questionnaire which read as “The job requires a variety of skills” and “The job requires me to utilize a variety of different skills in

order to complete the work” This is again proved that there are skill verities are there in the SLA.

According to task identity issues, it was revealed that statements one and two indicated that the SLA has clearly identified job tasks (89 per cent and 77 per cent of participant have agreed). According to the nature of the duties involved in military, in most occasions the soldiers who have started will not be able to complete the entire job. This situation has clearly indicated by respondents by responding 61 per cent disagree and 39 per cent agreement and the equal agreement and disagreement to the 4<sup>th</sup> statement.

Statements in part G of the questionnaire is based on task significance Task significance is the impact of one's work on others. People may desire to feel that they are making a significant contribution to the organization. Making a significant contribution to an organization may foster a sense of purpose and meaning. Greater perceived meaningfulness of work has been found to be associated with greater task significance. For task significance statements, eighty six percent of participants have indicated that they are fully agreeing with the statements that there is a impact o others as well as generally to the county by their work.

According to the organisational commitment analysis it is very clear that military personnel who responded (n = 320) were highly committed to the Sri Lanka Army.

This study revealed a positive relationship existing between job satisfaction and organizational commitment and job characteristics, organisational characteristics and worker characteristics. Therefore, the hypothesis of job characteristics, organisational characteristics, and worker characteristics are the factors that have created job satisfaction and/or organisational commitment among the military personnel of the Sri Lanka Army.

According to the above analysis it is very clear that military personnel who responded (n = 320) were highly committed to the Sri Lanka Army.

#### VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

As positive associations observed between the job satisfaction variables and the affective commitment

variable suggesting that the soldiers are satisfied with pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, relationship with co-workers, nature of the work and communication and they are reason as to why they serve longer period in the SLA. Therefore in order to motivate these committed soldiers, the SLA needs to take necessary action to up lift these variables in future.

As job satisfaction and affective commitment relate to soldiers attitude towards their work, duty and responsibilities, the SLA needs to introduce further encouraging them by up lifting these variables. Management skill such as general management and human resource management at scientific level should be introduced to training programmes of every officer grade at suitable level. For example from basic knowledge at the second lieutenant to advance knowledge at the Colonel level.

Sri Lanka Army needs to make the rules and procedures to suit modern technology driven environment as majority of participant were of the view that they are barriers for better job performance. SLA needs to develop leadership qualities for everybody who will play a role of a leader at any level as participants were of the view that here are problem with some leaders as to how they look at their subordinates.

The SLA should take every possible action to continue with present high level of job satisfaction and high organisational commitment along with low level of role conflict and ambiguity to be sure that the SLA will only consist with full professional military personnel.

Military trainers, educators and administrators should develop efficient strategies to create a more attractive military related professional learning environment.

#### IX. CONCLUSION

Findings in this study indicate that military personnel are generally satisfied with military service as a career choice, they are highly committed to the SLA and they experience low levels of role conflict and role ambiguity. The proposed hypotheses which are based on mainly Western scenario of theories, literature are largely supported by the findings of the present study. The

literature suggests that high level of job satisfaction is associated with high organisational commitment and low level of role conflict and ambiguity. The present study supports the literature and broadens its application to the military personnel.

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