

## Individual Aspirations - A Barrier for Second Career of Veterans

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### Abstract

The intellect and passion with which a person is using his equipment is the principal factor to win a war. In order to keep a youthful profile of the forces, almost 55,000–70,000 personnel of the army, navy, and the air force inevitably relinquish their uniform every year and become Ex- Servicemen (ESM). A significant amount of national human resource, taxpayers' money, time and infra-structure are utilised in the painstaking procedures of recruitment, training, and operations involving personnel, to churn them into a professional force. These veterans constitute a readily available, well-trained, disciplined, experienced, and versatile team of human re-source that can be harnessed towards a constructive role in nation building. At the personal and humane front this ex-serviceman (ESM) is in the late 30s or early 40s when released from service, is still young and he still has major responsibilities towards his family. Enormous responsibilities are still there to be take care of by these ESM, with their limited resources, relying mainly on their pension. The significance of providing satisfactory services to the ex-servicemen for their resettlement thus assumes greater magnitude. In today's environment, wherein new livelihood are being created at all levels in the various businesses and industries government owned or not; it is seen that a great percentage of our ESM are not able to take up suitable vocation. This study is aimed on devising methods and standards to identify the growing ambitions of veterans for a smooth transition into a second career after hanging their uniform and in the expanding avenues of employment in the outside world.

**Keywords:** Premature Retirement, Resettlement, Veterans, Personnel Aspirations

### Introduction

Indian Armed Forces is a 1.3 million strong army including its different arms, support arms, services and cadres. The most significant asset of the Army is the man behind the machine or the Human Resource. As the work force in uniform are relied upon to assume the charge of guarding the sensitivities of the country, the state and its associations need to assume the onus of taking care of the government assistance of its individuals after their retirement (Kishore, 1991).

At personal level, since the age of an ex-serviceman is in the late 30s or early 40s when released from service, he still has major responsibilities

towards his family. If we consider the average age of marriage as late 20s or early 30s, the greater part of the ex-servicemen have children who needs guidance and supervision when they retire. The benefits and offices recently enjoyed by the ex-servicemen are incompletely pulled back. From one perspective, the ex-servicemen need to fulfil huge obligations, and then again, they have restricted assets, depending essentially on their pension. In consideration of all these aspects, the significance of providing greater satisfaction amongst the Ex-servicemen (ESM) community by means of their smooth transition into a second career becomes the duty of government and of the Armed Forces.

The nation spends large sums of money to train our soldiers and develop a high degree of administrative, material and managerial skills. The soldiers are equipped to adapt to constant changes in technology and handle highly sophisticated equipment. This highly disciplined, devoted, dedicated and captive human resource needs to be tapped by the private and government segment for better economy and to improve efficiency. While acknowledging the selfless service rendered by a soldier, the Government has created structures to provide avenues for re-employment for the ex-serviceman in the government sector, PSUs, corporate sector or self-employment. The state government also has various schemes for providing benefits and employment to the ex-serviceman. The Adjutant General Branch of Army have also has initiated a number of steps towards achieving smooth transition for a serviceman into a second career post retirement.

In the present condition where-in new roads of opportunities are being made at all levels in the administration, semi government and private parts, it is seen that a majority of our ex serviceman are not able to get appropriate jobs. A great percentage of reserved appointments, both in government and semi government sectors for the ex-serviceman go unutilized due to lack of information, adequate training or structure which could utilise these vacancies optimally (Uppal, 2001). There is, therefore, a requirement to find out the reasons for ESM not getting jobs post retirement and to institute measure and practices to remedy the same.

### Literature Review

The research undertook a review of pertinent previous writings including print and electronic media over the Internet. An earlier study titled "Resettlement Problems of Retired Army Officers" (Singh, 1985) focused on Poona (Pune) city in Maharashtra. Kishore (1991) studied the resettlement of Personnel Below Officer Rank of the Indian Army in the Indian states of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

However, both studies were undertaken two to three decades ago. A more recent work titled "Indian Ex-Servicemen" (Singh, 2005) elaborated on the issues of concern to ex-servicemen.

