Summary

‘Old soldiers never die they only fade away’
- Anonymous

In this part of research report a ‘Soldier’s five’\(^1\) of research work undertaken so far is being presented for effortless & quick grasp of the process, procedure & outcomes.

Whole commitment to duty, exemplary discipline and high integrity, fit to be en suite anywhere, physically fit, for them national pride above everything etc. are few sobriquet with which an exclusive class of citizens are decorated with, simply known as ‘Indian Soldier’. This soldier when separated from beloved military institution turns into an Ex-servicemen. In simplest terms a person who draws his or her pension from consolidated fund of India is known as Ex-serviceman. The predicament of adjustment, wellbeing (psychological distress), gainful re-employment, quality of life, satisfaction and quality of life expected while joining the Indian army and host of other issues tend to interfere with their life when they enter into civilian set up.

Military rank is the professional identifier and one of the important hierarchical rung which clearly defines the leadership role and quantum of responsibility for ‘its’ holder. These soldiers carry their hard earned rank with them when they separate from military service. By virtue of high importance of military rank in soldier’s life, it is bound to have differentiating effect on its holder’s behaviour. Time is the another important aspect which has emerged an important player in the adjustment, psychological distress, achievements in civil life, quality of

\(^1\)“Soldier’s five is a phrase meaning ‘a quick brief on a subject.’ It might have originated from ‘A soldier’s five minute instruction or lesson” (Anonymous).
life, overall satisfaction, and quality of life expected while joining the Indian army. An honest attempt in the form of present study has been made to explore the impact of above said variables on the post retired life of army ESM (NCO).

Adjustment means, “Those types of relationships which involve the accommodation of the individual to circumstances in his environment for the satisfaction of his needs or motives” (Medical Dictionary, 1998).

The operational definition of adjustment in respect of present study is the ability of effective and successful self integration with almost all components of civil society with highest satisfaction and acceptable standards of living. Maladjustment entails maladaptive behaviour (Verma, 2016). ESM are required to be psychosocially prepared well in-advance for forthcoming important stage of their life. The advance preparedness plays a decisive role in motivating individuals (Gupta, 2014). The advance preparedness will absorb the shocks of transitional jolts and subsequently make the adjustment smooth. The gullible ESM unaware of the jolts engendered by the civilian set up feels the heat resulting in adjustment, psychological distress and other multitude of problems. In addition to these factors there are few other components of adjustment which play crucial role in transition process, some of them includes; traumatic experience/s, severe physical injury, (military) dialect, (battle) readiness stance, punctuality, and interpersonal relations etc. The review of literature vindicated our stance that ESM face adjustment related difficulties in their transitional process.

When the retired soldiers return to their home they return with psychological imprints of their service life. These cognitive imprints may be of different nature and have different connotations on the cognitive character of the ESM. Bulks of evidence suggest that wellbeing (psychological distress) have significant role to play in the post retired life of ESM. In the present study the concept of general wellbeing is restricted to the threshold of psychological distress which is the most important
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contributing factor for general wellbeing. The wellbeing features which comes embedded with soldiers’ psych includes psychological fatigue, distress, depression, Alcohol Dependency Syndrome, anxiety, and combat stress (Max Pemberton, 2012). These features tend to interfere negatively with adjustment process, gainful achievements, quality of life and overall satisfaction.

Achievement in civil life is another important aspect of post retired life of ESM. It can be operationally defined as gainful re-employment with higher job satisfaction. Indian soldiers retire at relatively younger age when they have load-full of different kind of responsibilities. Retirement, an inevitable phenomenon (compulsory at younger age for soldiers), depletes the financial resources considerably which is known to affect the health, life satisfaction, and family life adversely (Menaghan and Merves, 1984; Williams and Johansen, 1985).

The other measures having considerable effect on the civil life of ESM has been assessed in the present study are ‘present quality of life’, ‘quality of life expected while joining the Indian army’, ‘overall satisfaction’ and ‘self perceived resources and demands’. Owing to their significance they have composite effect on the post retired life of ESM. Additionally it has been attempted to understand the differentiation effect of the ‘Rank and Time’ on the above discussed behavioural measures of ESM.

The literature reviewed details the difficulties in relation to measured variables faced by the ESM irrespective of their geographical location. Interestingly soldiers of the world, irrespective of their resources and demands, face more or less similar adjustment and wellbeing (psychological distress) related difficulties. The military cultures worldwide by their exclusive characters have significant lifelong influence (consciously/unconsciously) on the fragile psyche of human being. Evidence from studies indicate that the prime objective of military is ‘management of violence’ to one’s advantage which differentiates military’s human resources
(soldiers) from the general human beings (civilians). The general human beings are inducted into military for specific purpose and for specific period. At the end of prescribed time period when military trained soldiers separates and try to assimilate with their civilian counterparts (necessary social requirement) they find it little odd. The nerves get unsettled when they step into it resulting in scattering of behaviour.

