ABSTRACT

Sri Lanka Navy (SLN) at many levels requires naval personnel to use information and communication technology (ICT) systems to improve the quality of its operations. By the rapid changes in ICT, new literacy such as computer literacy (CL) has been brought up. To be competent naval personnel in this information-based world, they should be aware of ways to access information and actively making use of it to make correct decisions. These qualities are achievable if they get familiar with new technologies and be computer literate so that all naval personnel be able to practice well balanced cohesive naval operations.

There is no research evidence in CL skills of naval personnel, and it is unclear what skills they actually need. Officer cadets or sailor recruits enlisted/recruited to SLN with differed individual, demographic & technological qualifications are exposed to work in a differed organisational setting that may affect their CL.

It is seen that despite reasonable initiatives taken to provide CL training, majority of naval personnel require IT staff to accomplish even a minor computer oriented task. IT department is overwhelmed with requests for IT sailors to be attached to various offices, which later revealed them to be performing routine computer work. This scenario has made IT staff to be a scarce resource in SLN.

Therefore, this study set out to determine the CL level among regular naval force (RNF) sailors and to examine the factors affecting CL among RNF sailors in SLN.

A correlational & hypothesis testing research design was adopted. A questionnaire was administered to 105 sailors where disproportionate stratified random sampling technique adopted to select heterogeneous aggregate of RNF sailors.

This study has shown that the CL level among RNF sailors was "moderate". It was found that "attitudes towards computers" is the most affecting individual factor of CL. The result also showed that "SLN wide ICT strategy" is the most associated organizational factor of CL.

The evidence from this study suggests that SLN is required undertaking measures to enhance CL affected by "attitudes towards computers" and lack of "SLN wide ICT strategy" thus integrate measures for improving CL into its strategic plan and develop clear IT policy.