

## **Factor affecting to job satisfaction of officers of Sri Lanka Agriculture Service (SLAgS) in Sri Lanka**

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Received: May 30, 2017; Revised: June 5, 2017 Accepted: June 20, 2017, Published June, 2017

### **ABSTRACT**

Job satisfaction of agricultural functionaries working under DOA is pre requisite for the goal of the DOA. On this background, this study attempts to recognize job satisfaction perception by officers of SLAgS working in the Department of Agriculture. The data were collected from SLAgS officers of the DoA such as ROs, AOs, Lectures and SMSs through pre tested questioner. Job satisfaction was

measured by employing five points Likert-scale with 15 statements expressing different aspects of job satisfaction. SLAgS officers job satisfaction was low. Majority of SLAgS officers satisfied about motivational factors such as guidance given by superiors to improve their job, freedom and flexibility for carrying out the job, opportunities to utilize their personal skill and mutual understanding with the co-workers

while they did not satisfy about hygiene factors like present salary for the commensurate with their work and position, paid salary relation to educational qualification, performance assessment methods, distance from office to house, facilities availability, recognition and reward for their creative work, opportunities

for higher education and training, flexibility to engage with family responsibilities, children's education etc. and availability of promotion according to performance. Further, majority of the respondents were in the category of not satisfaction to highly dissatisfied level.

**Key words:** SLAgS officers, job satisfaction, motivational factors, agriculture

## INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is a vital component in Sri Lankan Economy as it contributes 7.9 percent to the national GDP and out of the 8.973 million Sri Lanka labour force about 2.530 million (28.2%) are engaged in agriculture [1]. The Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) with the view of achieving food security of the nation and upgrading the livelihood of the rural agriculture community has formulated a policy on agriculture sector with a theme 'A country free of poisonous substances'. Among the line agencies DoA has to play a major role in subsistence agriculture sector. Department of Agriculture (DoA) is responsible for the development of nationwide agriculture sector to achieve Sri Lankan development goals. All the staff members from top to bottom of the DoA are responsibility to accomplish the government objectives and food production policies. The line functionaries of the DoA belong to Sri Lanka Agriculture Service (SLAgS). Research Officers (ROs), Agricultural Officers (AOs), Lecturers and Subject Matter Specialists (SMS) are the major categories belong to SLAgS. In fact National Committee on Socio-Economics and Policy Analysis indicated that agriculture sector has not been able to support the rural poor who are vulnerable to natural calamities as well as to global and localized economic strife. Further, food prices on the other hand continue to rise and as much as 42.3 percent of the total household income is spent on food by nearly 50 percent of the population. On this background, DoA needs to bear the responsibility because it is the main technical department relevant to agriculture [2]. Thus, there is an argument about involvement of the officers of SLAgS for the progress of agriculture sector. It may still inadequate. It is therefore; necessary to study the SLAgS officers' job satisfaction in order to improve job performance. Huge numbers of research studies have been done by various researches related to the job satisfaction because employees' job satisfaction is the only important factor for achieving organizational goals. Therefore Anonymous [3] have pointed out that the most important information

Citation: Sandika AL et al. (2017), Factor affecting to job satisfaction of officers of Sri Lanka Agriculture Service (SLAgS) in Sri Lanka, Agricultural Extension Journal, Volume 1, Issue 3

