

Abstract

The Sri Lanka Air Force (SLAF) is a large scale service organization established as Royal Ceylon Air Force on 2nd March 1951. Like any other public organization in Sri Lanka, the SLAF is also professionally designed with necessary composition of human resources to execute co competencies of the organization. The HR composition of SLAF covers skilled areas like aviation, defence, engineering, medical, admin & accounting, logistics and also low skilled professions like waiters, labors etc. The electronics technicians of the SLAF are also part of the skilled HR enlisted with higher professional & educational qualifications and trained for installation, maintenance and repairs of electronics assets of the organization.

It is the best practice of any professionally managed organization to confine skilled personnel within their field of engagement for better productivity. Traditionally the utilization of skilled manpower in the military has become different with compared to a civilian organization and the SLAF is not exempted with the concept. The skilled personnel of the SLAF contribute for duties extraneous to their primary engagements and therefore electronics technicians of the SLAF are given with non technical assignments.

The researcher joined with the electronics engineering branch of the SLAF in 1988 and it has been a debating topic that non technical assignments for electronics technicians are negatively affected for the productivity. The researcher conceptualizes the productivity of an electronics technician into two arms as efficiency and effectiveness subsequently measured by the indicators of training, experience, skill, health and number of defective modules repaired by an electronics technician per month.

The electronics technicians of three repair wings of the SLAF were taken as population subjected to the research. The research finds that 23% of the electronics technicians' working time is consumed by NTAs while having a shortage of 46% manpower. It is further found that NTAs effects negatively on local training and interrupts in gaining experiences by junior technicians while introducing unintentional workforce segmentation cornering juniors into more NTAs. The skill levels of electronics technicians are found yet to be improved as NTAs have

lowered skill levels. Point rate analysis for technicians' skill level assessment shows that 22% of the population concerned are with poor skill level. The data analysis reveals that majority of the NTAs are labour related or less paid jobs substituted by technicians with a higher salary scale stepping into a financially loosing footage. Further the NTAs are found to be negatively effected on psychological health status of electronics technicians and effect is more on senior technicians.

At the end, the researcher realizes that the productivity of the electronics technicians of the SLAF is negatively effected by non technical assignments and it is the timely need do define limitations to engage technicians on non technical assignments to increase the productivity.