

The Post Deployment Reintegration and mental health issues of the Sri Lankan army soldiers; a situational analysis in the post conflict context of Sri Lanka.

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Abstract— This study examines the phenomenon of mental health status of the Sri Lankan Army Soldiers in the Post Deployment Reintegration stage and how their mental health status affects the self-development, professional life, family life, social life and functional level of the Army Soldier. Further, the researcher explores the existing and prevailing Post Deployment Reintegration Programs and the mental health services being adopted in the Sri Lankan Army. Also, the researcher assesses and evaluates how negative perceptions and pressures emanated from the general civil society affect the mental health status of the aforementioned Army Soldiers. The experimental design adopted for the study is Cross Sectional Research design which is of descriptive in nature. The Sri Lankan Army, being the main study area, is the population of this study. Out of such population, the researcher selected a sample of 40 soldiers with bitter experience of war from three Army Camps where purposive sampling method was applied. Primary data were gathered mainly through qualitative means including four case studies targeting lower rank Army officers.

Although the Sri Lankan Army Soldiers had faced with very strenuous, cumbersome, life threatening and tragic situations during 30 year war time, the mental health status of the Sri Lankan Army Soldiers was found to be satisfactory. Moreover, being the employer organization, the guardian and the closest relative of the soldiers and their family members, Sri Lankan Army implements a host of medical and non-medical welfare programmes to safeguard and uplift the mental health status of the Army Soldiers. On the other hand, It was evident that the civil society's positive perception towards one time martyrs is fading away gradually due to various negative behavioural patterns of some of the absent and in-service soldiers which reflect very badly on the entire civil society. In addition, labelling and stigma were also proved to be in existence among soldier community.

Keywords— Post Deployment Reintegration, Mental Health Issues, Sri Lankan Army Soldiers, Post Conflict Context

'Conflict' has many meanings in everyday life. To some it refers to behaviour or action. (Wallensteen, 2007) Deep inside every conflict lies a contradiction, something standing in the way of something else. (Galtung, 2003) This implies, why this behaviour or action occurred, throughout the history to the present era. The consequences of the conflict can be both positive and negative. Therefore, when considered the present conflict situations, humans are more concerned on how to minimize the negative impacts of the conflict. This research report brings forth such a specific aspect to the readers' attention.

The focus of this research study is to examine the mental health status of the Sri Lankan Army soldiers in the post deployment reintegration. Thus, the focal point of the study, the Sri Lankan Armed Forces consist of three main strands as; Sri Lankan Army, Sri Lankan Navy and Sri Lankan Air Force. These three Armed Forces are the three main pillars of the Sri Lankan Government Security System which is also can be considered as the backbone of such system. Accordingly, out of the three Armed Forces mentioned above, the Sri Lankan Army, being the largest Armed Force in Sri Lanka has been playing a very vital role in protecting the sovereignty of the country.

In its history of 65 years, the hardest and most precarious time the Sri Lankan Army had to undergo was to face the civil war waged by the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) in the Northern and the Eastern part of the country, for 30 years. After battling with LTTEs, the Sri Lankan Army was able to defeat and crush the rebels in May, 2009 winning all accolades to its credit. Now, according to the professional conflict analysts Sri Lanka is in the Post Conflict Stage facing unprecedented, host of challenges to be solved by the authorities in Armed Forces.

The Sri Lankan Army Forces being the main Armed Force engaged in the land based military missions during the internal conflict period of Sri Lanka, faced with various traumatic experiences. These traumatic experiences affected the Sri Lankan Army and the Sri Lankan Army soldiers in diverse ways in the post conflict context.

The researcher having understood the importance of this issue socially and nationally, gathered information first hand and in addition, collected data and other information

using other primary and secondary means and conducted a situational analysis in this Post Conflict Stage, on the Post deployment reintegration and the Mental Health status of the Sri Lankan Army soldiers.

The specific objectives of the study are as follows; to study the mental health status of the Sri Lankan Army soldiers and its impact over the Army soldier, to evaluate the family, extended family, workplace and civil society, impact over the mental health status of the Army soldiers, to reveal the mental health services provided by the Sri Lankan Army, to provide suggestions and recommendations for the improvement of the post deployment reintegration program of the Sri Lankan Army.

II. METHODOLOGY

The researcher used the descriptive research study method to explain the diverse of information collected for the research study. Further, during the data collection process, priority was given mainly to gather qualitative data.