There was clear gap in regard to empirical studies, the review is heavily skewed in favour of officers. Further, interesting studies during the transition were also lacking.

**Objectives**

The major objectives of study are

1. To assess the phenomenon of adjustment, psychological distress and achievements in civil life in the Indian set up since the demands and resources are, by and large, local rather global.

2. To verify whether retired Junior Commissioned Officers (Subedar Major, Subedar, and Naib Subedar) and Other_ranks (Havildars and below) are experiencing the similar problems in adjusting with the retirement and ensuing outcomes.

3. To trace the time lagged process of post retirement adjustment in various fields of life during the first year and also to tap the clustering of psychological variables across the time phases.

**Hypotheses**

1. There would be significant difference between the JCOs and Other_ranks on the dependent variables {post retired general wellbeing (psychological distress), adjustment and achievements}, which may be moderated by personal resources and demands quotient.
2. There would be significant effect of time period on the dependent measures, which may also be moderated by personal resources and demands quotient.

3. The effect of rank on dependent variables may be affected by time periods over a year, i.e. a significant interaction between rank and time period. It may also have demand/resources quotient as a significant covariate.

To achieve the objectives of the study, a $2 \times 3$ repeated measure design was applied. A total of 150 {75 JCOs (dropout 13) and 75 (dropout 7) Other ranks} were selected and assigned into two groups on the basis of military rank they held at the time of separation from service. Group I consisted of JCOs and Group II consisted of Other ranks.

General Adjustment Scale Form A was used for assessing the six components of adjustment. General Health Questionnaire-12 was used to assess the wellbeing (psychological distress). Self devised achievements in civil life performa, resources and demands matrix, semi-structured questionnaire and MS Excel supported demand calculator was used to assess the respective measures. Additionally, demographic and personal background information was collected from each subject. To remain relevant and academically economical the resources and demands were converted into singular parameter which has been christened as $\text{Resdmd}_\text{Quo}$ (Resource demand quotient). It was calculated by dividing the $\text{Resources}$ by $\text{Demands}$ and multiplying by 100. The score was used in data analysis as a covariate. If calculated $\text{Resdmd}_\text{Quo}$ score is $>100$, ESM is resource surplus and if $<100$ ESM is demand surplus. The statistical inferences were arrived at by repeated measure ANOVA & ANCOVA and one way ANOVA & ANCOVA, Correlation, Chi square and Factor analysis. Data were interpreted in the backdrop of objectives and hypotheses with broad discussion in context of reviewed literature.
Major Findings of the present study

The ex-soldier faces more or less similar predicament across the globe as soon as he hangs up his uniform for greener pastures. Hence, ex-soldiers face difficulty in transition.

The present study variables were analysed in twin format i.e. with & without covariate. The GAS test manual says that higher the means score on adjustment components the poorer the adjustment. Similarly, the GHQ manual also indicates that higher the score, severe the psychological distress and subsequently poorer the wellbeing. The measure of psychological distress is crucial in deciding the present position and future outcomes. Evidences suggest that psychophysically healthy ESM are likely to have easier and better adjustment with substantial achievements in civil life. The present study reveals that the six adjustment components have significant effect on different combination of military ‘Rank’ over time. Across time the means scores for both the ranks exhibits down ward trend, an indicator of improvement in adjustment in due course of time. The drop in means scores is mainly attributed to quality-cum-longer association with family members resulting in fulfillment of all the three basic needs at required intervals, recognition of self-worth away from unyielding orders & commands, reduction in professional strain in context to performance, emotional realization, psychological relaxation and regular social association. However, even after introduction of Resdmd_Quo as covariate the findings remain statistically significant. There was no departure in statistically significance by introducing covariate in the analysis, it can be interpreted that the resources and demands of individuals have little meaning as far as the measured behavioural components are concerned.

1. The Rank made a significant effect on all six adjustment measures, Present QoL, QoL Expected While Joining the Indian Army, Achievements in civil life and Psychological distress, whereas, it did not have significant effect on ‘Overall satisfaction level’.
2. The time period after the immediate retirement is crucial in transitory phase as 28% JCOs and 41.33% Other ranks faced difficulty in transition; therefore the effect of Time on both the Ranks on Health, Family, Occupational, Sexual, and Social Adjustment and Psychological distress is statistically significant. Post-retirement ‘Time’ is inversely proportional to adjustment & psychological distress. It means longer the post retirement period better the adjustment and lower the psychological distress.

