

Job Satisfaction of Paraprofessional Staff Working in Academic Libraries in Sri Lanka: A Case Study at the Library, University of Jaffna

K.Murugathas¹ and S.Santharooban²

ABSTRACT

Paraprofessional staff in academic libraries play a vital role in providing efficient services to library readers. Their job satisfaction directly influences the quality of services offered by the library. This study explored the level of job satisfaction among the paraprofessional staff at the University of Jaffna Library and examined the main factors impacting their job satisfaction. Further, the study examined the influence of the selected demographic characteristics of the paraprofessional library staff members on their job satisfaction level. A survey research method was employed in this study. Self-administered pre-developed questionnaire served as the research tool for data collection. The total population of paraprofessional staff in this library was twenty-eight, all of whom were considered for the study. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics such as the Wilcoxon Signed Rank test, Kruskal-Wallis H test, and Mann-Whitney U.

¹Deputy Librarian, Medical Library, University of Jaffna.

Email: komathym@univ.jfn.ac.lk,  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7252-0342>

² Deputy Librarian, Faculty of Health-Care Sciences, Eastern University, Sri Lanka.

Email: santharoobans@esn.ac.lk,  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1984-875X>



Received: 02 January 2025, Accepted revised version: 30 May 2025.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License.

The survey evaluated various aspects of job satisfaction and how these different facets affect overall job satisfaction. Findings revealed that the study participants were moderately satisfied ($\bar{x} = 3.12$) with their current job. The facet 'Nature of the Work' received the highest satisfaction level, with a mean value of 3.61 (SD = 0.79). This was followed by 'Supervision' ($\bar{x} = 3.50$, SD = 0.48) and then 'Coworkers' ($\bar{x} = 3.38$, SD = 0.77). The lowest-scored facet ($\bar{x} = 2.64$, SD = 0.50) was 'Operating Procedures in the Library'. The facets 'Rewards', 'Pay', 'Promotion', 'Opportunities', and 'Operating Procedures' scored below the neutral mean value (3.00), suggesting dissatisfaction and requiring attention. The study identified a significant difference in 'Pay', 'Benefits', and 'Rewards' among different experience levels of the participants ($p < 0.05$). The analysis further revealed that other demographic factors, such as gender, age, and educational and professional qualifications, do not influence any of the assessed nine facets of job satisfaction ($p > 0.05$) of the paraprofessionals working at University of Jaffna Library. The findings of the study would be helpful to administrators in identifying areas of concern and implementing strategies to enhance the job satisfaction of paraprofessional staff.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, Paraprofessional staff, University libraries, Sri Lanka, Academic libraries, Library Information Assistants

Introduction

Job satisfaction of employees is a crucial factor in the success of any organization. It is the level of satisfaction that the employee prefers the job. According to Locke (1976), job satisfaction can be implicit as a positive emotional response that arises from evaluating one's job or work experiences. Spector (1997) discussed that it is an individual's perception of a job. It depends on several factors, and it may change over time. The exact working situation can be expressed differently by different employees. Job satisfaction is an individual's attitudinal behaviour. Job satisfaction has a direct impact on an employee's health and well-being. Many people hold jobs primarily to earn a living and support their families. Armstrong (2006) described job satisfaction as being closely linked to the attitudes and feelings that individuals hold toward their work. Furthermore, he explained that if employees exhibited a positive attitude, they were said to be satisfied with their jobs. On the other hand, if they experienced an unfavourable attitude, they were unsatisfied with their job. The importance of job satisfaction goes beyond individual well-being; it directly impacts the efficiency and quality of any organization. Satisfied employees are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and committed to their work, which translates to better customer interactions, higher accuracy in task execution, and a positive workplace culture. The level of satisfaction has a positive impact on the job performance of support staff working in academic libraries (Ahamad et al., 2022). Conversely, dissatisfaction can lead to decreased productivity, higher turnover rates, and a decline in service quality, all of which can undermine the organization's mission of serving its academic community effectively (Pugno & Depedri, 2010). Addressing the job satisfaction of paraprofessional staff, therefore, is not just a human

resource concern but a strategic priority for academic libraries aiming to maintain excellence in their services (Rubin, 1991).

Effective services are vital for the success of an academic library, as they support learning, teaching, research, and overall academic excellence (Ariyo & Okwilagwe, 2020). The effectiveness of library services significantly impacts the quality of education and research. By providing equal access to resources, fostering information literacy, and adapting to changing academic needs, libraries play an essential role in the success of the academic community (Corrall & Jolly, 2019). It ensures that all members of the university community, regardless of background or abilities, can access a wide range of resources and services. All categories of staff members should cooperatively work hard to provide effective and efficient services in academic libraries. Paraprofessional staff named Library Information Assistants (LIAs) play a crucial role in the functioning of academic libraries in Sri Lanka. The category of staff members, who often hold intermediate level qualifications in the field of Library and Information Sciences, supports the core activities of libraries and helps to ensure the smooth operation of library services. They are mainly responsible for activities such as cataloguing, circulation, interlibrary loans, and assisting library readers, which form the backbone of daily library operations. By taking on routine responsibilities, paraprofessional staff members support the professional librarians to focus on more specialized tasks such as research support, information literacy, training, collection development, etc.