“Health care practitioners, managers and policy-makers have increasingly turned to the qualitative methods of social inquiry used within the social sciences to enhance understanding of health services and to improve the management and provision of health services”. (Green & Thorogood, 2004) On the other hand, as it has been pointed out by Royse (1991), “The qualitative researcher seeks to understand social relationships and patterns of interaction and qualitative research is commonly regarded as being exploratory”.

The researcher was able to find that the Sri Lankan Army soldiers and the officials of the Sri Lankan Army carry various in depth perceptions, behaviour patterns, opinions and life styles which affect the mental health status and the Post Deployment Reintegration of the Sri Lankan Army soldiers. Further, the research study focused mainly on the mental health status of the soldiers, the behaviour of the other social systems related to the Army soldiers, the mental health services provided by the Sri Lankan Army for the Army soldiers.

Going by the conclusion given by Pant (2010) as “The researcher’s purpose is to study these perceptions and, thus, gain a greater insight and knowledge on the study area”. Non experimental research design was utilized throughout the study since the study will not involve a manipulation of the situation, circumstances or experiences of participants. To gather data in-depth interviews, observations, key informant interviews and case study methods were used by the researcher.

Under in-depth interviews the information gathering sections were mainly divided in to seven main topics as demographics and personal information, front line experiences, self-development, the relationship with the

family members, information related to the health, relationship with the spouse and the children, reintegration programs and the participation. Non participatory observation approach was utilized by the researcher as an observatory method during the interview. When interviewing the key Informants the questionnaire was designed considering the nature and the type of the key informant and the researchers intended study requirements. Further, four Case Studies were conducted with selected respondents to strengthen the study.

The collected data and facts were converted to meaningful information. Further, such information was sorted and studied in depth. Then, the researcher interpreted the findings and results through the calculation of averages, percentages using the SPSS statistical data analysing software. Thereafter, the findings were presented in a descriptive manner.

III. EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

The Sri Lankan Army, being the main study area, is the population of this research study. Having total man power strength of around 276,700 personnel, the Sri Lankan Army consists of 24 Regiments and Corps dispersed all around the island. The researcher selected three Army Camps as Sinha Regiment, Gemunu Watch and Panagoda Cantonment, the sample of the study.

The nature of the research study is Qualitative. Further, primary and secondary data were gathered to support this research study.

As mentioned above, to gather the primary data, 40 in depth interviews, observations (all the respondents who participate in the study), 4 case studies, 10 key informant interviews were conducted with the higher level officers of the Sri Lankan Army mainly covering the three camps mentioned above and consultant psychiatrist of the Sri Lanka Army Hospital, Colombo, and counsellors of the Sri Lankan Army hospitals.

As secondary data of the study, locally and internationally published Journal articles, publications and research reports conducted on the theme of mental health, post deployment reintegration were referred by the researcher.

IV. RESULTS

Regarding the mental health, the scholar Sreevani (2010) has quoted in her book titled “A Guide to Mental Health and Psychiatric Nursing” the definition given by The American Psychiatric Association (APA 1980) for Mental Health as, “Simultaneous success at working, loving and creating with the capacity for mature and flexible resolution of conflicts between instincts, conscience,

important other people and reality.” To explain Post Deployment Reintegration in brief, it is the stage where the Army soldiers will re-enter the family and the society from the military context.

Self-Development of the Army Soldiers were examined through their Personal, Professional, Economical and Intellectual development. As a percentage, 65 percent (26 participants) agreed that there was a Personal Development such as entering for matrimonial stage, spouse giving birth to offspring. Also, 35 percent (14) mentioned that there were no any Personal Developments in their lives for the past six months to one year. As a percentage, 80 percent (32) of the soldiers agreed that there was Professional Development and 20 percent (8) of the soldiers mentioned that they did not have any Professional Development. Regarding the Economic Development, 72.5 percent (29) of the soldiers mentioned that they had an Economic Development while 27.5 percent (11) of the soldiers said ‘No’ Economic Development in their lives. As a percentage, 50 percent (20) of the soldiers agreed that they were able to have an Intellectual Development while 50 percent (20) of the soldiers mentioned that they were unable to have an intellectual development for the past six months to one year.

As per the World Health Organization’s document titled, World Health Report 2001 – Mental health: New Understanding, New Hope, ‘10% of the people who experience traumatic events will have serious mental health problems and another 10% will develop behaviour that will hinder their ability to function effectively. The most common conditions are depression, anxiety and psychosomatic problems such as insomnia, or back and stomach aches.’

