

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNDEREMPLOYMENT AND JOB
SATISFACTION OF COMMERCIAL BANK EMPLOYEES:
EVIDENCE FROM NUWARAGAMA AREA, ANURADHAPURA DISTRICT**

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between underemployment and job satisfaction of domestic commercial bank employees. The purpose of this study is to determine how the employees of the banking sector perceived themselves as underemployed for the job they currently assigned and its impact on their job satisfaction. To find the result of this study the related data was collected by filling self-administrated questionnaires as one of the primary data collection method by the selected population's sample of 154 employees. Of the selected sample 131 questionnaires were completed and usable for this study. Correlation and regression analysis was performed to test the hypothesized relationship. Employees perceived over qualification has become an important topic in the world of work most specifically in domestic commercial bank sector. The research study will take a hard look by the primary reason for lack of acceptability due to over education or underutilisation of knowledge, skill, and abilities within the work place. Finding of the study indicated that underemployment was negatively related to job satisfaction. For the commercial bank sector employees in Nuwaragama area Anuradhapura district were selected as interest of population to find the result of the study. On the basis of these findings, managerial implications of the study and future research direction was highlighted.

Keywords: *Underemployment, Job satisfaction, Over-qualification, skill under-utilization, Employees, Commercial banking sector*

Introduction

A nation's economic activities depend on three major sectors. They are agricultural sector, industrial sector, and service sector. In the modern era, service sector is very important to success of the economic growth and development, through the service sector, banking sector plays a crucial role in the economic growth in the whole world. Employee is one of the key factor of the organization success. A satisfied happy and

hard-working employee is the biggest asset of any organization including banks.

Current study focused on the relationship between underemployment and job satisfaction of commercial bank employees. Sri Lanka is a lower middle-income country with a total population of 21 million people and a per capita income of USD 3,924 in 2015. Following a 25-year-long civil war that ended in 2009, Sri Lanka's economy grew at an average of 6.4 percent between 2010-2015, reflecting a peace dividend and a

determined policy thrust towards reconstruction and growth. The sectoral composition of the economy has changed from an agriculture-based economy to one dominated by the service sector. The service sector was the highest contributor to GDP in 2015, with 62.4 percent, followed by the industrial sector at 28.9 percent and the agricultural sector at 8.7percent. With increasing economic liberalization, the services sector has become the largest sector in terms of employment with 45.9 percent of total employments.

Sri Lanka is a country with many blessing; free primary, secondary and tertiary education is one of them. Hence, there is 98% youth Literacy rate a great achievement for a middle-income country. The increase in highly educated individuals nationwide during the last years generated a massive educated workforce, this is not easily absorbed by the available job vacancies. The situation of a worker who possesses surplus education, experience, or skills relative to what a job requires has been referred to as skill underutilization, underemployment, lack of opportunity for growth and change, or over qualification. However, the most common term used is underemployment.

In this highly competitive world, success of any organization depends on its human resource. Banks are no exception to this. According to Thakur (2007), Success of banking, it is very important to manage human resource effectively and to find whether its employees are satisfied or not. Work force of any bank is responsible to a large extent for its productivity and profitability. Efficient human resource management and maintaining higher job satisfaction level in banks determine not only the performance of the bank but also affect the growth and performance of the entire economy. So, for the only if they are satisfied, they will work with commitment and project a positive image of the organization.

In the past two decades, much attention has been paid to the negative psychological effects of unemployment (e.g., Flynn, 1993;

Kasl, Rodriguez, & Lasch, 1998). By comparison, we know relatively little about the effects of being underemployed—that is, holding a job that is in some way inferior or of lower quality, relative to some standard (Feldman, 1996). Unemployment is a key yardstick to measure economic health. So is under-employment. If the economy maximised its efficiency and potential, everyone in employable age would find timely employment his/ her full potential at a fair wage in line with market price. An individual who is unemployed or underemployed is both unproductivity and a drain on society's resources. High rate of unemployment and underemployment have very dire consequences. It leads to poverty resulting in low living standards, malnutrition and diseases and many other social problems.