Understanding the factors that contribute to or detract from job satisfaction among paraprofessionals is crucial for fostering a supportive and productive workplace environment. Issues such as workload, workplace

relationships, opportunities for professional development, recognition, and compensation all influence how these employees perceive their roles and their organization (Brun & Dugas, 2008). Furthermore, the unique environment of academic libraries, characterized by evolving technologies, budget constraints, and shifting patron needs, adds another layer of complexity to job satisfaction for paraprofessionals.

University of Jaffna is one of the oldest state Universities in Sri Lanka established as a campus of the University of Sri Lanka in 1974. It became an individual university in 1978. Currently, it has fourteen faculties in a wide range of disciplines. Seven branch libraries are attached to the faculties in different locations, managed by the main library of this university. Three faculties are in Kilinochchi district, and all other faculties are in Jaffna district.

Many studies (Thirunavukarasu, 1994; Amarakoon, 1995; Kuruppu, 1998; Wijeweera, 2004) have been conducted on the job satisfaction of employees in university libraries in Sri Lanka, but the main concern of the research studies was on the job satisfaction of the professional staff members rather than paraprofessional staff members working in the university libraries. Studying job satisfaction among paraprofessional staff is important to address their concerns and enhance their work experience. By examining this topic, academic institutions can better understand how to support these vital employees, ultimately improving both individual well-being and the overall effectiveness of library services.

Objectives of the study

- To explore the level of satisfaction of the library paraprofessional staff working at the library, University of Jaffna.
- To identify the major job satisfaction factors that influence the job satisfaction level among paraprofessional staff members.
- To find out whether there are any correlations between the selected demographic characteristics of the paraprofessional library staff members and their job satisfaction level.

Literature Review

Spector (1985) developed a widely used job satisfaction survey tool to assess staff satisfaction in private or non-profit organizations. This validated tool has nine subscales: pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, operating conditions, contingent rewards, co-workers, nature of the work, and communication. Overall job satisfaction can be measured using these nine subscales. Each subscale has four items, each of which includes a Likert rating scale, allowing comprehensive measurement of overall job satisfaction. Job satisfaction among library support staff was conducted in Alabama academic libraries by Fitch (1990). The study used a job description index as a survey tool to collect data. In this study, the employees working in small libraries (less than 3000 students) were more satisfied with the supervision than the employees working in large libraries (3000-9000 students). Compensation and opportunities for promotion were the least satisfying factors among the library support staff.

Thapisa (1992) reported on a study that identified library assistants' attitudes toward library work. The study found that library work did not

provide intellectual stimulation among library assistants employed in university libraries in the United Kingdom. Further, the study explored the idea that they worked in the library to earn money and that the job didn't play any important role in their lives. Parmer and East (1993) conducted a study on job satisfaction among support staff employed in Ohio academic libraries. The study concluded that overall satisfaction of the support staff of these libraries was rated as satisfied with their library job. Out of the nine subscales used in the research questionnaire, satisfaction was expressed in five subscales, and they were not satisfied with the rest of the four subscales, which were operational procedures, communication, rewards, and promotion. Further, the study pointed out that part-time employees were more satisfied with the pay than permanent employees working in the library. Murray (1999) performed a study among the employees, including paraprofessionals and professionals, at the Academic Affairs Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to identify the job satisfaction level of these staff members. Both categories of these staff members were satisfied with their job and professional staff members were significantly more satisfied than paraprofessional staff. The study further identified that pay and promotion were the lowest satisfaction factors among these staff members.

Hussain and Soroya (2017) investigated factors affecting the job satisfaction of paraprofessional staff working in university libraries in Pakistan. The study revealed widespread dissatisfaction with salary and job security being the most influential factors in determining the level of satisfaction of paraprofessional staff members in academic libraries in Pakistan. Permanent employees reported greater satisfaction than contract-based staff more satisfied than contract-based staff. Further, the study pointed

out that there was no significant difference in the level of job satisfaction between the employees working in government and private libraries.

Opeke and others (2019) conducted a study among library staff members in public universities in South-West Nigeria. It was a survey research study based on Herzberg's two-factor theory. Data was collected from professional and paraprofessional staff working in university libraries in Nigeria. The study reported that the overall level of satisfaction of the staff members was high. The study highlighted that job security, relationships with co-workers, the nature of work, and recognition significantly contributed to overall job satisfaction. Out of all the job satisfaction factors, salary scored the lowest mean value, indicating library staff members were not satisfied with their salaries.

A study was conducted by Martin (2020) to study the job satisfaction of professional librarians and library staff working in different types of libraries in the USA. Seven hundred and seventy participants were included in the survey. It was reported that no significant correlation between job satisfaction and the years of library service, age of the staff members, race, or gender. Abdulrahman, Abubakar and Ahmed (2023) conducted a descriptive survey involving 250 paraprofessionals in six academic libraries in Bauchi State. The study reported gender-based differences in satisfaction. Male staff were more satisfied with the factor of staff development, while female staff were not satisfied with the same. However, both groups expressed satisfaction with promotional opportunities.