Findings	Yes	No	Sometimes	Percentage
Feeling guilty on the carried out military activities	6	29	5	15
Tobacco Consumption	6	22	12	
Alcohol Consumption	1	7	32	
Job Satisfaction	34	0	6	
Changing the Job	4	31	5	
Appreciation received by SL Army	32	1	7	
Appreciation received by Civil Society	18	5	17	

Table 1. The Responses under the categories; feeling guilty, tobacco use, alcohol use, Job satisfaction, changing jobs, appreciation received by SL Army and Civil society.

Similarly, the researcher was able to identify a set of experiences which was common among all the forty respondents. Such experiences are as; being attacked or ambushed by enemy, receiving incoming artillery, rocket or mortar fire, receiving small arms fire, shooting or directing fire at the enemy, being responsible for a death of an enemy combatant, seeing dead bodies or human remains, handling or uncovering human remains, seeing dead or seriously injured fellow soldiers, being wounded or seriously injured to himself, having a close call, shot or hit, but protective gear saving the soldier, having a buddy shot or hit near the soldier, engaging in hand to hand combat and saving the lives of civilians or soldiers.

Further, the soldiers mentioned that the military actions in which they were engaged were common, universally practiced military actions that any military around the world would face with and the strategies and the techniques adopted while being in action were always to protect the civilians and the sovereignty of Sri Lanka.

During the Humanitarian Mission, the decision makings have been directed to them daily and such decisions had been in line with the final objectives of the mission. It is visible that the decisions were always taken by the superiors and Army soldiers had only put the decisions in to action. Therefore, the soldiers mentioned that they are not feeling guilty and their performance during the Humanitarian Mission does not affect their mental health status negatively.

The researcher found that none of the respondents have a family history of psychiatric or mental illness. Further, the respondents mentioned that they had not taken any treatment for any psychiatric or mental illness prior to the deployment, throughout the deployment or in the present post deployment stage.

Further, Out of all the respondents, 67.5 percent (27) of the respondents mentioned that they had not received any medical treatments for the past six months’ time period while 32.5 percent (13) of the respondents mentioned that they had received medical treatment for various physical problems caused by battle ground induced wounds and injuries which in turn induced disability. Only one respondent mentioned that he was taking treatment for high blood pressure and cholesterol.

According to the collected data, 57.5 percent (23) of the soldiers mentioned that they were not getting aggressive in both personal and professional life matters while 42.5 percent (13) of the soldiers mentioned that they were getting aggressive. Yet, they have the ability to cope up with the aggression. When asked to explain instances of healthy coping mechanisms of the Army soldiers, they

pointed out as; keeping silent; talking to a loved one such as mother, leaving the aggression induced situation & place etc.

Out of all the respondents, 52.5 percent (21) of the soldiers have joined the Sri Lankan Army by considering it as a better job opportunity where 25 percent (10) has joined as a service for the country. Further, 15 percent (6) has joined due to the family background where the father or other relatives have previously worked or working in the military service. As a percentage, 7.5 percent (3) of the soldiers mentioned that they had joined the army because of other reasons such as passion and interest for working in the Sri Lankan Army.

Furthermore, 87.5 percent (35) of the soldiers mentioned that they were satisfied about their service since it was meant for the Sri Lankan Army and in turn, for their motherland. Also, they mentioned that they were highly satisfied with their jobs and they enjoyed with what they were doing. Apart from that it was found that they were confident and happy for working in the Sri Lankan Army. In the meantime, 12.5 percent (5) of the soldiers mentioned that they were satisfied sometimes about their service for the country and for the Sri Lankan Army.

Adding the above fact, 60 percent of respondents (24) mentioned that they had a very good relationship with their friends while 37.5 percent of the soldiers (15) mentioned that their relationship was good with the friends. Further, 2.5 percent (1) agreed that to a certain extent, their relationship with friends was good.

Through the in-depth interviews and the key informant interviews conducted, the researcher found that the Sri Lankan Army does not conduct a Mental Health Screening Process for the new recruitments; the Army Soldiers do not take part in a Mental Health Screening Process during the Pre deployment stage, Deployment stage and even in the Post deployment times. Thus, a writer to The New York Times, James DAO states in his online article Military Study find Benefits in Mental Health Screening had pointed out that, "Soldiers who were screened for mental health problems before deploying to Iraq were less likely to report suicidal thoughts, be evacuated for mental health reasons or require care for combat stress."

