

Exploring the Job Satisfaction of Staff Working in University Libraries in Sri Lanka

R.A.A.S. Ranaweera^{1,2*} Si Li³

1. School of Information Management, Wuhan University, P. R. China, 430072
 2. Library, University of Kelaniya, Dalugama, Sri Lanka
 3. The Center for the Study of Information Resources, Wuhan University, P. R. China, 430072
- * E-mail of the corresponding author: 1607336204@qq.com

Abstract

Employees in libraries play a key role in supporting academic and research works in the university. Therefore, it is better to understand their level of satisfaction towards their future career. This study carried out with exploring job satisfaction of 600 respondents representing all professional, para-professional and support staff categories working in 14 university libraries in Sri Lanka. Survey questionnaire with five point-Likert scale used to collect data for finding the level of job satisfaction, main factors related job satisfaction and identifying influential factors related to the context of university libraries in Sri Lanka. Study findings indicate that university library employees were satisfied with their jobs in general and nature of work and coworkers were identified as the most satisfied factors and salary and benefits and career development opportunities identified as the least satisfied factor related to job satisfaction. Therefore the present study recommends to take immediate measurements to enhance the least satisfied factors in order to upgrade the present job satisfaction level of university library staff in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, university library, Sri Lanka, Library staff

1. Introduction

Satisfaction about the inherent characteristics of their job status of employees is very important to any organization for the success and future existence. Also, it is a key component for enhancing the productivity of the organization and as well as the career development and success of the employees (Adigwe & Oriola, 2015; Kaba, 2017). This background behind job satisfaction and its complexity in nature has been attributed to use as an application tool in different conceptual contexts and strings. Spector recognized the concept of job satisfaction as employee's emotion to the extent of like and dislikes of his or her job. However, it can be confirmed that there is a lack of a universally accepted definition for this concept. Technically, job satisfaction is a multidimensional concept and a vast array of research conducted in worldwide on job satisfaction on employees in the context of organization behavior as well as in the literature of library science (Adio & Popoola, 2010). Library staffs who are serving in university libraries are important group of people as they work to fulfill the vision and mission of the university by disseminating universal knowledge to the scholarly community in the university.

In Sri Lanka there are few studies had been carried out with regard to job satisfaction of university library employees and all those studies were focused on the professional staff only. Therefore the present study carried out to fill the research gap in the library science literature in Sri Lanka by compressively analyzing the job satisfaction of employees attached to all the staff categories in university library system in Sri Lanka.

2. Literature review

A wide array of studies have been conducted with different case studies in order to identify the factors and variables which highly impact on job satisfaction of library staff members in different countries around the world (Moniarou-Papaconstantinou & Triantafyllou, 2015). Adio & Popoola (2010) tried out to study about career commitment associated with job satisfaction using a sample of 381 librarians working in 24 federal universities of Nigeria. The study revealed that respondents were not satisfied with the funding, promotional schemes, job recognition and working conditions. In order to get more commitments towards their careers, they suggested to enhance welfare facilities and provide adequate funding and resources for the workers. Moniarou-

Papaconstantinou & Traintafyllou (2015) tried to create a job satisfaction model of special, public, School and academic librarians in Greece. They analyzed the problem with the factors such as available learning options, independence, knowledge and abilities of professionals, adaptation to new technological trends and creativity expression. The study identified a significant difference between the satisfaction and the library type. Since the profession has a prestigious value, librarians in public libraries were much satisfied than the academic librarians. Hussain and Soroya attempted to evaluate the parameters influences on satisfaction for their jobs of the para-professional staff working in public and private sector universities in Pakistan by using Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS). The results show that both of respondents are satisfied with their jobs to some extent. Also, it does not show a noteworthy difference in this regards between two groups. The study had identified the nature of work (i.e., permanent or contract basis) and salary scales as the most influential factors on their level of satisfaction. The study recommends to university administration to pay their attention to revise the employee recruitment policies, present salary structures and especially to keep a good communication flow between top management and library employees. Kaba (2017) attempted to identify the relationship between job satisfaction, career opportunities, job challenges and future directions of academic librarians in public and private universities in United Arab Emirates (UAE). He has been found that respondents were most satisfied with job satisfaction facets such as salary and benefits, job status, job tasks, and appreciations from the management while dissatisfied with promotion schemes and career opportunities. According to the results, he has been suggested to improve career opportunities with IT related training programs, revision of promotion schemes and giving more training opportunities to the employees.