The review revealed a scarcity of recent research in the domain and underlined the need for conducting this study on the inclusive management of ex-servicemen in India. The study intends to cover the many gaps with regard to comprehensiveness, spheres of time, geographical area, and coverage of respondent categories that exist. A recent study in India revealed that the majority (53%) of air force veterans faced significant problems in resettlement (Maharajan&Subramani, 2014). The problems include financial difficulties, adjustment with civil society, inadequate support from resettlement framework, and lack of support from family and friends. Thus, there is a need for support from organisations and governments to extend all possible guidance and help to resettle the ex-servicemen.

### Need for Study

The aim of the study is to examine the primary reasons for the ESM not getting jobs post retirement. The study will attempt to home on to those core aspects of his personal aspirations which once fulfilled will motivate him to take job post retirement and live an honorable life as an ESM and will suggest methods to meet growing aspirations of retiring servicemen for a sustained transition into post retirement job in the expanding pool of opportunities in civil world.

### Objectives of the Study

The two objectives of the study are as follows:

- oTo identify reasons behind ESM not getting jobs post retirement
- oTo prescribe measure to be taken to guarantee accessibility of suitable openings for work for ESM in civil world.

### Methodology

The research adopted a quantitative approach using cross-sectional descriptive design. This included analysis of the problem, seeking factual inputs from policy makers, stake holders, individuals about to retire by means of questionnaires, interactions, interviews, by means of questionnaires, collation and analysis of data by employing management tools and techniques.

### Research Methodology

The aim is to recommend measures to match the growing aspirations of retiring servicemen for a smooth transition into a second career after retirement in the expanding

employment prospects in the outside world. It tries to identify the growing aspirations of retiring servicemen for a sustained transition into a second career after retirement. The approach adopted included the analysis of the problem, seeking factual inputs from the policy makers, stake holders, individuals about to retire by means of questionnaires, interactions, interviews, collation and analysis of primary and secondary data by employing management tools and techniques.

This investigation is further, centered on the veterans in the class of JCOs and different Ranks (ORs) and the after effects of this examination are pondered to be summed up to the ESM specifically. This broad examination is both descriptive and conclusive in nature which also included cross sectional data and longitudinal perspectives. Two services that is EME and AOC were identified for sample collection due to availability of regimental centers in the vicinity and regular access.

**Primary Research.** The populations and establishments from whom data was desired were determined. In all, two organisations were identified to collect data. The research was done with primary data to assess the current organizational environment in terms of their efficacy to meet the aspirations of the ESM for their second career, and to determine options for enhancing organizational effectiveness through options of empowering them with core competencies. The mode of primary research comprised of three strata to eliminate possibility of bias and to provide inputs towards finding solutions.

Questionnaires were made for retiring OR, Regimental Centers and Placement Centers. Interviews were conducted for the vital inputs of the Commanding Officers and their staff who are responsible for the final release of ESM from service.

**Secondary Research.** The secondary research was involved in studying and understanding the available literature. Internet websites and publications were accessed for viewing various recommendations on the subject.

### **Data Collection.**

Survey method was adopted to collect the data. Structured instruments in the form of questionnaire and interactions with retiring personnel was used to gain insight for the

probabilities and pay-offs for the problem at hand. The questionnaire has been so structured to provide the insight of the thought process of various strata in the Armed Forces.

**Sample Design** This research involves a predominantly quantitative approach. The views were taken from the sample, which is presumed to be Normally Distributed.

**Technique Used for Sample Design.** As ESM in the Army consist of distinct groups with different viewpoints, Stratified Random Sampling was the method used.

**Sampling Unit.** Considerable effort was put in to cast the net wide for samples. Samples were collected from a wide cross section of officers dealing with ESM discharge drill, in AOC and EME, besides survey conducted of the ESM and Service personnel about to retire.

**Sample Size.** The statistical tools dictate the sample size by the following method:-

- For a Z value corresponding to a confidence level (CL), standard error E, Probability factor of occurrence 'p' and non-occurrence 'q' (obtained from sample survey), the sample size 'n' is given by the formula  $n = (Z/E)^2 \cdot p \cdot q$ .

- With the confidence level of 95%, the value of Z= 1.964, E= 5 % and p=0.5, the required sample size is 292.

- The study was done at regular intervals to gather the inputs on monthly basis from Depot Bn of AOC and EME, where the individuals who are retiring come for the discharge drill.