During the study, the researcher drew the attention on the Basic Recruitment Training (BRT) of the Sri Lankan Army which is yet another important aspect of Professional Life. According to the findings gathered from the respondents, they believe that the Sri Lankan Army procedures are somewhat different to the better from those of the other Militaries around the world. As per the BRT given by the Sri Lankan Army, soldiers undergo an initial training

program for four to six months' time. Then, thereafter, upon the deployment to a particular Unit, the soldiers receive a fourteen days Unit specific training. The BRT which is been carried out by the Sri Lankan Army is very effective as it shapes up an Army soldier enabling them to face the military setting. Furthermore, it builds up the coping skills, emotional control, personality, self-esteem and the patience of the Army Soldier. Apart from that, this training imparts knowledge on civil administration to while contributing positively for the mental health of soldiers. According to the soldiers, the BRT provides a strong footing to the soldiers to get the basic shaping to fit for the Military Profession. Though the BRT does not include programs or activities specifically targeting the mental health status of the soldiers, the soldiers mentioned that BRT addresses the mental health aspects too. Due to the intense qualities of the BRT, the individuals who are unable to cope up with the BRT leaves the Sri Lankan Army during this four to six months' time period. Therefore, the BRT is very important since everything in a soldier's life will depend on such an acute training.

During the deployment of the soldiers in the conflict, the family members were anxious about the soldiers' lives and it was a very stressful time period for both parties considering the repercussions of the war. Soldiers further noted that the wives were very cooperative during the deployment time period and also, during this post deployment reintegration time period during which this study was conducted. Though it was difficult for the Army Soldiers to communicate with the families during the deployment, both parties had the mutual understanding about their relationship and about the very nature of the military profession. Therefore, they managed to continue with their relationship strongly and in a very stable condition. They also mentioned that the high ranking officers gave them the maximum opportunity to have contacts with the family members and if there was any urgent need, the soldiers were given the opportunity to visit the family members as well. Adding to the facts mentioned above, the respondents stated that, in the post deployment reintegration also they were able to maintain a healthy relationship with their families due to the mutual understanding of both parties. The researcher was also unearthed that most of the soldiers and their wives had the healthy problem solving skills to overcome diverse of their day to day problems. Further, if a third party intervention was needed such as counselling or legal support, the Sri Lankan Army had provided those needed services for the Army soldiers and their family members too. In the present post conflict context, they have the ability to spend more time with their family members.

In the post deployment reintegration, most of the Army soldiers incline to give more attention to their children to

strengthen those relationships by spending more time with them, taking them to school, attending to children's school home-work, playing with the children etc. Such behaviour patterns of soldiers have helped to strengthen the relationship between the father and the offspring immensely. Also, this has resulted in uplifting the mental health status of the Army soldiers in the post deployment reintegration.

The Army soldiers were hopeful and had plans about their future which was mostly related to family members such as providing a good education to their children and groom the children to be good citizens, building or complete building of their homes, complete the Army soldiers' education related programs etc. Furthermore, the soldiers those who were going on retirement mentioned that they were planning to start businesses, find new job opportunities; fly abroad for income generation etc.

As a percentage, 77.5 percent (31) of the soldiers agreed that their relationship with the extended family members was very good while 22.5 percent of the soldiers (9) mentioned that their relationship was good with the extended family members. Further, 75 percent of the respondents (30) mentioned that the Army soldiers had the ability and capacity to provide support for the extended family members. In the meantime, 25 percent of the soldiers (10) mentioned that to a certain extent they were providing support and had the ability and capacity to support their extended family. Also, it was visible that some extended families were living close to the soldier's family or living with the soldier and his family, visit the extended families either weekly or monthly, provide financial support to the parents and taking care of the elderly relatives providing medical needs as well. In the Asian context, extended family has both positive and negative influences for a nuclear family.

As a percentage, 45 percent of the respondents (18) mentioned that they were satisfied with the appreciation they received from the civil society while 42.5 percent of the respondents (17) mentioned that they were somewhat satisfied in that regard. Further, 12.5 percent of the soldiers (5) mentioned that they were not satisfied with the civil society appreciation. As a whole, all the respondents agreed that the respect and the appreciation they receive from the civil society is reducing gradually as now the conflicting experience is fading away. Adding further, the respondents also mentioned that the unaccepted behaviour of some handful of Army Soldiers has induced this situation among the civil society.

Further, the gathered information signalled the following important facts as well. The Army soldiers are in the post deployment reintegration where they will not be engaged

in any specific military activities or missions. But, the Government of Sri Lanka and the Ministry of Defense have allocated a huge amount of funds in the annual Sri Lankan budget under military expenditure. Due to the facts mentioned above, the civil society believes that the Sri Lankan Army is not engaging in any productive work and they have simply become a burden to the society.