In Sri Lankan university library context handful of studies conducted on job satisfaction of staff members and among them the first study was conducted by Thirunavukarasu in 1994. In this case study, it has been collected data on job satisfaction and its governing factors: motivation and hygiene factors, from fifty university librarians in ten selected universities in Sri Lanka. Results show that library professionals are extremely dissatisfied with career achievements, social recognition and work itself, salary, benefits and their personal life. Therefore, study thoroughly recommends that there should be a system in upgrading the satisfaction level of library professionals to have an efficient and effective service to the university societies in Sri Lanka. Kurruppu explained about the causes or problems encountered by library professionals in the bureaucratic structure and analyzed how job satisfaction level can change the alternative structure. Further, the study concluded that the bureaucratic structure is not conducive in maximizing the creativity aspects of the professionals and alternative structure can contribute to resolve the conflicts between the professional role of librarians and the organization structure. It finally suggested that these special professionals should recognize their roles and potentials to reap maximum benefits from the organizational structure and the alternative system. Marasinghe & Wijeratne (2016) evaluated the job satisfaction of one hundred and twenty-five university library professionals based on three generations: Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y, using four parameters; Work, co-workers, compensations, supervision, and promotions. Study findings showed that job satisfaction changes with the generation. In the case of parameters such as 'work' and 'supervision', baby boomers were much satisfied their work than the others. Generation Y had shown a higher level of satisfaction than others. Punyawardena (2016) conducted a research on job satisfaction of 285 library assistants in 13 university libraries in Sri Lanka using salary, overtime earning, loan facilities, welfare, accommodation, foreign leave and career development were selected as the variables. Salary was identified as the most influential factor in this study and they were dissatisfied with other job facet tested in the study.

Generally, employees in university libraries play a key role in supporting academic and research works in the university. Therefore, it is better to understand their level of satisfaction towards their future career. In this regard, it is timely important to investigate the job satisfaction of staff members in all job categories in university libraries in Sri Lanka.

3. Objectives

This study carried out with following research objectives:

- To identify the level of job satisfaction of employees working in university library staff in Sri Lanka.
- To explore factors related to job satisfaction of library staff members serving in university libraries.
- To identify the highly satisfied factors of job satisfaction related to university library staff in Sri Lanka.

4. Methodology

Both qualitative and quantitative data were utilized for the study. Quantitative data were obtained from a survey questionnaire from 600 randomly selected staff members serving in fourteen national universities around Sri

Lanka. Out of 600 distributed questionnaires, 510 were used for the final analysis. The questionnaire was consisted of 29 questions in three parts; demographic information, factors of job satisfaction and overall job satisfaction. Five-point Likert scale starting from 1-5 (strongly disagree to strongly agree) used as the scale for the questionnaire. Collected quantitative data was mainly analyzed by using frequencies, percentage, mean and standard deviation in the SPSS environment.

5. Findings and Discussion

5.1 Demographic profile of university library staff

According to the survey findings, 50.8% of the respondents were male, and 49.2% of the represented the female staff members. 52.2% of the sample represented the para-professional staff category, and 32% and 15.8% indicated the support staff and professional staff respectively. The majority (31.2%) of the respondents were representing the age group between 41-50 while 16.7% of the staff members were in the age between 20-30. A large number of the sample (81.2%) were married while unmarried represented the 18.4% of the study sample. 46.7% of the respondents were the information assistant, and 26.4% of the respondents have completed Bachelors or Masters Degree level. 47.7% (25.5% and 22.2%) of them are having 11-30 years working experience.

Table 1. Job satisfaction of library staff

	SD %	D %	ND %	A %	SA %	Mean	Std. Deviation
If a good friend of mine were interested in working in my job, I would encourage him to take it	4.4	14.6	10.4	55.8	14.8	3.61	1.064
Job satisfaction motivates me to do my job well	4.4	9.3	8.2	67.7	10.4	3.69	.954
If I had to start my career again, I would take my current job	2.4	6.2	6.2	66.4	18.8	3.92	.867
In general, I am satisfied with my job	2.2	10.4	11.3	66.2	10	3.7	.884
SD= strongly disagree, D= Disagree, ND= Neither agree nor disagree, A= Agree, SA= Strongly agree							

5.2 Level of job satisfaction of library staff

Table 1 indicates the study findings on the level of job satisfaction of staff member serving in university libraries in Sri Lanka. According to the survey results, 85.2% respondents were mentioned that if they had to start their professional life, they will indeed take their current job as the first choice with the highest mean value of 3.92 (SD=.867). Furthermore, 76.2% of the survey sample mentioned that they are satisfied with their current jobs (Mean= 3.7). Also, 70.6% of the respondents were recommended their current job in the library to their friends with a mean value of 3.61. These statements and mean values highly proved that the university library staffs were satisfied with their jobs in general.

5.3 Factors related to job satisfaction of library staff

Table 2. depicted the survey findings of factors related to job satisfaction of employee's in university library staff in Sri Lanka.