### **Results and Discussion**

The survey was planned to obtain data for two parameters i.e Personal Aspirations of ESM and Job opportunities for ESM. The compilation and analysis revealed the following:-

**Table I: Personal Aspirations of ESM**

S/N	Question	SD	D	N	A	SA	Remarks
Q1	Post retirement I don't need to do a Job.	240	60	32	18	02	85.2% Disagree
Q2	To get a Job I am willing to work away from my family.	200	81	41	12	18	79.8% Disagree
Q3	I am mentally and physically ready to do a job immediately.	140	100	62	0	0	68 % Disagree
Q4	I am willing to work for less than 50% of my pension.	220	70	40	0	22	82.3% Disagree
Q5	If required I will work for 10-12 hrs in a day for civil job.	75	122	49	77	29	55.9 % Disagree
Q6	JCO/OR should not be given study leave like Officers.	310	22	08	09	03	94.3% Disagree
Q7	Choice between Govt or Pvt , I will choose Pvt Job.	173	104	35	08	32	78.6% Disagree
Q8	Resettlement training should be as per my trade/special skills.	01	03	16	29	303	94.3% Agree
Q9	Resettlement training should be accepted by Govt/Pvt Sector.	0	0	0	40	312	100% Agree

**Table II: Job Opportunities of ESM**

S/N	Question	SD	D	N	A	SA	Remarks
Q1	Financial benefits of Army will last throughout my life.	153	109	21	48	21	74.4% Disagree
Q2	Army resettlement training will easily get me a job.	132	136	48	32	04	76.1% Disagree
Q3	By registration with AWPO I will surely get a call/job.	82	186	41	22	21	76% Disagree

Q4	Education cert given by Army is valid in Civil.	161	148	31	10	02	87.7% Disagree
Q5	Professional cert given by Army is valid in Civil	46	198	68	24	16	69.3% Disagree
Q6	I am fully confident of facing any job interview in English.	103	164	44	31	10	75.8% Disagree
Q7	I am confident of making my resume without any assistance.	180	103	29	28	12	80% Disagree
Q8	I am confident in handling basic computer tasks.	81	112	68	64	27	54.8% Disagree
Q9	I will easily get the jobs reserved in Government for ESMs.	141	152	41	10	08	83.2% Disagree
Q10	Registration and interview call up should be online.	21	01	26	41	263	86.3% Agree
Q11	Reservation for ESMs should be therein NDMA/Pvt sector.	08	02	09	51	282	94.6% Disagree

### Analysis

Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Adequacy. The factorability of 21 LIKERT items was examined. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.894 within acceptable range and confirms sampling adequacy. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was highly

significant ( $\chi^2 (435) = 2142, p < 0.05$ ) and the Null Hypothesis i.e. 'None of the Variables are correlated' is rejected at 95% Confidence Level. Hence, 'There is correlation among some of the variable'. With these indicators, factor analysis was considered suitable for all 292 LIKERT items.

**Table III: KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.849
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx Chi-Square	2142.061
df	78
Sig.	.000

Data Reliability. Cronbach's Alpha test was carried out for the 23 Likerts (Q7 to Q29) and separately for each construct to measure reliability of scale. The overall

Cronbach Alpha score was 0.826 and therefore adequate in supporting reliability of scale.

**Table IV : Cronbach's Alpha Test for All Constructs**

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.705	.703	21

Normality Test. Normality is the underlying assumption for all parametric tests. Normality test for the data was carried out to study if the responses from the primary population was normally distributed or not. The analysis

was carried out separately for both the factors using SPSS tool and Shapiro Wilk Test was conducted. The outcome and analysis is given in Table III and Table IV.