When analysed these information, it was visible that this situation is creating negative image in the Army soldiers' mental health status. The Army Soldiers mentioned that this situation reduced the motivation of the Army Soldier since it affected the self-esteem, dignity and enthusiasm.

All the respondents mentioned that they had both civil and workstation category of friends. Some also mentioned that they preferred to have friends from the civil society since they do not need to talk about the official or the military activities with such civil society members.

The other point the researcher examined is about the status of Army Soldiers entering to matrimonial state, which is the basic system of the society. As a percentage, 97.5 percent of the Sri Lankan Army soldiers (39) participated for the research study is married while 2.5 percent (1) of the soldiers are unmarried. Further, 67.5 percent (27) of the soldiers got married before the year 2009 where the conflict was ended. On the other hand, 30 percent (12) got married after the year 2009. Also, 2.5 percent of the soldiers (1) are not yet married. Marriage being the basic social system or the unit of the society, it was visible that all the Army soldiers are related to and they directly experience this social system.

As a percentage, 82.5 percent of the soldiers (33) mentioned that it is important that the Sri Lankan Army should introduce the mental health related programs while 7.5 percent of the soldiers (3) mentioned that it is not that much important. Further, 10 percent of the soldiers (4) had no opinion over the question. Responding further on this matter the soldiers mentioned that at present, Sri Lankan Army has several programs such as; religious programs; meditation sessions, programs of observing skill targeting stress management. In addition, the Army Hospital conducted awareness programs, vocational training, development courses, counseling courses, positive thinking courses, family therapy sessions etc. for the benefit of the soldiers. Furthermore, accessibility for the mental health services inside the Sri Lankan Army has been improved vastly.

Yet, as a whole, the respondents agreed that it was also important to upgrade the existing mental health related programs in the Sri Lankan Army. Further, stigma and labelling towards mental health should be reduced in the

Sri Lankan Army since stigma and labelling is the main impediment for the mental health services to be improved in the Sri Lankan Army. Further, it is also a good reason for Army soldiers to be reluctant to receive the benefits of these services.

At the end of the internal conflict in the year 2009, 50 percent of the soldiers (20) mentioned that they were deployed for another camp setting, and 22.5 percent of the soldiers (9) mentioned that they were sent on official leave. As a proportion, 22.5 percent of the soldiers (9) mentioned that they remained in the front line and engaged in the clearing activities while 5 percent of the soldiers (2) mentioned that they engaged in a Post Deployment Reintegration Program. However, as commented by the respondents, the Post Deployment Reintegration Programs carried out by the Sri Lankan Army are not accurately organized and such programs are not provided for all the Army soldiers too.

Responding further in this regard, 80 percent of the soldiers (32) mentioned that they preferred a Post Deployment Reintegration Program and they were of the opinion that it is important to have a Post Deployment Reintegration Program in the Sri Lankan Army for all the Army Soldiers. Meanwhile, 10 percent of the soldiers (4) mentioned that they were not in need of a Post Deployment Reintegration Program. On the other hand, 10 percent of the soldiers (4) mentioned that they had no opinion about it.

Furthermore, the respondents suggested that a Post Deployment Reintegration Program should be provided for the absent soldiers of the Sri Lankan Army. Also, they believe it is not a prudent decision to enroll the absent soldiers again for the Sri Lankan Army. Yet, the absent soldiers should be provided with a proper Reintegration Program since it would help them to reintegrate with the society and family successfully.

V. DISCUSSION

Out of all the respondents, it was visible that the four main development areas of an individual, such as Personal Development, Professional Development, Economic Development and Intellectual Development were above 50 percent which depicts a satisfactory self-development of the Army soldiers.

Yet, it is visible that the soldiers tried to get the coverage of certain believes and used the same as a shield to safeguard their mental health status from being harmed by their commissions in actions in the battle ground. The researcher felt that, the soldiers are using psychological defense mechanisms such as Repression and Denial.

As it has been pointed out by Grohol (2007) in the Online Article 15 Common Defense Mechanisms, 'Repression is the unconscious blocking of unacceptable thoughts feelings and impulses. The key to repression is that people do it unconsciously...' The researcher believed the defense mechanisms are used as coping mechanism of various traumatic experiences that the soldiers have faced during the deployment. Use of defense mechanism is good, yet it is important to introduce healthy defense mechanism for the soldiers to be more productive in their lives. Further, when examined the alcohol consumption and the tobacco use of the Army soldiers, it is visible that none smokers are high in smoking category while occasional drinkers are high in drinking category in the Sri Lankan Army.