While numerous studies have explored job satisfaction among library staff globally, a key gap remains concerning paraprofessional staff in university libraries in Sri Lanka. There are a few studies carried out in Sri

Lanka to explore the job satisfaction of professional staff working in state university libraries in Sri Lanka (Thirunavukarasu, 1994; Amarakoon, 1995; Kuruppu, 1998; Wijeweera, 2004; Marasinghe and Wijayaratne, 2018). These studies were mainly focused on the job satisfaction of professional staff members. Moreover, there is a lack of recent studies that reflect current employment trends, job satisfaction, and professional development of paraprofessional staff in Sri Lanka.

A comprehensive study by Ranaweera et al. (2018), surveyed 510 library employees across fourteen Sri Lankan state universities, including both professional and paraprofessional staff attached to the academic libraries in Sri Lanka. The study concluded that overall, the library employees were moderately satisfied with their library work. Further, the research identified seven key factors affecting job satisfaction: work itself, supervision, salary, promotion opportunities, recognition, working conditions, and cooperation among staff. The study recommended enhancing career development opportunities and establishing mechanisms for appreciation and feedback to improve job satisfaction levels. Each of these studies provided different findings to understand the level of job satisfaction of paraprofessional staff members working in libraries.

The current study seeks to address gaps by focusing specifically on the job satisfaction of paraprofessional staff working in the Jaffna University Library in Sri Lanka, providing current perspectives of the library paraprofessionals. By examining the key factors such as salary, supervision, promotion opportunities, work environment, etc., the study builds upon the foundational work of prior researchers while offering new insights relevant to paraprofessional staff working in the Jaffna University library.

Research Design and Methods

The survey research method was used to explore job satisfaction among the library information assistants working at the University of Jaffna. A self-administered questionnaire was used as a research tool to collect data. The total population of this staff category was twenty-eight, and the entire population was considered for this study.

A pre-developed structured questionnaire (Spector, 1997) was employed to gather data from participants. The English version of the questionnaire was translated into Tamil by a professional translator to help the study participants easily understand it in their native language. The translated questionnaire was then back-translated into English to prevent translation errors. Experts evaluated the Tamil translation to assess its reliability. The validated job satisfaction survey encompasses nine facets of job satisfaction: 'Pay', 'Promotion', 'Supervision', 'Benefits', 'Contingent Rewards', 'Operating Procedures', 'Co-workers', 'Nature of the Work', and 'Communication'. Each facet contains four statements, mixing negative and positive statements. A total of 36 statements was included in the questionnaire, which measures overall employee satisfaction. A five-point Likert scale was employed, ranging from 'Strongly Agree', 'Strongly Disagree'. At the beginning of the questionnaire, demographic information about the participants was included. A cover letter was attached to the questionnaire, emphasizing the purpose of the study, the anonymity of data collection, data confidentiality, and the voluntary nature of participation in the research. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed among the participants, and data were collected in February 2025. The collected data was analyzed for descriptive statistics, and inferential statistics such as the Wilcoxon Signed

Rank test, Kruskal-Wallis H test, and Mann-Whitney U were also used to analyze the data. The statistical analysis was performed using R software (version 4.4.2) from the Comprehensive R Archive Network (CRAN).

Results and Discussion

Demographic information of the participants

The response rate of the study was 100 %. The survey provides details of the demographic characteristics and professional experiences of paraprofessional staff working at the library, University of Jaffna. Table 1 presents a detailed summary of the participants' demographic characteristics. The study participants were 43% male and 57% female, suggesting a slight female dominance in the profession. The largest age group among the participants was 36-45 years (43%), followed by 26-35 years (29%) and 46-55 years (21%). This indicates that a significant proportion of the participants are in their mid-career stage. Regarding professional experience, half of the participants had 15-20 years of service, while only 7% had more than 20 years of experience. Educational and professional qualifications are well-represented, and most employees have professional qualifications from the Sri Lanka Library Association (SLLA), which is the professional body providing Library Science courses in Sri Lanka. Though the basic requirement of the educational qualification of this job position in Sri Lanka is an advanced level, which refers to a high school qualification in Sri Lanka, 68% of the participants earned basic Degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas, and Master's Degrees. This suggests that most participants exceed the requirements of the minimum qualification.

Table 1

Demographic information of the participants

Characteristics		Frequency	Percentage
Library	Main	18	64.3
	Branch	10	35.7
Gender	Male	12	42.9
	Female	16	57.1
Age (years)	26-35	8	28.6
	36-45	12	42.9
	46-55	6	21.4
	> 55	2	7.1
Experience as Library Information Assistants (Years)	0-5	10	35.7
	5-10	2	7.1
	10-15	0	0.0
	15-20	14	50.0
	>20	2	7.1
Distance from the residents to the working library (km)	<3	6	21.4
	3-5	5	17.9
	5-10	3	10.7
	10-15	3	10.7
	15-20	3	10.7
	>20	8	28.6
Educational Qualification	A/L	9	32.1
	Degree	11	39.3
	PG Diploma	3	10.7
	Masters	5	17.9
Library Science Qualification	BA	0	0.0
	PGD	3	10.7
	SLLA I	9	32.1
	SLLA III	15	53.6
	Others	1	3.6

Participants were asked whether they had ever considered resigning from their jobs to identify their job satisfaction level. The responses indicated that 71% (n=20) had never thought of leaving the job, 21% (n=6) had seldom considered it, and 7% (n=2) reported frequently thinking about resignation. It shows that the majority of the staff members are satisfied with their current jobs. It is interesting to note that no one reported always thinking of leaving the job.

