



JOB SATISFACTION OF STAFF IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN SRI LANKA

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Abstract

Job satisfaction of library employees' has been a widely research topic of library and Information science studies in the world research arena. However, in Sri Lanka, few studies have been carried out relate to job satisfaction and all these studies mainly focused on the professional staff serving in university libraries. Therefore, this study carried out to fill the gap in the literature by comprehensively exploring the job satisfaction and related aspects of all three staff categories under five research objectives. A questionnaire used to collect data from 643 library employees attached to fourteen universities. Survey results revealed that, university library employees were fairly satisfied with their jobs and identified seven factors related to job satisfaction. Out of them coworkers and nature of work selected as the most influential factors of job satisfaction and inadequate work cooperation, absence of proper appreciation mechanism, gaps in communication flow and less job autonomy make the staff dissatisfy with their jobs.

Key words: Job satisfaction, university libraries, library staff, Sri Lanka, par-professional staff

Introduction

The concept of Job satisfaction is considered as a main factor of suc

cess of any organization and as well as the productivity and career development of employees. Many researchers define job satisfaction in

different ways, however the job satisfaction is simply known as employees' perception on their own job and related aspect and their measurement and judgments in between satisfied to dissatisfied. Job satisfaction is one of the widely and frequently research concept in organizational behavior and proved that much satisfied employees with their work are much productive, stable, loyal, supportive, and always committed to work (Memon & Jena, 2017).

In the review of literature, job satisfaction of university library staff have been carried out over the last decades (Moniarou-Papaconstantinou & Triantafyllou, 2015). Generally, employees in libraries play a key role in supporting academic and research works in the university. If the workers are satisfied their jobs in a good manner, they work positively contributing to a better performance of the organization and as well as in the context of libraries. The present study aims to explore the level of job satisfaction of staff members in fourteen university libraries in Sri Lanka and also identifying the factors related to job satisfaction, determining of influencing factors, barriers related to job satisfaction and finally to give recommendations and suggestions to improve the present level of job satisfaction of university library professionals in Sri Lanka.

Literature Review

Job satisfaction is a complex scenario in nature and it is associated with a number of fundamental elements. Theoretically and practically,

a number of attempts have been taken to define job satisfaction with its inherent nature (Giese & Cote, 2009; Okaro, Eze, & Ohagwu, 2010). As cited by Hussain and Soroya, 2017, it was Hoppack, in 1935, for the first time identified the concept and the phenomenon of job satisfaction as “a combination of psychological, physiological and external circumstances which lead a person to state that he is satisfied with his job”.

As cited in Khan, Masrek and Nadzar, 2017 and Lim, 2008 in 1976, Locke identified and characterized the behavior of satisfaction of an individual on his present job situation as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences.

It has been noticed that a number of attempts have been taken to study and assess about the job satisfaction levels of workers attached to university libraries.

Study by Adio and Popoola (2010) in Nigeria on career commitment of 381 librarians have found out 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.

Oyovwe Tinuoye, Omeluzor, and Akpojotor in 2016 conducted a study based on university libraries in states in Edo and Delta, Nigeria and identified physical working environ-

ment, salary levels, fairness, trainings and promotions were the most satisfying factors of job satisfaction. They concluded that these factors act as stimulus to deliver a productive and quality library and information service to the user communities in universities.

Hussain and Soroya (2017) evaluate the job satisfaction of the para- professional staff working in public and private sector universities in Pakistan by using Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS). The results shows that no noteworthy difference on job satisfaction between two groups. 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. Study recommends to university administration to pay their attention to revise the employee recruitment policies, present salary structures and specially to keep a good communication flow between top management and library employees.

A few numbers of researches have been conducted to investigate the job satisfaction of staff members working in university libraries in Sri Lanka. However, in most of these studies, it has been given their attention on professional staff in university libraries (Marasinghe & Wijayaratne, 2016; Punyawardena, 2016). In this regard, the present study is significant, since this is the first study of job satisfaction assessment in which it covers all the employee categories in fourteen university libraries in Sri Lanka.