Underemployment is a measure of employment and labour utilization in the economy that looks at how well the labour force is being utilized in terms of skills, experience and availability to work. Labour that falls under the underemployment classification includes those workers who are highly skilled but working in low skill jobs and part-time workers who would prefer to be full time. This is different from unemployment in that the individual is working but is not working at his full capability.

Researchers in this field (e.g., Burris, 1983b; Feldman, 1990, 1996; Johnson & Johnson, 1996, 2000a) have consistently hypothesized that underemployment is associated with a variety of negative individual outcomes, including poor job attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction, organizational commitment), poor physical and psychological health, lower job performance and organizational citizenship, and withdrawal behaviour (e.g., absenteeism, turnover). Also, some research on work-related overqualification has predominantly focused on its effects on job satisfaction (Feldman, 2011), its effects on employees' productivity and ways to increase one's performance when being overqualified for

the particular job (Erdogan & Bauer, 2009; Erdogan, Bauer, Peir'o & Truxillo, 2011). Today underemployment is one of the major factor to employees' dissatisfaction. Many employers track job satisfaction as part of their human resource departments but there is no comprehensive analysis of job satisfaction at the regional, state or national level. Tracking job satisfaction as well as a comprehensive measure of underemployment could be helpful in measuring organizational effectiveness and in identifying strategies for workforce and economic development which will lead to a more productive and satisfied workforce.

Research Problem

There are many problems faced each and every bank. Among them employees' problems are more important of within the banks. For the success of the bank it is very important to manage human resource effectively. In Anuradhapura district, many employees of commercial bank find themselves overqualified for the job they hold.

A little amount of research works was done in Sri Lanka context in this regard; especially the relationship between underemployment and job satisfaction of banking employees in Anuradhapura district commercial banks. Commercial bank of Anuradhapura where job dissatisfaction is a major concern. The research problem is identifying those issues and provides the solution for it.

Thus, the research problem of this study was; whether "Underemployment has any relationship between job satisfaction of employees in domestic commercial banks or not"

Research Questions

The study sought to address the following research questions

1. To what extent underemployment impacts on job satisfaction?
2. Is there any relationship between underemployment and job satisfaction?

Objectives of the Study

Prime objective

The main objective of this study is to identify the relationship between underemployment and the degree of job satisfaction of employees in domestic commercial banks.

Sub objectives

Further, following specific objectives were established in order to accomplish the main objective the study.

1. To identify the determinants of employee underemployment.
2. To identify the determinants of employee job satisfaction.
3. To measure the level of job satisfaction of employees in domestic commercial banks.
4. To measure the degree of underemployment of employees in domestic commercial banks.
5. To identify the relationship between underemployment and job satisfaction

Hypothesis of Study

The following hypothesis were established, in order to realize the above-mentioned research objectives and to conclusions of the study

H₁: There will be a significant negative relationship between underemployment and job satisfaction of commercial bank employee.

Literature Review

Job satisfaction is the collection of feeling and beliefs that people have about their current job. People's levels of degrees of job satisfaction can range from extreme satisfaction to extreme dissatisfaction. In addition to having attitudes about their jobs. People also can have attitudes about various aspects of their jobs such as the kind of work they do, their co-workers, supervisors or subordinates and their pay (George et al., 2008). The job attitude most commonly associated with over qualification is a low

level of job satisfaction (Feldman et al., 2002). This study replicates this finding to make sure that this relationship is a robust one.

Many previous studies have defined over qualification (Khan and Morrow, 1991; Feldman, 1996; Johnson et al. 2002; and Maynard, et al., 2006). In order to examine the relationship between perceived over qualification and job attitudes, there is a meaning full need to understand the perceived over qualification. Perceived over qualification is defined as the extent to which an employed individual perceives that he or she possesses surplus job qualifications or has limited opportunities to acquire and use new job-related skills (Johnson, Morrow and Johnson, 2002). According their view perceived over qualification is said that they possess education, experience, or skills that exceed normal job requirements.

According to Feldman (1996), underemployment is firstly defined as an inferior, lesser, or lower quality type of employment. Underemployment has been conceptualized in many ways across academic discipline (Feldman and Turnely, 1995; Khan and Morrow, 1991; Feldman, Leana and Bolinco, 2002) Underemployment is often defined narrowly to imply part-time jobs or overeducation ignoring full time workers. Many people in today's economic climate are underemployed. Underemployment may be defined as a situation where individuals feel that their skills and abilities are not fully utilized (Khan and Morrow, 1991).