**Table V : Test of Normality for Existence of Job Opportunities for ESM**

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig	Statistic	df	Sig
Existence of job opportunities	.120	292	.000	.961	292	.000

**Table VI: Test of Normality for Personal Aspirations of ESMs**

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig	Statistic	df	Sig
Personal Aspirations of ESMs	.088	292	.000	.964	292	.000



### Personal Aspirations of the ESM

The stock forming part of the services today are drawn from a mix of rural, semi-rural, urban and metropolitan belts from across the country. The terms and conditions / entry level qualifications form the first filter in defining the future aspects of aspirations. While Navy and IAF have majority of entries at graduation level, the Army still maintains 10th class as the basic entry qualification. This in turn creates an education bias. The soldier (General Duty) which forms the backbone of our large standing Army is perceived to have the following aspirations:-

- o Settle down in his village or town and lead a retired life. At best get a security job.
- o Reluctance to move out of the village / City / Townships.
- o Perceptions of a second career as an avenue to grow and not a job.
- o Role of DGR or Regimental Centres and Battalions in securing a job for him.
- o Jobs and placements at managerial levels.
- o Aspirations of the family and children.
- o Conflict of lack of skill to get a job and his perceived waste of experience in the Army.
- o Absorptions in the PSUs /DSC /BSF/Police driven by terms and conditions

The ESM require a second career as physical fitness and age is on their side and their responsibilities and obligations are generally at peak when they retire. The responsibilities on the ESM are enormous. Children's education is one of the major responsibility they are faced with. The socio-economic changes, break-up of the joint family system, stiff competition in the employment market and the steep increases in the cost of living are some of the contributing factors. Other allied problems of ESM like provision of medical and schooling facilities have also been assuming greater importance. Thus, over the years, the number of ESM and other entitled categories have gone up, but complexities of their problems have increasingly become more pronounced.

### Difficult Transition to Civil Life

The abrupt entry of the ESM into the society tosses its own difficulties and issues for them. These ESM have lived through out their life in an ensured hierarchical set-up. Their relations and dealings have been governed by rules and standards. Their environment have been as a closed group, however the civil society is like a open group. Exit

from the military entails loss of pay, loss of acknowledgment, loss of recognizable pieces of proof, loss of expert status, loss of method of investing time and vitality, loss of partners/companions, and loss of self-sufficiency or self-articulation and so forth, which acquires a swarm of financial and mental issues. Notwithstanding these issues, ESM face the difficulty of finding an appropriate second vocation for themselves. It is a twofold test much the same as a twofold edged blade which cuts on the two sides. A study conducted in year 2014 in India revealed that the majority (53%) of air force veterans faced significant problems in resettlement (Maharajan & Subramani, 2014). The suggestion of restarting another profession resettlement is very hazardous which include alterations, bargains, new strains and difficulties (Brunger, Serrato, & Ogden, 2013). Due to above, a large number of the ex-servicemen face significant difficulties in dealing and adjusting in civil society.

### Problems Faced By ESM

The problem faced by the ESM and other entitled categories are multi-faceted and varying widely depending on variety of factors e.g. the States to which they belong, age and individual requirements, physical ailment, financial status, number and age of their children, and ownership of residential property etc. The dominating cause for the serving personnel to leave army and proceed on pre-mature retirement is primarily lack of fulfillment of his personal aspirations. The major problems faced in resettling the JCOs and OR are as follows:-

- o Ignorance about resettlement schemes and role of Director General of Resettlement (DGR).
- o Higher age profile on retirement for obtaining second career.
- o Inadequate civil experience and knowledge of regulations for corporate jobs.
- o ESM being uncomfortable with civil working conditions and reluctance in starting own enterprises/business.
- o Inadequate interactions of ESM with DGR/ KSB, regional and local units.
- o Gap between the existing skill sets/ aspirations of ESM and the requirement of the civil industries/corporate world.
- o Lack of appropriate accreditation of specialization/educational qualifications/ professional competencies acquired during the service.
- o Stiff competition in civil jobs/limited job

opportunities.

- o Unwillingness of majority of Army ESM to work away from home and preference to seek employment in native districts where opportunities are very limited. Resettlement courses selected by individuals are utilized as a 'Leave Pending Retirement' in most cases.
- o Mismatch of connect between ZilaSainik Boards (ZSB) and DGR in the process of resettlement. The RSBs come under a Secretary/Director who is responsible to State government and in districts ZSB come under District Collector.
- o Preference of ESM for Government jobs.