Methods

This study adopted exploratory mixed method and quantitative data was collected through a questionnaire survey. Entire university library staff population, which is 707 employees attached to university library system had selected for the study. However, due to internal delay regarding permission for ethical clearance during the survey period the University of Colombo had to drop from the study population. Finally, the study sample consisted of 643 university library employees are attached to libraries of 14 national universities in Sri Lanka. Data collection period was nearly four months from July-October 2017. Out of 643 distributed questionnaires 525 returned and the questionnaire response rate is 81.65%. However, only 510 (79.2%) were usable and collected quantitative data analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 22 for windows by utilizing factor analysis, multiple regression and other frequency and descriptive statistically analyzing techniques.

Measurements

The questionnaire designed by the researcher for the present empirical study consists of 37 questions under four sections. Both close ended and open ended questions were used to get the respondent opinion on job satisfaction. 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1-5 (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither agree nor disagree, Agree and Strongly agree) used as the type of score in the questionnaire.

Results

Reliability of the questionnaire measured by the Cronbach's alpha test and the alpha values of the coefficient was .673 as for the overall job satisfaction (4 items) and .882 for the factors of job satisfaction (27 items). The study sample consisted of 81(15.8%) professional, 266 (52.2%), Para-Professional and 163 (32%) Support Staff. Out of them 50.8% were male while 49.2% were female and 45.3% represented the age group between 20-40. A large proportion 47.7% were having working experience of between 11-30 years.

Results of Level of job satisfaction of library staff

Based on the research findings, 77.2% of university library staff members were satisfied with their present jobs in respective universities in general with the mean value of 3.71. More than 70% of the respondents have been stated that they would, highly, recommend their current job to their friends (\bar{x} =3.62, SD=1.045). Further, they have been mentioned, with a pleasure, that they would rank their present job as the first choice, if they had to re-start their career as a freshman (\bar{x} =3.93, SD=0.845). In general, respondents was emphasized and, further, proved by the overall mean (3.74, SD=0.922) value is that the university library employees in Sri Lanka were fairly satisfied with their jobs.

Results of Factor Analysis of job satisfaction

The principal component analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization rotation (KNR) was employed to identify the factor pattern matrix of 27 job satisfaction factors. The construct validity and sample adequacy of individual variables of the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) and Bartlett's test of sphericity shows a value of .899. That indicated the validity and co-relationship between construct and therefore this study proceed with the factor analysis. There were 07 factors extracted from the factor analysis, with loading values ranged between .367 - .798 and total value exceeded 57.11% of the variance. The extracted 07 factors are as follows; salary and benefits (eigenvalue= 7.310, α =.763), co-workers (eigenvalue=2.015, α =.789), physical working condition (eigenvalue= 1.436, α =.716), career opportunities and development (eigenvalue= 1.334, α =.602), Nature of work (eigenvalue=1.147, α =.503), appreciation and feedback (eigenvalue= 1.109, α = .314) and cooperation (eigenvalue= 1.071, α =.601).

Results of Factors influencing job satisfaction

Multiple regression analysis utilized to identifying the most influential factors related to the context of job satisfaction of university library employees in Sri Lanka.

Accordingly, based on the study results showed in Table 1, it is identified that, 'coworkers' (β =0.224) and 'nature of work' (β = 0.176) were the highly influential factors and 'physi-

cal working conditions' ($\beta=0.98$), 'career opportunities and development' ($\beta=0.094$) and 'salary and benefits' ($\beta=0.088$) considered as moderate influencing factors on job satisfaction of staff in university library context in Sri Lanka. The factors of 'cooperation' ($\beta=-0.021$) and 'appreciation and feedback' ($\beta=-0.082$) have shown the negative values and therefore these two factors name as least influential factors of job satisfaction by the study.

(Editor's Note: Please see Table 1. at the end of this article.