to have regarding an employee in an organization is a valid measure of employees level of job satisfaction. Consequently, analysis of job satisfaction of agricultural functionaries working under DOA is pre requisite for implementing the strategic plant to achieve the goal of the DOA. On this background, this study attempts to recognize job satisfaction perception by officers of SLAgS working in the Department of Agriculture with following specific objective to assess the perception on job satisfaction of officers of SLAgS, to ascertain the personal and job related characteristics of SLAgS officers on influencing the governance and job satisfaction, and To identify the bottle necks and appropriate measures to improve the job satisfaction.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The descriptive research design was employed for the study. Department of Agriculture (DoA) was the study organization. It is one of the oldest and important government departments in Sri Lanka. It was established in 1912 and at the moment it is functioning under the Ministry of Agriculture. Primary data was collected through pre tested questioner. The study was conducted during June 2016 to December 2016. The data were collected from SLAgS officers of the DoA such as Eighty three ROs, thirty three AOs and twenty Lectures and four SMSs were selected to form a sample of 140. However, data of the lecturers and SMSs were merged together due to insufficient number of questionnaires received from the SMS. Further, two questionnaires was filtered out because improper filling of the information by the respondents. Therefore, final sample size was 138. Job satisfaction is a set of favorable or unfavorable feelings and emotions with which employees view their work. To assess the level of job satisfaction, Anonymous [4] theory was adopted. According to Anonymous [4] there are two dimensions to job satisfaction such as motivation and hygiene. The similar idea for the job satisfaction was given by the Anonymous [5]. Hygiene factors, according to Anonymous [4], cannot motivate employees but can minimize dissatisfaction if handle properly. In other words, hygiene factors such as salary, administration policies influence only dissatisfy if they are absent or mishandled. Motivators on the other hand, create satisfaction by fulfilling individuals' needs for personal growth such as achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility and advancement. On this background, it was operationalized as the degree to which, a respondent is satisfied or not satisfied with different aspects of his job. This variable was quantified by using scale developed by Anonymous [6] followed by the Anonymous [7]. The scale consisted of 15 statements expressing different aspects of job satisfaction which belonged to either hygiene factors or motivators. The respondents were asked to mention the appropriate answers

for each statement of the scale which had Likert-scale with five point *viz.*, from highly satisfied to highly dissatisfy with scores of +2, +1, 0, -1 and -2 score, respectively. Job satisfaction score of a respondent was obtained by summing up the scores obtained by him/her on all the statements. Addition to that, demographic variables like age, gender, education, job experience, training and visits, health condition, information seeking behavior (ISB) and occupational related variables like place of work and distance to home, mode of transport, SLAg Class, job title, job description, job involvement, perceived workload, job stress, job freedom and facilities and resources at work place were considered. Principle component analysis (PCA) was employed to select the suitable statement. Before analyzing data, validity and reliability of the questionnaire was measured. To enhance validity of the instrument, a pre-testing was conducted on a population similar to the target population [8]. Coefficient alpha also known as Cronbach alpha can be used to assess the reliability of a multiple item variable [9]. Descriptive methods such as frequencies and percentages were used at the beginning of the analysis. Frequencies and percentages were used to interpret the data pertaining to characteristics of the respondents, their levels of perception of good governance and job satisfaction. Further, statistical tools such as chi-square, t test, simple correlation and multiple linear regressions were used to test the statistical significance.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

According to the Motivator- Hygiene Theory fifteen statements were used to measure the job satisfaction of SLAgS officers. PCA was employed to recognize the suitable statements before further analysis. It was observed that results of the KMO and Bartlette's were high. Value of this test was 0.868. Further, variables with coefficient of 0.45 or more were considered and all the statements were selected for the further analysis. Moreover, PCA proved that all the statements can be used to measure the job satisfaction. Secondly, Cronbach's alpha value related to reliability test for the Likert scale of job satisfaction was 0.892. It indicates that reliability of scale adapted to measure job satisfaction high. SLAgS officers job satisfaction was low. The data presented in table 1 revealed that negative mean values had received for the present salary for the commensurate with their work and position, paid salary relation to educational qualification, performance assessment methods, distance from office to house, facilities availability, recognition and reward for their creative work, opportunities for higher education and training, flexibility to engage with family responsibilities, children's' education etc. and availability of promotion according to performance. It mean that majority of SLAgS officers were in the dissatisfy level or not satisfy level regarding above indicated job satisfaction dimensions. According to