Survey results of job satisfaction score

The survey assessed nine facets of job satisfaction: ‘Pay’, ‘Promotion’, ‘Supervision’, ‘Benefits’, ‘Contingent Rewards’, ‘Operating Procedures’, ‘Coworkers’, ‘Nature of Work’, and ‘Communication’. The survey tool consists of thirty-six (36) statements that cover the nine facets. There are seventeen positive (17) statements and nineteen (19) negative statements. Positive statements are coded as follows: 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree. Negative statements are reverse-coded. A one-tail Wilcoxon signed-rank test (one-sample test) was performed, using 3 (Neutral) as the hypothetical median to determine whether the median scores of each statement significantly differed from the neutral value of 3. The results revealed that, among the seventeen positive statements, the medians of thirteen statements were significantly greater than 3 ($p < 0.05$). These statements indicate generally positive perceptions. Among nineteen negative statements, the medians of nine statements were significantly less than 3 ($p < 0.05$) and these statements indicate generally negative perceptions.

Table 2

The median values of the statements grouped with the relevant facets

Facets	Item	Direction	Statements	Median
Pay	1	+	I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do	4.00**
	10	-	Raises are too few and far between	2.00*
	19	-	I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me	2.00
	28	+	I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increase	3.50
Promotion	2	-	There is really too little chance for promotion on my job	2.00*
	11	+	Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted	3.50
	20	+	People get ahead as fast here as they do in other places	3.50
	33	+	I am satisfied with my chances for promotion	4.00**

Supervision	3	+	My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job	4.00**
	12	-	My supervisor is unfair to me.	2.00*
	21	-	My supervisor shows too little interest in the feelings of subordinates.	4.00**
	30	+	I like my supervisor	4.00**
Benefits	4	-	I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive	3.00
	13	+	The benefits we receive are as good as most other organization offer.	4.00**
	22	+	The benefit package we have is equitable.	3.50
	29	-	There are benefits we do not have which we should have	2.00
Contingent Rewards	5	+	When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive	4.00**
	14	-	I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated	2.50*
	23	-	There are few rewards for those who work here.	2.00
	32	-	I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be.	2.00*
Operating Procedures	6	-	Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult	4.00
	15	+	My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape.	4.00**
	24	-	I have too much to do at work	2.00*
	31	-	I feel my skills are enough to work efficiently & effectively	1.00*
Coworkers	7	+	I like the people I work with	4.06**
	16	-	I find I have to work harder at my job than I should because of the incompetence of people I work with.	4.00
	25	+	I enjoy my co-workers	4.00**
	34	-	There is too much bickering and fighting at work.	2.00*
Nature of Work	8	-	I sometimes feel my job is meaningless	3.00
	17	+	I like doing the things I do at work.	4.00**
	27	+	I feel a sense of pride in doing my job	4.00**
	35	+	My job is enjoyable	4.00**
Communication	9	+	Communication seems good within this organization	4.00**
	18	-	The goals of this organization are not clear to me	4.00
	26	-	I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organization	2.00*
	36	-	Work assignments are often not fully explained.	4.00

*Note: Positive statements are coded as follows: 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree. Negative statements are reverse-coded. **indicates that the observed median is significantly greater than 3 ($p < 0.05$) and * indicates that the observed median is significantly less than 3 ($p < 0.05$) in a one-tail Wilcoxon signed-rank test.*

The analysis reveals that there are some notable trends among the facets of job satisfaction. For 'Pay', items 1 and 10 suggest that while staff are satisfied with the salary, they are dissatisfied with salary increments. Regarding 'Promotion', there is a mixed perception about the chances of promotion. While they are highly satisfied with 'Opportunities' for 'Promotion' (Item 33, Median 4.00), staff also feel overall chance for 'Promotion' is limited (Item 2, Median =2). The 'Supervision' facet reflects strong positive perceptions for three items, except the item 12, where staff perceive their supervisors are unfair towards them. These findings suggest generally strong supervisory competence and positive interpersonal relationships among staff members. For 'Benefits', item 13 indicates a strong positive perception of the benefits they receive, whereas other items reflect a neutral view as their median are not statistically significant.

In the area of 'Contingent Rewards', items 5, 14 and 32 are statistically significant. Although staff feel that whenever they do a good job, they receive recognition, they have a negative perception regarding the appreciation and reward. For 'Operating Procedure', items 15, 24, and 31 are statistically significant. Although the staff believe that their good jobs are seldom blocked, and they have enough skill to perform their work effectively, they also report being overburdened with work. Additionally, the statements such as, 'When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive' and 'My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape' highlight a work environment that values performance and minimizes bureaucratic obstacles. About the 'Coworker' relations, items 7, 25 and 34 are statistically significant. The relationship among the staff members is with strong agreement on liking coworkers, but there are also concerns about bickering and fighting. The 'Nature of Work' facet received consistently high ratings, with all positive

items scoring medians of 4.00 or more, and this indicates that staff enjoy their work and take pride in it. About the 'Communication', there is a high satisfaction in the general communication within the organization. However, concerns remain about a lack of organizational awareness.