Results of Current barriers related to job satisfaction of library staff

The present study was able to identify a number of barriers which led dissatisfaction on the job regarding the service performances in staff of university libraries. Among them, prevailing communication gaps and errors with the coworkers and the management ($\bar{x}=6.54, SD=3.117$), lack of job autonomy ($\bar{x}=6.37, SD=2.679$), poor management ($\bar{x}=5.97, SD=2.734$), improper physical working environment ($\bar{x}=5.61, SD=2.559$), and inadequate cooperation between co-workers ($\bar{x}=5.40, SD=2.633$), were recognized as main barriers which are leading to poor job satisfaction. In addition to that, current policies and procedures practicing in universities ($\bar{x}=5.29, SD=3.148$), inadequate financial allocations ($\bar{x}=5.16, SD=2.705$), less opportunities for career development ($\bar{x}=5.05, SD=3.043$), insufficient workforce and lack of resources ($\bar{x}=4.56, SD=2.684$) were also identi-

fied as negative impacts on job satisfaction of university library staff.

Discussion and Recommendations

Based on the study findings, it can be concluded that the university library staff members in Sri Lanka are fairly satisfied with their jobs, in general. However, it is better to enhance their present level of job satisfaction levels specially by improving the least satisfaction factors such as appreciation and feedbacks and cooperation and also providing measurement for current barriers related to job satisfaction.

Therefore, study strongly recommends to the university administration to take immediate actions to overcome these barriers in the process of increasing the present level of job satisfaction. Following are the recommendations and suggestions made by this study in order to uplift the present level of job satisfaction of library workers serving in university library system in Sri Lanka.

Strengthen the cooperation between staff members, establishing proper mechanism and systematic and standard performance evaluation and staff appraisal would bring commendable outcomes to the library. Cooperation can be improved by organizing various activities such as team building activities, job rotation programs, and lectures on attitude changing, team building and positive thinking.

Majority of the respondents were dissatisfied about their opportu-

nities for training facilities and, at the same time, they have been thoroughly emphasized regarding the opportunities for staff development. Therefore, this study recommends to library administration to allocate necessary financial support and provide adequate training facilities for the staff members specially on different languages and information technology to strengthen their skills on communication and modern technological trends.

Physically healthy environment, adequate number of workers, job autonomy, necessary resources and welfare facilities considered as important factors of job satisfaction. However, the present study found that these factors need to be strengthening in university libraries in Sri Lanka.

Therefore, the present study suggests university library administration must take necessary actions to upgrade the current physical environment, resources and facilities, recruit new people and give more work freedom and upgrade welfare facilities to staff members in university libraries to make a pleasant work place. These measurements ultimately led to enhance the satisfaction levels of jobs of employees.

Generally, with the human nature, workers get bored and would dissatisfy with their regular duties in jobs when they do same routine work for many years. This situation is negatively impact on both professional and personal life of employees. Accordingly, present study recom-

mends to implement a systematic job rotation program in respective university libraries in Sri Lanka to make staff more happier and satisfied during their jobs.

Most of the recommendations made by this study are related to policy and administrative decisions, therefore, the present study suggests that it is the task of the library and university authorities to systematically analyze and consider these recommendations and suggestions to make prompt measures to enrich the current level of job satisfaction of staff members. Simultaneously, it is the responsibility of the staff to give their utmost contribution to endeavor it.

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Table 1. Most Influencing Factors Of Job Satisfaction Based On Standardized Coefficients Beta

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	B	SE			
Constant	2.089	.170		12.303	.000
1. Co-workers	0.171	.049	.190	3.505	.000
2. Salary & Benefits	0.82	.048	.088	1.734	.084
3. Nature of work	.159	.043	.176	3.700	.000
4. Physical working conditions	.080	.041	.098	1.926	.055
5. Career Opportunities and development	.076	.044	.094	1.727	.085
6. Appreciation	-.067	.043	-.082	-1.574	.116
7. Cooperation	-.016	.040	-.021	-.399	.690

(Dependent Variable: Job satisfaction; $R=.426$, $R^2=.182$, Adj. $R^2=.170$, $p<0.001$)