Motivator- Hygiene Theory those were belonged to Hygiene factors. It is further important to point out that when the absent of the hygiene factors within the organization lead the dissatisfaction of the employment. On the other hand, it will be the cause of the de-motivation. Similar result has found by the Anonymous [10] for their study. Nevertheless, positive mean value were obtained for the guidance given by superiors to improve their job, freedom and flexibility for carrying out the job, opportunities to utilize their personal skill and mutual understanding with the co-workers. These points related to the motivator, and majority SLAgS officers satisfied about the motivator available at the DOA. The data presented in Table no. 2 revealed that majority of the respondents of the total sample (73.00%), ROs (61.00%), AOs (70.00%), and Lecturers (73.00%) were in the category of not satisfaction to highly dissatisfied level whereas, 27.00 percent of ROs and 30.00 per cent of AOs 27.00 percent of lecturers were observed in satisfaction to high job satisfaction level. Result of Chi square test also indicated significant different between the categories of job satisfaction of ROs, AOs and Lecturers. These findings are in agreement with the findings of Anonymous [11, 12, 13, 14]. SLAgS class, ISB, Health, Job title, TOR, Awareness of TOR, relates of TOR with job expectation, job involvement, job freedom, facilities and resources available for carrying out job exhibited positive and significant relationship with job satisfaction of ROs while education and job stress negatively and significant relationship with job satisfaction of ROs. Whereas ISB, relates of TOR with job expectation, job freedom, facilities and resources available for carrying out positive and significant relationship with job satisfaction while education and job stress negatively and significant relationship with job satisfaction of AOs. Job title, facilities and resources available for carrying out job exhibited positive and significant relationship with job satisfaction of ROs lecturers Table no. 3. An attempt was made to identify possible suggestions to improve job satisfaction of SLAgS officers working under DoA. It was suggested that introduced the suitable methods which can be used to ensure good governance in the organizational administration context. Similar result found by the Anonymous [15]. They found that, favourable organizational climate perception insure the job satisfaction of the employees. Moreover, respondents suggested that increase the availability of facilities and inputs. This point was basically mainly highlighted by the people who are working in the remote area. They have worked several years by suffering necessary facilities and inputs. Further they highlighted other basic facilitates such as good school for their children's, medical and transport facilities need to be provided. At same time they pointed out that requirement of implementing transparent transfer system to the all officers. Then, respondents indicated that minimize additional, unrelated and unnecessary works in order to increase the job satisfaction. Majority of ROs

and AOs pointed out that they should involve additional works like exhibition, discussion and meetings rather than their real duties. And also, they pointed out that implement the proper promotion system, transfer system, training facilities and scholar facilities to the officers are needed to improve their work life and job satisfaction. Improve the quantity and quality of the human resources through effective methods, increase the efficiency of administration mechanism in the department, appreciate creative and good work and introduce new mechanism to encourage the join work with private sector and public private partnerships are also required to increase job satisfaction of the respondents.

### CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that SLAGS officers' job satisfaction was low. SLAGS officers satisfied about guidance given by superiors to improve their job, freedom and flexibility for carrying out the job, opportunities to utilize their personal skill and mutual understanding with the co-workers while majority SLAGS officers did not satisfy about the present salary for the commensurate with their work and position, paid salary relation to educational qualification, performance assessment methods, distance from office to house, facilities availability, recognition and reward for their creative work, opportunities for higher education and training, flexibility to engage with family responsibilities, children's education etc. and availability of promotion according to performance. So, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents were in the category of not satisfaction to highly dissatisfied level. It was suggested to introduce the suitable methods which can be used to ensure favourable organizational climate or good governance in the DoA is required to improve job satisfaction of the employees.

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### LIST OF TABLES

**Table no. 1: SLAgS officers' job satisfaction**

**n=138**

Sl. No.	Dimensions	RO		AO		Lecturer		Total	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1	Present salary is commensurate with your work and position.	<b>-0.21</b>	1.07	<b>-0.33</b>	1.14	<b>-0.11</b>	1.02	<b>-0.23</b>	1.07
2	Salary paid is in relation to educational qualification.	<b>-0.31</b>	1.04	<b>-0.45</b>	1.09	0.11	1.13	<b>-0.29</b>	1.06
3	The performance will be assessed objectively before taking any serious action.	<b>-0.02</b>	1.04	<b>-0.33</b>	1.11	<b>-0.33</b>	0.91	<b>-0.14</b>	1.03
4	Guidance will be given by superiors to improve your job.	0.33	1.03	0.48	1.00	0.33	1.08	0.36	1.02
5	You have been given freedom and flexibility for your job by your superior	0.59	0.96	0.52	0.91	0.50	1.10	0.54	0.96
6	Distance from office to house	<b>0.00</b>	1.44	<b>-0.30</b>	1.36	<b>-0.72</b>	1.45	<b>-0.17</b>	1.43
7	Facilities availability (Transport, Office facilities etc)	<b>-0.17</b>	0.96	<b>-0.03</b>	1.14	<b>-0.28</b>	0.75	<b>-0.14</b>	0.98
8	Opportunities provided to utilize your personal skill	0.37	1.11	0.39	1.00	0.17	0.86	0.32	1.06
9	Recognition from your superior officers for good work done.	0.16	1.03	<b>0.09</b>	1.10	<b>-0.11</b>	1.23	<b>0.08</b>	1.09
10	Recognition and reward for your creative work.	<b>-0.09</b>	1.04	<b>-0.33</b>	1.08	<b>-0.33</b>	0.97	<b>-0.19</b>	1.05
11	Scope to prove your excellence in doing the job.	0.11	1.02	<b>-0.06</b>	0.86	<b>-0.17</b>	0.99	<b>0.04</b>	0.97
12	Opportunities for securing higher education / training	<b>-0.21</b>	1.20	<b>-0.48</b>	1.06	<b>-0.22</b>	1.31	<b>-0.26</b>	1.18