The situation of a worker who possesses surplus education, experience, or skill relative to what a job requires has been referred to as skill underutilization, underemployment, lack of opportunity for growth and change, or over qualification, however the most common term used is underemployment (Johnson et al., 2002).

According to Shujaat and Usman (2007) concluded that individuals in jobs that underutilize their education and skills are dissatisfied because they earn almost no return on surplus education. Since the excess

education that is not required and hence may be underutilised, have zero or lower impact on earnings.

The job attitude most commonly associated with overqualification is a low level of job satisfaction (Feldman et al., 2002). Johnson et al. (2002) consider over qualification and underemployment to be synonymous, some other studies (Fine, 2007; Fine & Nevo, 2008; Maynard et al., 2006), generally considered over qualification to be sub set of underemployment. This study is consistent with the definition of Johnson et al., (2002).

Sarawanabawan and Uthayatharshika (2014) concluded that perceived over qualification was negatively related to job satisfaction, affective and continuance organizational commitments and positive relationship between over qualification and intention to turnover.

Many researchers in this field have constantly hypothesized that underemployment has been linked with a variety of negative job attitudes and indicators of poor psychological well-being. The job attitude most commonly associated with underemployment is job dissatisfaction (Borgne, Amundson, & Harder, 1988; Khan & Morrow, 1991).

Feldman Leana and Bolinco (2002), which looked at the effects of relative deprivation on the relationship between underemployment and important job outcomes, he suggests that underemployment may lead to negative job and career attitudes because graduates both desire and feel entitled to have jobs that utilize their education and skills.

Kara Cockroft (2011), found out that, graduates who perceived themselves to be underemployed reported lower levels of job satisfaction, stronger careerist attitudes (belief that one does not get ahead mainly on the basis on merit), lower life satisfaction, lower affective commitment, increased intentions to quit, and increased job searching behaviour.

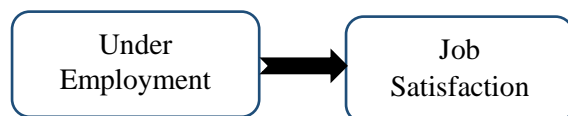
A number of studies have evaluated the relationship between underemployment and

job satisfaction, by equating underemployment with educational attainment and skill utilization. Most underemployment researchers have posited globally negative relations with job satisfaction (e.g., Feldman, 1996; Johnson & Johnson, 2000a). The logic behind these studies is that higher education raises workers' expectations for more challenging and interesting work, and discontent can lead to a decline in worker productivity and in turn, job dissatisfaction (Nabi, 2003).

The negative association between underemployment and job satisfaction can be traced to both the absolute and relative amount of rewards an employee receives (Feldman, 1996). Moreover, underemployed workers are more likely to experience job dissatisfaction because of the greater discrepancy between the expect to receive (Rousseau, 1990).

Based on the research literature, researcher recognized that underemployment is one of the major determinants of job satisfaction. Thus, this study intends to test the following relationship, with surveyed data, it explains job satisfaction is a function of underemployment, while other factors remain constant.

Taking underemployment as the independent variable and Job satisfaction as the dependent variable, researcher developed the below conceptual framework to explore the relationship between the underemployment and job satisfaction.



Methodology

To test the above-mentioned hypotheses, primary data were collected from a sample of 131 employees. The sample was chosen conveniently from among employees who working in commercial bank in Nuwaragama area, Anuradhapura District, North Central Province. To collect data the researcher used

a structured questionnaire that was personally administered to respondents.

The questionnaire was structured into three sections. Section A and B were concerned with data on factors which affect individual job satisfaction. Section C sought to capture the demographic data of the employees.

Though two instruments could be employed to measure underemployment and job satisfaction. Underemployment was measured multiple scales. The first measure of underemployment named, underemployment (skills), utilized 13 items scale developed by Bolino and Feldman's (2000) and the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) developed by Smith, Kendall and Hulin (1975) were selected for dimensional measures.