When considering the global context and similar Military Post Deployments around the world, generally, the military personnel prefer to change their profession once they are in the Post Deployment Reintegration. As it has been pointed out by the scholars that is due to one or more of the following reasons as; excessive workplace burnout, dissatisfaction on the assigned duties and responsibilities at the cantonment setting which are not relating to military activities, dissatisfaction towards his/her performance rendered to the employer and the workstation and the poor mental health status. Such situation is not visible among the Sri Lankan Army personnel at all. As the researcher was appraised of by the participants with proofs, this is due to reasons such as; the Army soldiers' commitment to the employer, the country and their fellow citizens, self-esteem and bondage and respect towards the profession, the opportunities, benefits and perquisites provided by the employer. When matched this sort of characteristics and behaviour patterns with those of the global situations, it is quite obvious that Sri Lankan condition is in contrary to global situations.

Through the gathered details, it was proven that the extended families of the Sri Lankan Army soldiers have a satisfactory relationship where it provides a moral support, sense of security, belongingness, helpfulness for the Army soldier and for his family. This affects positively the mental health status of the Army soldier which helped them perform their duties in the field.

Furthermore, the statistics imply that the civil society perception towards the Sri Lankan Army soldier is satisfactory, showing that civil society members are eager to have bondages with the soldiers. The Army soldiers are social being those who have the ability to maintain good social relationships. Most of the Army soldiers have entered the matrimonial status and they are experiencing the basic social system 'Family'. It further signifies the social system perception toward the Army soldiers and Sri

Lankan Army in general. Further, it was found that the civil society has not stigmatized or labelled the Role of the Army soldier in a negative way. Further, it also depicts the employee friendly initiatives the GoSL and the Sri Lankan Army are practicing toward the Army soldiers, unlike the LTTE leadership towards the LTTE combatants where their carders had been prohibited to have such connections. Therefore, these factors have contributed positively to the Army Soldiers to enter the matrimonial stage easily.

Though the Army soldiers received respect and appreciation from the civil society it is gradually decreasing and there is an increase of negative perceptions among the civil society. Therefore, these negative perceptions of the civil society should be positively addressed by the Sri Lankan Army.

Hence, the Post Deployment Reintegration programs should focus on stimulating the Army Soldiers since it will support and benefit to decrease memories of the war and on the other hand it will inspire the soldiers. It was also observable that the mentalities of the soldiers are still war or conflict oriented. In addition, it was proved that a structured Post Deployment Reintegration Program is important for the Sri Lankan Army Soldiers and for the soldiers those who have absconded from the Sri Lankan Army.

VI.CONCLUSION

As a whole, the researcher found that the mental health status of the Sri Lankan Army Soldiers in the Post Deployment Reintegration is satisfactory. To achieve such status, their organization the Sri Lankan Army and the closely knitted family members of the relevant soldiers have provided a genuine support, during the pre-deployment, deployment and post deployment reintegration. Yet, the civil society positive perception about the Army soldiers is fading away little by little and due to change of attitudes of the general public towards the Sri Lankan Army.

Labelling and stigma towards mental health prevails among the Sri Lankan Army soldiers. Therefore, this situation discourages the Army soldiers to seek support and services related to mental health. Further, seeking mental health services hinder the chances of aspiring higher career goals in Sri Lankan Army which again discourages the Army soldiers to seek support and services.

Additionally, the findings validated during the recruitment, pre deployments, during the mission deployments or post deployments standard Mental Health Screening Procedures are not utilized. Accordingly, only a set of Army soldiers have received a structured Post Deployment

Reintegration Program. Further, burnout in the professional setting is at a rise where the effectiveness of the Army Soldiers threatened since they are in the fashion of not taking at least the assigned leaves being workaholic. Furthermore, it was visible that there is a correlation between the level of education of the Army soldier and the coping ability for mental health related issues. This situation leads where the Army soldiers are utilizing negative coping mechanisms to face the mental health issues frequently.

Further, the Army soldiers those who are coming under the disability category are dissatisfied on the provided attention and benefits to them and their family members. Further, the Army Soldiers those who are retiring from the Sri Lankan Army after a successful professional life is anxious since their skill development is less where it will be difficult for them to find respectable income generation activities upon their retirement. Accordingly, the mental health status of the Army Soldiers in the Post Deployment stage are being affected due to the mentioned above findings.

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