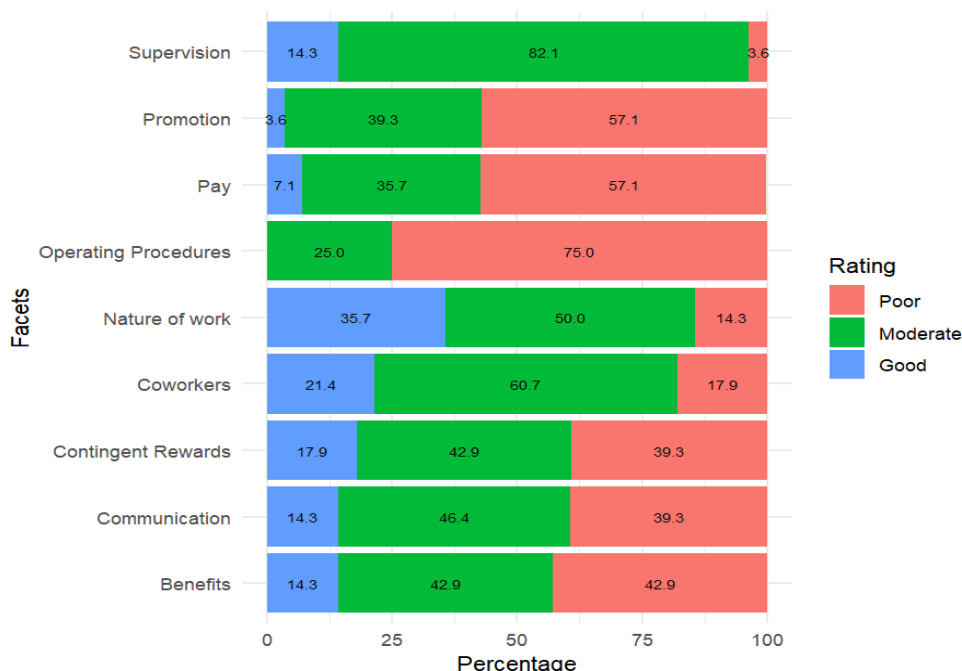
Levels of Job Satisfaction in Percentage Distribution with Each Facet

The average for each facet was calculated by using the responses given by each respondent. Since there were no universal categorizations of this scale, authors categorized 1 and 2 as poor satisfaction, 3 as moderate satisfaction, and 4 and 5 as good satisfaction. This categorization was derived from the Likert scale that was used to measure job satisfaction. Based on this categorization, the stacked plot (Figure 1) was derived. Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of the job satisfaction level among the paraprofessionals, categorized by nine distinct facets of their work experience. Out of the nine facets, 'Supervision' was the most satisfied facet, with 82.1% rating it as moderate, 14.3% as good, and only 3.6% as poor. The second most satisfied facet was 'Coworkers', with a substantial majority reporting "moderate" satisfaction. The nature of work also demonstrates a positive trend, with the majority of participants rating it as "good" or "moderate."

The factor, 'Operating Procedures' of the library received the lowest satisfaction rating, with 75% of the participants rating it as poor, 25 % rated it as moderate, and no good rating at all. The study suggested that inefficient operating procedures make the work more challenging. Facets of 'Communication' and 'Benefits' revealed a more balanced distribution across satisfaction levels, suggesting varied experiences and potentially requiring further investigation to understand the underlying factors contributing to these mixed responses.

Figure 1

Levels of job satisfaction in percentage (%) with each facet



The study explored how different facets influence the level of job satisfaction. The average level of satisfaction for each facet is given in Table 3. Each statement was coded from 1-5, and negative statements were reverse-coded to calculate the mean and standard deviation. The facets of job satisfaction are organized in descending order based on their mean values, from highest to lowest. The analysis of the study provides a comprehensive understanding of the perception of paraprofessionals across different job satisfaction facets. The overall average mean value of job satisfaction was 3.12 (SD=0.43), and the average score of job satisfaction indicated by each respondent was categorized as poor (1-2), moderate (3), and good (4-5). The descriptive analysis shows that 75% of that, the paraprofessional staff members of the University of Jaffna library were moderately satisfied and 25% were poorly satisfied with their current job, while there was no one with a good satisfaction level.

Table 3

Overall means of Job satisfaction level in each facet

Facets	Mean	SD
Nature of the Work	3.61	0.79
Supervision	3.50	0.48
Co-workers	3.38	0.77
Benefits	3.13	0.71
Communication	3.11	0.82
Rewards	2.94	0.90
Pay	2.79	0.69
Promotion	2.74	0.64
Operating procedures	2.64	0.50
Overall satisfaction	3.12	0.43

