

ABSTRACT

The role of Sri Lanka Army Electrical and Mechanical Engineering (SLEME) is to ensure the operational fitness of the electrical, mechanical, electronic and optical equipments of the Army. Sri Lanka Army is tasked and entrusted with the responsibility of defending the mother Land from all forms of internal and external threats. Therefore, it is of paramount importance that each element of the Army is properly organized and function with maximum efficiency. Success of modern war to a greater degree is depending on the use of sophisticated military hardware. Technology and the technical expertise are essential ingredients for the successes in the present battle-field. SLEME is responsible to provide technical expertise to maintain all types of equipment fleet in the Sri Lanka Army

SLEME need technical competency-technical knowledge, technical skill and positive attitudes to carry out its tasks effectively. Sri Lanka Army has undergone a very eventful period due to the internal conflicts and changes taken place in every quarter of the Army. Responsibilities of SLEME increased in many folds to cater for the needs of the formations in the combat and effectiveness of SLEME is largely depended on the technical expertise of the tradesmen.

SLEME could not adhere to effective recruitment policy because there were no technically qualified people joining the Army. SLEME had to fill the HR gaps through available HR resources. Recruited people also had no technical knowledge and technical skills. Due to heavy technical commitment of the Army, SLEME could not even find time to provide better technical training to its tradesmen and engage in

human resources development functions. This very strongly affected to the competency development among SLEME personnel.

To provide a quality technical support to the Army, SLEME personnel must have technical competency. The research is based on the exploration of factors lead to the technical competency of SLEME and to find an effective framework to enhance the technical competency.

Development of competency is an essential requirement in human resource management. If HR functions are more effective, it will tend to enhance the competency. Modern HR management is concerned with the competency based HR functions. Various human resource functions can be developed into one integrated system and can be developed around competency. Therefore the research has given more emphasis to analyze the HR practices of SLEME with the technical competency.

Excessive technical requirements, difficulty to cope up with fast changes in technology, inability to recruit and retain professionals with the worsening war situation were the major difficulties of SLEME. However, SLEME still managed to fulfill its role and tasks to provide the technical support needed by the troops in the field. If it is possible to increase the technical competency, it will be an added advantage to improve SLEME's productivity.