3. Resources and Demands of an ESM plays significant role on psychological distress but not on adjustment. The results construe that psychological distress of both the ranks has significant relation with the Resdmd_Quo.

4. The interaction of ‘Time and Rank’ exerted a significant effect on Family, Occupational, and Social adjustments on both the ranks.

5. Over 93.33% of sampled JCOs and 97.33% Other ranks faced covert or overt social discrimination in transitional phase as well as civil life, which is a reprehensible act.

6. The present study reveals that the ‘Rank’ has significant effect on the Achievements in Civil Life measure. The retired soldiers are known to differ on rank on several factors such as educational qualifications, aspirations, psycho-physical health, cognitive & financial resources, demands, family obligations etc. The major problem with ESM on financial front is poor planning for forthcoming retirement. The 49.33% JCOs and 69.33 % Other ranks desired for re-employment. Achievements in civil life for both the ranks are unsatisfactory because of low educational qualifications. At the time of retirement 22.67 % JCOs & 2% Other ranks were 10th & below, 88% JCOs & 8% Other ranks were 10th pass, 1.33%
JCOs & 80% Other_ranks were 12th pass and 1.33% JCOs & 9.33% were graduate in terms of personal educational qualifications.

7. The findings further reveal that difference between the last held military ranks is the function of ‘Present Quality of Life’ measure. The positive resources and demands balance tends to have categorical effect on the self-perceived present QoL.

8. The measure of ‘QoL Expected While Joining the Indian Army’ presents a significant relationship with last held military ‘Rank’. The introduction of covariate has insignificant effect on the difference of means scores of Ranks. It can be interpreted that individual’s expectations of forthcoming life as a soldier are function of contemporary conditions of society and goodwill index of the Indian Army at that time. The 90.67 % sampled JCOs responded by saying that they joined Indian Army “शीर्ष रंग” and the figure for Other_ranks is 62.67%.

9. The ‘Rank’ does not have significant relationship with ‘Overall Satisfaction Level’ measure. In other words neither the overall satisfaction level is the function of Rank nor is it significantly affected by individual’s resources and demands. The satisfaction is beautifully explained by one of the JCOs, he said, “We derive our satisfaction from our rich treasure of experiences we had during the service, the fatigues, the gun and the original fun in the lap of nature with moments of sharing a large steel mug full of steaming tea with fellow soldiers in minus 25 degree temperature”.

10. High negative (-.686) and moderate negative correlation (-.366) between the resources and demands were found for JCOs and Other_ranks respectively. In other words both the Ranks were demand surplus which means that the retirement benefits and post retirement pension were largely inadequate for ESM (NCOs). Association between rank and resources found. Demands were equally likely in both ranks. JCO’s resources are found to be poor relatively.
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Findings from Factor Analysis

Factor analysis was conducted among the variables to reveal the simple structure and grouping of the variable. From factor analysis four factors emerged in each phase, the structure and grouping of variables differed among phases. Overall two conclusions can be drawn for the consistency of grouping of variables over the year in ESMs.

1. Achievements in civil life bring social, occupational and emotional adjustment.
2. More resources than demands ensure satisfaction and quality of life.

Limitations

The sample was purposive and limited to Indian Army veterans (non-commissioned officers). The self-perceived Resources and Demands, Achievements in Civil Life, Present QoL, QoL Expected While Joining the Indian Army and Overall Satisfaction Level measures were self perceived and assessed with self designed tools. The empirical literature was almost nonexistent especially on non-commissioned ranks of Indian Army.

Suggestions

According to the nature and characteristics’ of the study following suggestions are offered. The future studies might be undertaken to include the Ex-servicemen (Non-commissioned officers) from all the three branches of the defence with their spouses. A comparative study between commissioned and non-commissioned ESM on similar measures might be undertaken.

Implications
The study will give fillip to clear the general perception of masses (discriminatory) in respect of ESM that by virtue of their training their adjustment in society is not a cake walk. The reintegration training curriculum can be modified for the prospective soldiers likely to be separated within a year. The findings can help the corporate sector and public sector undertakings who wish to employ veterans. Agencies looking after the welfare of ESM can surgically flush out the behavioural difficulties faced by the ESM during transition. Ex-servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) clinics can take a cue from this study and address the behavioural issues being faced by ESM and/or likely to face by engaging suitable human resources.