Respondents were asked to indicate the degree of how they are influenced by each of the items on the Likert scale. Items in the underemployment questionnaire was measured using 7-point Likert Scale (1=Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree). Scale reliability α for these items was 0.850. Job satisfaction was measured using five-point Likert Scale (1=Very dissatisfied to 5 Very satisfied). Scale reliability α for these items was 0.816. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics, independent t-test, correlation and regression analysis with the help of SPSS, which enabled data interpretation, and statistical inferences.

Results and Discussions

This study sought to determine the relationship between underemployment and job satisfaction of bank employees in Nuwaragama area, Anuradhapura District. Hence, the employees' responses across underemployment were studied. Moreover, their responses across type of banks, age, gender, level of education, marital status, employees' experience, position, and salary level were also studied.

Descriptive Statistics

Out of the 154 (N=154) employees targeted, only 23 (N=23) employees failed to fill the

questionnaire acceptably, All, other respondents (N=131) provided all details requested; therefore, giving a response rate of 85.06%. Majority of the respondents 59.5% were in Private banks and rest was Public banks. Of the sample, 40.5% fall in the age group of 21-30 years, 42.7% were in the age group of 31-40 years whereas those who were in the age group of 41-50 and 51-60 were 13.7% and 3.1% respectively. 57.3 % of sample is male, while the remaining 42.7% female. Most of the respondents (55.7%) are unmarried and nearly 44.3% were graduates. further, 43.5% of the total respondents were clerical staff, 32.8% of the respondents were officers, and rest 23.7% belong to supporting staffs.

Reliability Test

The reliability of the measures was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Reliability in the current study ($\alpha = .889$) was acceptable, according to that the questionnaire had a higher degree of reliability Spector (1997). Therefore, it used to measure the degree of underemployment and degree of job satisfaction.

Data Analysis

In order to measure the degree of underemployment, the calculated mean value and standard deviation are given in the Table 1. Altogether 131 respondents in the sample indicated a 4.61 of mean value with a standard deviation of 0.949, suggesting that the sample felt high degree of underemployment.

Table 1. Degree of underemployment

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Underemployment	131	4.61	.949

Source: Survey Data (2017)

Researcher found that female employees have a greater degree of underemployment than male employee. But, results of independent sample T-test revealed that there is no significant difference of

underemployment between two groups; Male and Female.

Table 2. Underemployment among Male and Female

Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation
Male	4.59	.937
Female	4.63	.972

Source: Survey Data (2017)

Table 3. Underemployment according to banking sector

Type of bank	Mean	Std. Deviation
Public	4.47	1.010
Private	4.71	.898

Source: Survey Data (2017)

Results showed that employees private banks have a high degree of underemployment (M=4.71). But, branch employees of public commercial banks are having a moderate degree of underemployment (M=4.47). According to the survey data it is mainly due to (Over education, opportunities, salary and promotions) in private commercial banks. Results of the T-test revealed that there is a no significant difference of underemployment between two groups: private and Public.

Measurements for the degree of Job satisfaction of sample; Table 5. All together 131 employees in the sample indication a 3.0477 of a mean value with a standard deviation of 0.38024.

Table 4. Degree of job satisfaction

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Job satisfaction	131	3.0477	.38024

Source: Survey Data (2017)

According to the findings, calculated mean value falls between 3 and 4 indicating that the value majority of employees working in banks have high degree of job satisfaction. These finding suggest that employees who perceive higher in underemployment tend to be low level of job satisfaction.

Table 5. Job satisfaction according to Gender

Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation
Male	3.0591	.42236
Female	3.0379	.97211

Source: Survey Data (2017)

Table 5 illustrates mean score of job satisfaction for males (3.0591) and Female (3.0379) were moderate level with their jobs.

Table 6. Job satisfaction according to the banking sector

Type of bank	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Public	53	2.9693	.32444
Private	78	3.1010	.32106

Source: Survey Data (2017)

With regard to Table 6 Private sector branches employees are highly satisfied while public sector branches employees have a moderately level of job satisfaction. Researcher found that this variation is due to the difference of getting opportunities, work environment and workloads between two sectors.

Hypothesis Test (H1)

Even though the researcher to the identified relationship between underemployment and job satisfaction, bivariate analysis was done. The stated hypothesis of the study was that,

H1: There will be a significant negative relationship between underemployment and job satisfaction of bank employee.

