

**IMPACT OF THE CAREER PLATEAU OF COMMISSIONED OFFICERS ON THEIR JOB
SATISFACTION IN THE SRI LANKA ARMY**

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ABSTRACT

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Employees often begin their careers with hopes, or even expectations of climbing to the top of their chosen organization. Many employees care deeply about their career development and visualize themselves attaining increasingly greater responsibility, power, and compensation. Since organizational cultures breed a “hierarchy” among employees, successful career development is measured exclusively in terms of upward progression.

Sri Lanka Army, also being a pyramidal structured organization with an exclusively constricted apex and largely a wider base, plateauing is an issue faced by every individual commissioned officer of the Sri Lanka Army. Sri Lanka Army officers feel that their present is not progressive and their future prospects are ambiguous. In that context, Officers of the Sri Lanka Army who are entrusted with profession of arms find that continuation of upward advancement through the hierarchical ladder becomes unlikely or impossible owing to certain impediments. Alternatively, some officers achieve a level of responsibility beyond which they do not wish to grow. The latter case may generate a sense of satisfaction, but the former circumstances frequently lead to disappointment.

The state of certain instability in terms of career prospects create negative overtones on the degree of satisfaction in officer cadre. Dissatisfied officers are evidently a drawback to organizations and hence it

is important to ensure that employees are not plateaued in view of accomplishment of goals in the given institute.

Some researchers have contemplated on this very discipline of career plateauing and its resultant outcomes primarily focusing on corporate sector in the past. Yet, corresponding researches in the field of military is seldom evinced. Hence, a gap is observed in the management literature related directly to the profession of arms in relation to the Armed Forces career plateau and job satisfaction. However, no any study addresses the prevalent relationship between career plateau and its impact on the job satisfaction of commissioned officers in the Sri Lanka Army.

The purpose of this study was to empirically investigate the relationship between career plateau and job satisfaction of the commissioned officers in the Sri Lanka Army. Structural plateau is controlled by restrictions put in place due to pyramidal organisational structures which give rise to a lack of promotional opportunities related to job satisfaction.

This study adopted a mixed methodology (quantitative and qualitative research methodologies) approach in order to obtain knowledge on pragmatic grounds. Hence data collection involved both numeric information as well as textual information. Accordingly the final database represented quantitative data pertaining to the study of career plateau and job satisfaction.

In this undertaking, seven objectives could be achieved in conducting the research study and Seven research questions were answered whilst five hypotheses were formulated. Data presentation and analysis tool was Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS); correlation and regression person correlation was tested thereupon.

Five findings, twelve recommendations and few suggestions have been put forward for future researchers to do the empirical studies on the Career Plateau.