The facet Nature of the Work received the highest satisfaction level with a mean value of 3.61 (SD= 0.79), suggesting that participants generally find their job roles meaningful, engaging, and fulfilling. This represents a key strength of the University library, as participants had a positive perception of the nature of the library work. Only 14 % of the respondents rated this facet as poor. The facet Nature of the Work was followed by ‘Supervision’ (\bar{x} = 3.50, SD = 0.48) and then ‘Coworkers’ (\bar{x} = 3.38, SD = 0.77). Concerning the ‘Supervision’, only 3.6 % responded as poor. This indicates that the majority of the library paraprofessionals were satisfied with the supervision they received. Employees’ feeling of good supervision is a strength of the library, contributing to a positive trend to increase performance. Coworker relationships (\bar{x} = 3.38, SD = 0.77) also scored well, which suggests a positive team environment in the library. Strong interpersonal relationships among supervisors and coworkers play an important role in increasing the job satisfaction of employees in an institution (Baxi & Atre, 2024). Strong team relationships can contribute to collaboration, motivation, and overall work satisfaction. These findings highlighted that the paraprofessionals at the

Library University of Jaffna appreciate their work, supervisors, and the coworkers they collaborate with, which can contribute to overall job satisfaction and productivity of the institution. The current study findings are supported by the study conducted by Parmer & East (1993). Support staff expressed a strong satisfaction level with supervision, coworkers, and their work.

‘Benefits’ ($\bar{x} = 3.13$, $SD = 0.71$) and ‘Communication’ ($\bar{x} = 3.11$, $SD = 0.82$) received moderate satisfaction scores, highlighting areas where improvement could boost overall job satisfaction. Improvements in internal communication channels are urgently needed to increase transparency within the institution.

Several factors, such as ‘Rewards’, ‘Pay’, ‘Promotion’, ‘Opportunities’, and ‘Operating Procedures’, scored below 3.00, suggesting dissatisfaction and requiring attention. The facet ‘Rewards’ exhibited a high standard deviation ($SD = 0.90$), reflecting diverse perceptions among the study participants. Some may feel recognized and rewarded, while others believe their efforts are not recognized. This inconsistency could lead to misunderstandings among employees. A study reported (Sarwar & Abugre, 2013) that better rewards induce employee job satisfaction and increase the institution's customer satisfaction. The lowest-scored facet was ‘Operating Procedures’ with a low standard deviation. This shows that participants are not satisfied with the current system and procedures in the library. Further research is needed to confirm whether participants have a clear knowledge of the operating procedures in the library, or the library may have an inefficient system and operating procedures.

Correlation between the demographic factors and the job satisfaction facets

The nine facets of job satisfaction were compared with the demographic details of the participants, such as “gender, age, experience, working library whether main library or branch library, distance from the residence to the library, educational qualification, and library science qualifications” using the Kruskal-Wallis H test and Mann-Whitney U test to determine whether significant differences exist between the demographic characteristics of the participants and the facets.

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis H test showed that there was a significant difference in ‘Pay’, ‘Benefits’, and ‘Rewards’ among different experience levels of the participants ($p < 0.05$).

A pairwise comparison was performed using Bonferroni correction for these three facets to exactly locate the significant difference. Table 4 presents the mean values of job satisfaction concerning ‘Pay’, ‘Benefits’, and ‘Rewards’ across different experience levels of the participants.

Pay

The results indicate that the employees with less than five years of experience reported the highest mean satisfaction with ‘Pay’ ($\bar{x} = 3.22$), followed closely by those with more than 20 years of experience ($\bar{x} = 3.13$). However, employees in the 5–10 years and 11–20 years categories reported lower ‘Pay’ satisfaction levels ($\bar{x} = 2.25$) and ($\bar{x} = 2.52$), respectively. The Kruskal-Wallis test indicates a statistically significant difference in ‘Pay’ satisfaction across all experience levels ($p = 0.038$), suggesting that perceptions of ‘Pay’ vary significantly depending on the job experience.

Benefits

Employees with 5–10 years of experience reported the highest satisfaction on ‘Benefits’ (\bar{x} = 4.00), while those with 11–20 years had the lowest rating (\bar{x} = 2.70). The remaining groups, those with less than 5 years (\bar{x} = 3.55) and more than 20 years of experience (\bar{x} = 3.13), fell in between. The Kruskal-Wallis test shows that differences in satisfaction with the ‘Benefits’ employees receive were statistically significant (p = 0.006), indicating that employees with 11–20 years of experience perceive benefits less favourably than their less experienced or more experienced counterparts.

Satisfaction with the ‘Benefits’ is also significantly lower among staff with 15 to 20 years of experience than among staff with less than five years and 5 to 10 years of experience.

Rewards

The highest satisfaction with ‘Rewards’ was reported by the respondents with more than 20 years of experience (\bar{x} = 3.63), followed by those with less than 5 years (\bar{x} = 3.60). Respondents in the 11–20 year group reported lower satisfaction with factor ‘Rewards’ (\bar{x} = 2.48), with the 5–10 year group showing the lowest satisfaction (\bar{x} = 2.13). The Kruskal-Wallis test also yielded a significant result (p = 0.005), indicating that employee experience levels significantly influence perceptions of the job satisfaction facet rewards.

In all three cases, the staff with 15 to 20 years of experience had poor levels of satisfaction, and the staff with less than 5 years of experience had a moderate level of satisfaction. The satisfaction regarding the factor ‘Benefits’ among the staff with 5 to 10 years of experience was good.