Pearson correlation was used to test the hypothesis and desired level of significance is 0.05. Descriptive statistics means, standard deviations and correlation coefficient for all measures are reported in the above table 7. Correlation analysis was used to find out the relationship among the variables and their relative strength.

Hypothesis (H1) concerned the negative relationship between subjective feelings of underemployment and the level of job satisfaction an individual feel with their job. The results of correlations showed that the job satisfaction was negatively and significantly correlated with underemployment (Over education) ($r=-.369$), underemployment (lack of opportunity) ($r=-.327$), underemployment (More formal education) ($r=-.403$), underemployment (Over qualification) ($-.405$), underemployment (Skill underutilization) ($r=-.345$), underemployment (underemployed) ($r=-.287$). The nature of these relationship suggests that individuals who felt underemployed in relation to over education, lack of opportunity, more formal education, over qualification, skill underutilization, and underemployed, were less satisfied in their jobs. Based on this finding, underemployment have a significant correlation at $p<.001$. People who were defined as underemployed on these measures were generally less satisfied with their jobs.

Table 7. Correlations of study variables

Variables	JS	OE	OP	FE	OQ	SU	UE
Mean	3.04	4.69	4.78	4.77	4.78	4.77	4.88
Std. Deviation	0.380	1.658	1.457	1.729	1.713	1.448	1.419
Job satisfaction(JS)	1	-.369**	-.327**	-.403**	-.405**	-.345**	-.287**
Over education(OE)		1	.525**	.964**	.976**	.519**	.477**
Opportunity to do best (OP)			1	.537**	.552**	1.000**	.520**
Formal education(FE)				1	1.000**	.531**	.544**
Over qualification(OQ)					1	.547**	.538**
Skill utilization(SU)						1	.536**
Underemployed(UE)							1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: survey data (2017)

Relationship between underemployment and job satisfaction

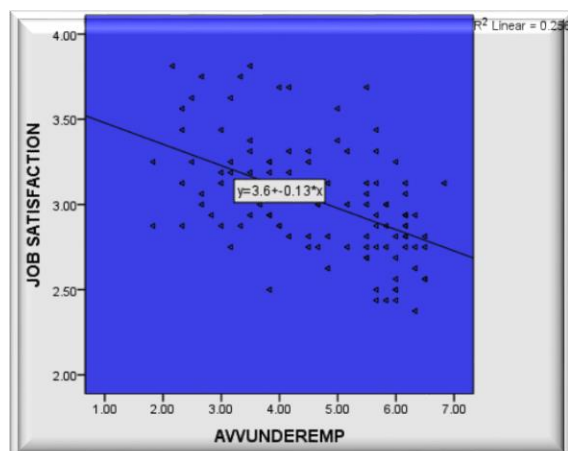
In relation to the results of statistical test (Table 4.16), Pearson correlation coefficient between two variables is -0.506^{**} . It revealed that there is moderated negative relationship between underemployment and job satisfaction of employees working in domestic commercial banks ($r = -0.506$, $p < 001$). The found relationship is statistically significant as correlation is significant. At 0.05 level (As Sig. is 0.000 which is less than 0.05). Thus, it can be statistically claimed that there is a significant relationship between these two variables; underemployment and job satisfaction.

Table 8. Correlation of Underemployment and job satisfaction

		Job satisfaction	Under employment
Job satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	$-.506^{**}$
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
Under employment	Pearson Correlation	$-.506^{**}$	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Survey Data (2017)



(Source: Survey Data (2017))

Graph 1: Relationship between underemployment and job satisfaction

Additionally, regression analysis was done to identify the impact of underemployment on job satisfaction. According to the Table model summary, value of R square is 0.256, depicting that employee job satisfaction is explained by 25.6% through variance in underemployment.