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13	Mutual understanding with the co-workers.	0.67	0.91	0.76	1.00	0.72	0.75	0.70	0.90
14	Flexibility to engage with family responsibilities, children's' education etc	0.16	1.06	<b>-0.25</b>	1.11	<b>-0.33</b>	0.97	<b>0.00</b>	1.06
15	Promotion according to performance	<b>-0.22</b>	1.22	<b>-0.47</b>	1.08	<b>-0.33</b>	1.08	<b>-0.28</b>	1.16

**Table no. 2: Job satisfaction of ROs, AOs and Lecturers**

Categories	ROs	AOs	Lecturers	Total
	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)
Highly dissatisfy	4 (05%)	1 (03%)	0(00%)	6 (04%)
Dissatisfied	21 (25 %)	7 ( 21 %)	02 ( 09%)	32 (23%)
Not satisfied	36 ( 43%)	15 ( 46 %)	14 (64 %)	63(46%)
Satisfied	18 (22%)	6 (18%)	6 (27%)	29 (21%)
Highly satisfied	4 (05%)	4 (12%)	0 (00%)	8 (06%)
Total	83 (100%)	33(100%)	22 (100%)	138 (100%)
X <sup>2</sup>	9.3**			

\* Significant at 5.00% level. \*\* Significant at 1.00% level. NS=Non-significant

**Table no. 3: Association of independent variables of ROs, AOs and Lecturers with Job Satisfaction**

Sl. No.	Independent variables	Correlation of coefficients		
		ROs	AOs	Lecturers
1.	Age	-0.001 <sup>NS</sup>	0.074 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.035 <sup>NS</sup>
2.	Gender	-0.075 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.183 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.114 <sup>NS</sup>
3.	Distance	-0.088 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.126 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.152 <sup>NS</sup>
4.	Transport Mode	0.145 <sup>NS</sup>	0.141 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.361 <sup>NS</sup>
5.	SLAgS Class	0.214*	-0.254 <sup>NS</sup>	0.394 <sup>NS</sup>
6.	Education	-0.221*	-0.333*	-0.173 <sup>NS</sup>
7.	Job experience	0.027 <sup>NS</sup>	0.310 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.050 <sup>NS</sup>
8.	Training	0.012 <sup>NS</sup>	0.039 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.150 <sup>NS</sup>
9.	Information seeking behaviour	0.397**	0.397**	0.213 <sup>NS</sup>
10.	Health	0.272*	0.109 <sup>NS</sup>	0.105 <sup>NS</sup>

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11.	Job Title	0.334**	0.268 <sup>NS</sup>	.497*
12.	TOR	0.235*	-0.190 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.151 <sup>NS</sup>
13.	Awareness about TOR	0.372**	-0.192 <sup>NS</sup>	0.323 <sup>NS</sup>
14.	Satisfaction about TOR	0.480**	0.288 <sup>NS</sup>	0.378 <sup>NS</sup>
15.	Relates of TOR with job expectation	0.481**	0.534**	-
16.	Perceived workload	-0.061 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.215 <sup>NS</sup>	0.021 <sup>NS</sup>
17.	Job involvement	0.291*	0.251 <sup>NS</sup>	0.073 <sup>NS</sup>
18.	Similarity TOR and duties	0.203 <sup>NS</sup>	0.297 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.209 <sup>NS</sup>
19.	Job stress	-0.248*	-0.248**	0.084 <sup>NS</sup>
20.	Job freedom	-0.248*	-0.248**	-0.024 <sup>NS</sup>
21.	Facilities and resources	0.497**	0.497**	0.122 <sup>NS</sup>
		0.693**	0.693**	0.404*

\* Significant at 5.00% level. \*\* Significant at 1 .00% level. NS: Non-significant