

EMPIRICAL STUDY ON THE
IMPACT OF DESERTION IN THE
SRI LANKA AIR FORCE

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RJT/PGDM/2001/122

AN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO
 THE RAJARATA UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA
 IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR
 MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION IN
 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES
 RAJARATA UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA
 MIHINTHALE

March' 2003

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ABSTRACT

Desertion or absenteeism is not an unusual act in the Armed Forces or other public/private organizations throughout the world, down the centuries. But in Armed Forces, in times of war if the rate of desertion is going to be high, then there will definitely be a negative impact on war efforts as well as achievement of objectives and goals.

Unlike in most other countries, Sri Lanka had a rapid expansion of Forces and exposure to terror war. In different words, expansion of military Forces was not introduced gradually.

During the period 1990/2002 there were many complications in all three Armed Forces in recruiting of personnel, their training and putting them to war. At the same time during the period 1995 to 2002 at the height of war, in the Sri Lanka Air Force alone marks a very high percentage of desertion.

Most people had deserted Armed Forces may be due to fear of potential death or fatal injuries. But this is not the one and only cause for desertion and a proper investigation of the issue will no doubt lead to a paradoxical situation. Therefore this matter has to be given a lot of well directed thought. The study is aimed at, to find the root causes of the problem of desertion in the Sri Lanka Air Force and to recommend remedial action to minimize its incidence.

The research carried out in this regard reveals that desertion is a reaction, which is seen in an individual with low motivation. A lack of motivation causes a drop in morale, ultimately creates a lapse in the standard of discipline that finally causes a person to desert the service.

The key elements that have been identified as factors contributing to the control of this situation are better Management, correct Leadership and effective Training. Economic factors, Social problems, and Political issues which form a part of the complicated problem, will also have to be considered.

High rate of desertion in the Air Force has a negative impact in its achievement of objectives and goals. Further it is indicated that crimes in the society have also increased as a result of desertion by soldiers, sailors and airmen at large. Therefore it is required that serious attention of the government authorities, Army, Navy, Air Force authorities and the society be focused on strategies to preclude the situation.

SPECIAL NOTE

THIS RESEARCH ON THE SRI LANKA AIR FORCE DESERTERS CONSISTS OF MATERIAL AND DETAILS OF CONFIDENTIAL NATURE AND IT IS KINDLY REQUESTED THAT TO CIRCULATE THIS BOOK AMONG ASSESSING OFFICERS ONLY.

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