Study results show that highest mean value of 3.81 was recorded for the item 'I find my work is interesting'. Also, the safety of the working environment received the mean value of 3.71. Furthermore, 'I Like people I work with' also received the relatively high mean value of 3.61. However, some items have received low mean values especially the items such as 'My library offers training or education that I need to grow in my job (mean=3.01) and 'benefits of my university are equal with the external labor market (mean=2.84).

Table 2. Items of job satisfaction

Rank	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
01	I find my work interesting	3.81	.87
02	I feel that my work place is a safe environment	3.71	2.02
03	I Like people I work with	3.61	.93
04	My co-workers and I work as a part of a team	3.53	.98
05	I enjoy my co-workers	3.52	.99
06	My Salary is appropriate in relation to the job duties and responsibilities	3.48	1.09
07	People care about each other in my library	3.47	1.01
08	It is easy to work with my colleagues	3.43	1.00
09	My job is challenging	3.41	1.11
10	The physical environment allows me to do my job	3.36	1.10
11	Library provides me adequate feedback to the team on its performance	3.36	1.02
12	My job gives me the opportunity to use my skills and abilities	3.30	1.10
13	I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increment	3.27	1.06
14	I have necessary resources, tools or equipment to do my job	3.27	1.12
15	I am satisfied with my chances for promotion	3.26	1.14
16	There is generally corporative and collaborative atmosphere in the library	3.24	1.06
17	My Job is enjoyable	3.23	1.14
18	My salary is equitable to the job that I do with compared to other job categories in library field	3.23	1.12
19	My department provides sufficient material for our use	3.20	1.10
20	I am satisfied with my basic salary	3.19	1.16
21	I am satisfied with the benefits that I receive at the University	3.17	1.12
22	I feel that the work I do is appreciated	3.16	1.11
24	My salary is sufficient to satisfy enough of my basic needs	3.10	1.19
25	My subordinates are honest and obedient	3.09	1.13
26	Ventilation, furniture & other hygiene facilities are available to perform my duties in the library	3.02	1.20
27	My library offers training or education that I need to grow in my job	3.01	1.14
28	Benefits of my university are equal with the external labour market	2.84	1.08

All these twenty-seven items of factors of job satisfaction again categorized under seven main facet of job satisfaction as; salary and benefits, co-workers, physical working conditions, career opportunities and development, nature of work, appreciation and feedback and cooperation. Item numbers 1,5,8,12,18, 23 and 25 describe the salary and benefits. Item no. 3,6,11,14 and 26 describe the factor of co-workers. A physical working condition related items described under item numbers of 4,7,15,21 and 24 while 10,13 and 27 describe the factor of career opportunities and development. Item number 2,9,19 describe nature of work,16 and 22 describe appreciation and feedback and 17, 20 describe the factor of cooperation. Table 3 shows the mean values received for each factor.

Table 3. Mean values of factors of Job satisfaction of library staff

The factor of job satisfaction	Mean	Std. Deviation
Salary and benefits	3.20	.720
Co-workers	3.44	.744
Physical working conditions	3.32	.825
Career opportunities and development	3.19	.834
Nature of work	3.48	.742
Appreciation and feedback	3.27	.823
Cooperation	3.36	.879

As per the survey results revealed in Table 3, 'nature of work' received the highest mean value of 3.48. The second highest mean value recorded for co-workers (3.44) then followed by cooperation (3.36), physical working conditions (3.32) and appreciation and feedback with a mean value of 3.27. Factors of salary and benefits and career opportunities and feedback received the lowest mean values of 3.20 and 3.19 respectively.

6. Conclusion

These studies carried out with three main objectives and identify the level of job satisfaction of employees working in university library staff in Sri Lanka was the first research objective of this study. Based on the mean values regarding the overall job satisfaction it can be concluded that staff members attached to university libraries in Sri Lanka are satisfied with their jobs in respective university libraries. This has positively impact on service delivery of university libraries as satisfied employees are productive, efficient and dedicate to work. There were twenty-seven items used to analyze the factors related to the context of job satisfaction of staff serving in university libraries in Sri Lanka. Based on the mean values it shows that staff members are moderately satisfied with these items and also identified nature of work and co-workers as most satisfied factors related to job satisfaction of staff. Factors of cooperation, physical working conditions, and appreciation and feedbacks were identified as moderate satisfying factors while salary and benefits and career development opportunities show the least satisfaction towards job satisfaction of university library employees in Sri Lanka. As there were two factors identified as least influential factors, the university administration, and library management should draw their immediate attention to change the present set up in university library environment to upgrade these factors to make staff more satisfied with their jobs. Salary and benefits considered as one of the principal facets of job satisfaction of any organization also career development opportunities brought many positive outcomes to both the library and the individual employees as well. Therefore, the present study strongly recommends relevant authorities to arrange to improve the salary and benefit levels of staff and provide them necessary financial and other support for persuade more career development opportunities to keep pace with modern technological world while climbing up the career ladder.

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