Table 4

Mean Employee Satisfaction Ratings for 'Pay', 'Benefits', and Rewards across Experience Levels

Experience (Years)	Mean (\bar{x})		
	Pay	Benefits	Rewards
<5	3.22	3.55	3.60
5-10	2.25	4.00	2.13
11-20	2.52	2.70	2.48
>20	3.13	3.13	3.63
p value of Kruskal-Wallis H test	p =0.038	p =0.006	p =0.005

The analysis further revealed that other demographic factors such as gender, age, educational and professional qualifications do not have any influence on any of the nine facets of job satisfaction ($p>0.05$) of the paraprofessionals working at the University of Jaffna Library. Further research is needed to explore this finding with a large study sample, considering other university libraries in Sri Lanka. In contrast, Fitch (1990) concluded that women paraprofessionals working at Alabama academic libraries were more satisfied than men. Another study by Adegboye et al. (2021) concluded that gender differences did not influence the level of satisfaction among library staff members working in universities.

Job satisfaction level among branch libraries

The Mann-Whitney U test confirmed that there was a significant difference ($p=0.031$) in the level of satisfaction with 'Supervision' between the main library ($\bar{x}=3.36$) and branch libraries ($\bar{x}=3.75$). Even though there was a significant difference in the level of satisfaction with 'Supervision' between the main library and branch libraries, both satisfaction levels were at moderate levels. In large libraries, contact with the supervisor cannot be as

personal as in small libraries, where the number of employees is comparatively smaller. A similar test was conducted to check the difference in nine facets between branches situated in two different districts. The results revealed that there was a significant difference in the satisfaction of 'Pay' ($p=0.038$) and 'Rewards' ($p=0.038$) between the branch libraries situated in Killinochchi district and Jaffna district. The satisfaction level of 'Pay' for the staff attached to Killinochchi branch libraries ($\bar{x}=3.50$) is higher than the paraprofessional staff attached to Jaffna branch libraries ($\bar{x}=2.38$). Despite receiving equal pay under the standardized state university salary system, the job satisfaction level is higher among staff working at the branch libraries in Killinochchi than Jaffna. The Killinochchi branch libraries primarily employed junior staff members who are relatively junior to the workforce. Moreover, Jaffna is a more urbanised area than Killinochchi. Therefore, the cost of living in Killinochchi is comparatively less than the Jaffna. This may lead to the staff working in Killinochchi having higher satisfaction with pay than the staff who are working in Jaffna. Given Sri Lanka's economic challenges and limited job opportunities, these employees may perceive their employment as a valuable opportunity, leading to increased job satisfaction. The scarcity of new recruitment due to the economic crisis further reinforces their appreciation for permanent employment.

Further research is needed to explore the underlying factors influencing these perceptions. Similarly, the satisfaction on 'Rewards' for the staff attached to A libraries ($\bar{x}=3.75$) was higher than that of Killinochchi branch libraries ($\bar{x}=2.42$). In both aspects, the paraprofessionals attached to the libraries in Killinochchi district had moderate satisfaction, while the same category of staff attached to the branch libraries in Jaffna district had poor satisfaction.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The survey results provide the overall satisfaction level of the paraprofessional staff members working at the University of Jaffna library. The overall mean satisfaction of the paraprofessional staff was 3.12, indicating that employees are neither highly dissatisfied nor highly satisfied. Paraprofessional staff members are moderately satisfied with their jobs. There is room for improvement in enhancing overall work satisfaction. The most satisfying facet of these employees identified from this research was the Nature of the Work; it was followed by 'Supervision', then Co-workers. The survey results revealed that the University of Jaffna library has strong fundamentals, where paraprofessional staff enjoy their work and appreciate their supervisors and co-workers. The staff members were moderately satisfied with the 'Benefits' and internal 'Communication'. Enhancing communication strategies such as regular meetings, feedback mechanisms, and transparent library policies can improve communication in the library, leading to increased job satisfaction. Several facets were scored with a mean value below 3, signaling potential dissatisfaction. The most urgent areas brought up by the study are 'Rewards', 'Pay', 'Promotion', and 'Operating Procedures'. Addressing concerns on 'Rewards', 'Pay', job 'Promotion', and workplace policies will be crucial in improving overall satisfaction. Improving salary structures or providing incentives could enhance job satisfaction. The lowest-rated facet concerning job satisfaction was 'Operating Procedures' in the library. Participants may feel inefficient systems and procedures. The library management should identify and eliminate inefficient procedures in the library operations and get the involvement of the paraprofessional staff members in the process of improvement discussions.

Concerning the correlation between the demographic characteristics of the library paraprofessionals and the job satisfaction facets, there is a statistically significant difference in 'Pay', 'Benefits', and 'Rewards' among different experience levels of the participants ($p < 0.05$). Experience in library services influences the job satisfaction level of paraprofessional employees at the University of Jaffna Library. The analysis further concluded that other demographic factors such as gender, age, and educational & professional qualifications do not have any influence on any of the studied nine facets of job satisfaction ($p > 0.05$) of the paraprofessionals working at the University of Jaffna library. The results highlighted an interesting trend where paraprofessional employees with less than five years of working experience and employees with more than twenty years of working experience reported higher satisfaction with 'Pay' and 'Rewards' than mid-career (5- 20 years of working experience) paraprofessional employees. It was statistically proved that there was a significant difference ($p = 0.031$) in the level of satisfaction with 'Supervision' between the type of working library, namely the main library ($\bar{x} = 3.36$) and branch libraries ($\bar{x} = 3.75$). The type of working library, whether the main library or branch library, also significantly affects the job satisfaction facet of 'Supervision', which affects the level of job satisfaction of the paraprofessionals. The job satisfaction survey results provide a comprehensive understanding of the paraprofessional staff members' perceptions across various job satisfaction facets. Further, the study identified the areas concerned to be improved. By focusing on these areas, the University of Jaffna can enhance the job satisfaction of the library paraprofessionals, leading to higher engagement and overall productivity.