Table 9. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.506 ^a	.256	.249	.29076

a. Predictors: (Constant), underemployment

As we expected, the findings of the study revealed that a negative relationship between underemployment and job satisfaction. This finding is consistent with previous findings that, a negative relationship between job satisfaction and perceptions of skill under-utilization (Feldman et al., 2006; Feldman & Turnely, 1995; Khan & morrow, 1991). Maynard et al., (2006) says that in general, perceptions of underemployment were associated with poor job satisfaction, particularly for facets with a direct causal relationship with the specific dimension of underemployment, such as over qualification, lack of promotional opportunities, limited opportunities to do best and satisfaction with work.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Underemployment or disguised unemployment is a serious constraint to economic progress. Underemployment jobs are unchallenging and not tasking. Employees are dissatisfied because their educational achievements and skills are underutilized and they receive no return on their excess educational qualification. Underemployment may be a source of job dissatisfaction, as the lack of opportunities for skills, qualifications could destroy motivation and perceptions regarding opportunities for further personal development inside the work situation. As a

result, employees who are unsatisfied their work may exhibit lower productivity, poorer quality of work, increased turnover, higher absenteeism, bored and frustration dejection in order to reduce these feelings of dissatisfaction.

The tested research modal takes underemployment as the independent variable while job satisfaction as the depended variable. All eleven domestic commercial banks were taken for the study and this was conducted on a sample of 131 employees in Nuwaragama area, Anuradhapura District.

Then the face of statistical findings, difference in percentage between satisfaction and dissatisfaction suggest that dimensions of underemployment and facets of job satisfaction are more significant in determining job satisfaction of employees of the commercial banks in Nuwaragama area. Findings proved that female employees' higher degree of underemployment than male employees. Employees working in private commercial banks are moderately suffering from underemployment while employees working in public bank have high level of underemployment. Women employee enjoy their jobs highly whereas male employees have moderate level of job satisfaction. Qualitative findings revealed that, underemployed workers are young as compared to old and possess more qualification as compare to old. Thus, it can be statistically claimed that, employees who are having very high or low level of underemployment will suffer due to endless issues of job dissatisfaction.

The results confirm the researcher hypothesis that individuals in jobs that underutilise their education, formal education, qualification, skills, less opportunities and underemployed are dissatisfied because they earn almost no return on surplus education. Since the excess education that is not required and hence may be underutilised, have zero or lower impact on earnings. The after the analysis of statistical data and findings arrived, it can be concluded that, there is a negative

relationship between underemployment and job satisfaction.

Recommendations

On the basis of above findings of the study, a few suggestions are put forward, and if followed by banks, may help in enhancing job satisfaction among its employees.

Results from this study are important to work force development policy and human resource management. Reginal development policies that improve educational attainment and income level could improve employee satisfaction and productivity. Employee also increase labour productivity by improving overall satisfaction among employees though reducing underemployment and improving working conditions. Managers or employers should design job that facilitate the employees to use their skills and knowledge. Jobs should give challenge and opportunities to growth in their career path. Therefore, the managers or supervisors in banks should consider the factors that affect job satisfaction and they should provide promotional opportunity, job rotations and job enrichment and more challenging work environment.

Training and development programmes must be provided to the employees at regular intervals to update their knowledge and skills.

The kind of work given to an employee should be according to his/her abilities and knowledge and their efforts for doing a particular task must be valued by giving appreciations and rewards to the employees for their hard work so their level of motivation increases.

Future Research

These findings should encourage researchers to further investigate the effects of underemployment in the workplace. The results of the study generated new knowledge in the field and provided directions for future research. The number of participant was restricted to 131 and research area was limited. The small sample and area

prohibited generalized results. Therefore, expand the population to district or province is a good area to conduct a research. Future research also can focus on other dimensions to examine the relationship between underemployment and job satisfaction. Future research, should thus investigate the overlap between objective and subjective measures of underemployment dimensions. The results from this study revealed that the sample showed low occurrence of underemployment. Because the sample population has chosen by convenience simple sampling method. Future research could benefit from comparing individuals who perceive themselves to be adequately employed to those who are underemployed, as this would help determine the extent of underemployment in Anuradhapura District.

Conclusions

The major propositions of this study were supported, and the findings indicated that graduates who perceived themselves to be underemployed reported lower job satisfaction and promotion was an important factor to impact on job satisfaction. In addition, the results of this study revealed that education was an important explanatory mechanism in understanding the effects of underemployment. This research was important in understanding the underemployment experience of employees who are living and working in Anuradhapura.

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