

Determinants of Group Cohesiveness in Military Units in Sri Lanka

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This study was focused towards cohesiveness of groups in military units. Groups in military units are highly concerned in-group activities. They are assigned group goals and expected to attain the goals collectively. The broad objective of this study was to identify the factors affecting the group cohesiveness among army soldiers and rank these factors in the order of their importance. The literature revealed several factors affecting group cohesiveness. They were categorized as group factors, organizational factors and environmental factors and identified as independent variables. Member similarity, past success, frequency of interactions, stable membership, size, were regarded as group factors while group goal, leadership style and physical setting were regarded as organizational factors. Environmental factors, which are considered for this study, were group isolation, threats to group, and group reward system. Two distinct types of cohesion were identified and taken them as dependent variables. They were social cohesion and task cohesion. The sample was selected using random sampling method and data were collected administering structured questionnaire. Likert's five-point scale was used to measure the responses and Pearson's correlation method was employed to determine the relationship of each variable and rank them. Study revealed that group isolation, difficult physical setting, member homogeneity, frequent interactions and small size of the group contribute to enhance the unit's social cohesion, reward system to the entire group, consistence group goals with personal goals and past success contribute to enhance the task cohesion of the army unites. External threat to the group, democratic leadership style and stable membership improve both task and social cohesion among army soldiers.

Key words : social cohesion, task cohesion, groups, army forces.

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