References

- Abdulrahman, A., Abubakar, M. Z., & Ahmed, M. A. (2023). Levels of job satisfaction among para-professionals in academic libraries in Bauchi state. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, 7610.
<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/7610>
- Adegboye, M. O., Abubakar, H. O., & Osunkentan, O. A. (2021). Global trend in career satisfaction, self-perception, and gender differences among library personnel in the university: An important parameter for organizational success. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, 5125.
<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/5125>
- Amarakoon, L. R. (1995). *Study to determine the job satisfaction of health sciences librarians in Sri Lanka* [Unpublished fellowship thesis]. Sri Lanka Library Association.
- Ariyo, E. O., & Okwilagwe, A. O. (2020). Influence of organisational culture on job satisfaction of library personnel in selected academic libraries in three states in South-West, Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, 4016. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/4016>
- Armstrong, M. (2006). *A handbook of human resource management practice* (10th ed.). Kogan Page.
- Baxi, B., & Atre, D. (2024). Job Satisfaction: Understanding the meaning, importance, and dimensions. *Journal of Management and Entrepreneurship Research*, 18(2), 34-40.
- Brun, J. P., & Dugas, N. (2008). An analysis of employee recognition: Perspectives on human resources practices. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 19(4), 716-730.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09585190801953723>

- Corrall, S., & Jolly, L. (2019). Innovations in learning and teaching in academic libraries: Alignment, collaboration, and the social turn. *New Review of Academic Librarianship*, 25(2-4), 113-128.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13614533.2019.1697099>
- Fitch, D. K. (1990). Job satisfaction among library support staff in Alabama academic libraries. *College & Research Libraries*, 51(4), 313-320.
- Hussain, S., & Soroya, S. H. (2017). Exploring the factors affecting job satisfaction of paraprofessional staff working in University Libraries of Pakistan. *Library Review*, 66(3), 144-162.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/LR-09-2016-0074>
- Kuruppu, D. C. (1998). How to maximize the job satisfaction of professional librarians? *Sri Lanka Library Review*, 12(20), 71-78.
- Locke, E. A. (1976). The nature and causes of job satisfaction. In M. D. Dunnette (Ed.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology* (pp. 1297–1349). Rand McNally.
- Marasinghe, M. P. L. R., & Wijayarathne, A. (2018). The impact of gender differences on job satisfaction of university library professionals. *Journal of the University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka*, 21(2), 1-19.
<https://doi.org/10.4038/jula.v21i2.7905>
- Martin, J. (2020). Job satisfaction of professional librarians and library staff. *Journal of Library Administration*, 60(4), 365-382.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01930826.2020.1721941>
- Murray, R. A. (1999). *Job satisfaction of professional and paraprofessional library staff at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill* (Master's paper, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill). ERIC.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED437041.pdf>

- Opeke, R., Ikonne, C. N., & Adewoyin, O. O. (2019). Job satisfaction among library personnel in public universities in south-west Nigeria. *Information Impact: Journal of Information and Knowledge Management*, 10(2), 124-138.
<https://doi.org/10.4314/ijikm.v10i2.9>
- Parmer, C., & East, D. (1993). Job satisfaction among support staff in twelve Ohio academic libraries. *College & Research Libraries*, 54(1), 43-57.
- Pugno, M., & Depedri, S. (2010). Job performance and job satisfaction: an integrated survey. *Economia politica*, 27(1), 175-210.
<https://doi/10.2139/ssrn.1402566>
- Ranaweera, R. A. A. S., Si Li., & Bodhinayaka, D. (2018). Job satisfaction of library staff: A study based on university libraries in Sri Lanka. *International Journal of Human Resource Studies*, 8(3), 5359-5359.
- Rubin, R. E. (1991). *Human resource management in libraries: Theory and practice*. Neal-Schuman Publishers.
- Sarwar, S., & Abugre, J. (2013). The influence of rewards and job satisfaction on employees in the service industry. *The Business & Management Review*, 3(2), 22-32.
- Spector, P. E. (1985). Measurement of human service job satisfaction: development of the job satisfaction survey. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 13(6), 693-712.
- Spector, P. E. (1997). *Job satisfaction: Application, assessment, causes, and consequences*. Sage.
- Thapisa, A. P. N. (1992). Work, its significance, meaning and challenges among library assistants. *Journal of Library Administration*, 16(4), 19-43.

Thirunavukarasu, K. (1994). *Job satisfaction among university professional librarians in Sri Lanka* (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Colombo.

Wijeweera, K. G. G. (2004). *Job satisfaction of professionals in agricultural libraries in Sri Lanka* (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Colombo.