### Recommendations

The transition and resettlement is an issue which is current and pertinent as each day soldiers are retiring into uncertain domain. The study has unmistakably brought to fore the lack of synergy in various establishments, lack of implementing institutionalized quotas in the govt services and the responsibilities of various stake holders along with their desired role in the paras above. The problem at hand cannot be dealt with drastic changes in structures or procedures, but through a graduated well drafted strategy which puts in perspective the actions to be undertaken by all stakeholders through a synergic, practicable and implementable approach without bringing the worldviews of various stakeholders in conflict. This strategy has to be derived with time depended goals like short/medium/long term measures. The same has been discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

Short Term Measures for the Services. Following actions may be initiated in the short and medium terms by the respective arms/services:-

- o Increase Awareness amongst the JCO/ORs about Second Career Transition. The aspect of awareness is directly related to the visibility factor of DGR. In absence of direct linkages to the environment on the respective LANs/WANs there is a need to increase the visibility through the respective public information offices and the existent reach-response mechanisms through the Areas / Subareas/ Air Stations / Naval Stns / Release centers.
- o Encourage Posting of High Profile Officers for the ESM affairs Appointments. Currently the reach of DGR is limited to its DDG Recruitment Zones, the extension is desirable to each states. Hence, the Military Secretariat or equivalent may look at amalgamating the appointments of Public Relations and DDG Recruitment in states where voids exists.
- o Encourage Self-Development amongst Service

Personnel During Service. Steps need to be taken to co-opt a system of boosting his self-esteem needs through systematic process of enhancement over the entire service career. The MT directorate needs to re-introduce the PFC II equivalent to granting him a Senior Secondary certificate qualification. The same could be done by suitable linkages with the CBSE and state boards.

- o Intro English Speaking, IT Literacy & Interview Grooming Capsules. The present system of promotion exams constitute testing on the basic knowledge of IT and cyber security. The same could be extended progressively over the next 3-4 years to include IT skills in MS Office (English would then come inbuilt) as part of the testing in the promotion cadres wef the Naiks or equivalent rank.

- o Facilitate Early Selection of Pre-Release Courses. This activity needs to be co-opted by the regimental centers on the time plot of Release minus 4 years. The individual should have access to input form on the data base of DGR or service (linked to DGR) and get counseling from both the unit and DGR through digital and hard data sheets available. The personnel branch of each service to identify the skill sets in tune with the National Skill Development program and the CSR of the corporates. The retiree should get the up skilling course at least one year prior to his release automatically through the centers governed directly by the inputs given to the DGR.

- o Engage ESM through Periodic Msgs on Govt Schemes, New Facilities & Current Opportunities. The existing data links including video and teleconferencing can be used extensively. The existing linkages of DDG Recruitment Zones should be utilized for the purpose. Utilize the ECHS & CSD database for feedback. Generate employment for ESM in CSD, ECHS & Defence Est, by making it compulsory.

Long Term Measures for the Services. Following long term measures are recommended for implementation by the respective services:

- o Introducing Mentoring & Counseling during the service span.
- o Upload ESM data on a DGR web portal. The extensions of the same are supported down to the Regimental Centers level.
- o Follow a Structured Skill-Enhancement program in coordination with the state/central government. A study needs to be ordered for the quantification of the 1074 skills into applicable sets in the services.

- o Ensure Dual Skilling for a n  
Easy resettlement of less q u a l i f i e d



personnel.

- o Chart out Courses as per counseling to facilitate an early and suitable employment.
- o Maintain database of all ESM and update as well as synchronize it with the National database.
- o Utilising the ECHS & CSD database, create a unique ID of ESM.
- o Promulgate policy to employ high % of ESM in Defence related organisations under the MoD.

### Conclusion

The aspect of providing a second career to the ESM is a matter of national concern and needs to be addressed with that much sincerity. The higher demand for ESM would translate to younger generation aspiring to choose the Armed Forces as their First Career. Youngsters preferring Armed Forces means that there would be 'Better Quality of Entry' who would bring along with them much more 'Awareness'. Therefore all stakeholders today, need to help increase the Awareness and this should become the 'Training Philosophy' resulting in a better 'Transition Philosophy'. Factor that stands out in the study is the importance of personal aspirations of the ESM. Despite the fact that every single other factor are taken into consideration, the significance of personnel aspirations

can't be precluded. Once his personal aspirations are taken care off, he is able to contribute to his country in a different domain as an ESM.

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