

# Job Satisfaction of Pakistani Speech Therapists in Various Workplaces: A Cross-Sectional Study

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** A speech-language pathologist's (SLP) job is demanding but rewarding. Job satisfaction for speech pathologists is an essential factor. Speech-language pathologists work with children and adults to identify, assess, diagnose, and treat speech, language, social communication, cognitive communication, and swallowing problems. To the best of our knowledge, no previous research has investigated the aspects associated with job satisfaction, which may improve or reduce stress for SLPs.

**Purpose:** This study aimed to assess Pakistani speech-language pathologists/therapists' job satisfaction in different workplaces.

**Method:** Cross-sectional research design was used to study the variables. A sample was comprised of 117 speech therapists. The data was collected through an online survey due to the current pandemic situation. Google forms were sent to the speech pathologist working in schools, clinics, hospitals, universities, and special needs centers.

**Result:** Most of the participants were 25 to 30 years old, having a degree of masters and bachelors in speech-language pathology. Most of the participants were in the initial stages of their career experience and working in special care centers. In addition to this, most of the participants do not have much workload and their working hours were between 6 to 10 hours per week. Analysis of variance showed that there is no difference of working organizations in job satisfaction of speech-language pathologists.

**Conclusion:** No difference was found in job satisfaction among speech and language pathologists working in various settings.

## Introduction

There is evidence that healthy employees are more efficient and that an ill workforce costs the country more [1]. On two fronts, cost arises for SLPs: not only in respect to the number of capable, effective workers but also with respect to the impact a reduced workforce has on the health and productivity of persons with communication and swallowing challenges [2]. It's a difficult job, but if you like complexities and challenges, a career as a speech-language pathologist may be a good fit for you [3]. It has long been acknowledged that job satisfaction is critical for therapists who

work with communication disorders. Individuals who are happy in their jobs are more likely to be efficient, do quality work, report success, stay in their jobs, and encourage others to follow in their footsteps [4]. Across occupations, job satisfaction is strongly and indirectly related to stress and emotional exhaustion [5]. According to John Locke, job satisfaction is a pleasant emotional state caused by the assessment of one's employment as allowing or attaining value accomplishment. It was noted that job dissatisfaction was characterized as an emotionally uncomfortable condition coming

from an evaluation of one's job as irritating or as being incompatible with the accomplishment of one's own job values or as being a net loss of job worth. Cranny and his colleagues found that people react to various perceptions of what they wish to get as opposed to what they really receive [6].

A great amount of effort and energy is invested in the field of speech-language therapy for evaluating the quality of life and treatment of persons served. Many service sector workers give little weight to the quality of life of those working as speech-language pathologists (SLP). Current research seems to imply that employees today place the most importance on things like salary, lifestyle, and job stability. The study conducted by Ruggero, McCabe, Ballard, and Munro (2012) found that the average yearly turnover rate for academic staff in Nigerian public hospitals was 16.18 percent from 1990 to 1997 [7]. According to Felton (1998), certain professions, such as SLPs, who engage with special communities and persons with impairments, are more likely to acquire job dissatisfaction and tiredness [8]. SLPs' job satisfaction has been linked to a lack of technical supports, a significant caseload and work, and a lack of money. Apart from an increase in years-at-position, age was found to have a significant strong connection with SLPs' high satisfaction ratings [9]. As job satisfaction is so important in terms of performance and employee engagement, there has been a rise in research in this area across a wide range of occupations. Speech-language pathology is a field that can be found in a wide range of settings. SLPs can work in numerous settings, such as schools,

hospitals, care facilities, rehabilitation centers, and private practice [10]. To date, the majority of studies on SLP work satisfaction have been conducted in school settings. As a result, the aim of this study was to assess SLP work satisfaction in a variety of settings and analyze the disparities in replies. In conclusion, the study that has been undertaken on Pakistani speech and language pathologist job satisfaction working in different employment sectors. The following eight demographic factors were of concern: age, level of education, amount of work experience, industry, workplace, and kind of employment.

## Material and Method

It was a cross-sectional study. A mail survey methodology was employed. One hundred and seventeen full-time and part-time practicing SLPs in hospitals and other sectors residing in Pakistan were randomly selected. Participants rated the Job Satisfaction Survey nationwide. To quantify total, intrinsic, and extrinsic job satisfaction, a survey questionnaire was sent to all the therapists. Included as part of the survey package was a 15-item Professional Satisfaction Scale (PSS). Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction on a five-point Likert-type scale, from 1 (very unhappy) to 5 (very satisfied) (highly satisfied). Data were statistically evaluated by utilizing descriptive statistics, as well as analysis of variance was applied to see whether there were significant differences. William Blank (1993) developed the PSS to investigate the things that make an employee feel satisfied or dissatisfied in their jobs.

## Results

**Table 1:** Demographic characteristics of a sample comprising age, experience, workplace, and workload (N=117).

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age</b>		
18-24 years	12	10.2
25-30 years	67	57.1
31-36 years	23	19.4
37-42 years	6	5.2
43-50 years	3	2.7
More than 50 years	6	5.3
<b>Qualification</b>		
BS SLP	17	14.5
MS SLP	80	68.4
Diploma	13	11.1
PhD	7	6
<b>Years of experience</b>		
0-5 years	88	75
6-10 years	21	18.8
11-15 years	2	1.8
16-20 years	5	0.9
More than 20 years	5	4.5

Workplace		
Hospital	29	24.6
Clinic	25	21.2
Special Needs Centre	37	31.4
School	19	16.1
University	8	6.8
Workload		
Normal	90	76.9
Extra	27	23.1
Working Hours		
1-5 hours	23	19.6
6-10 hours	88	75.2
11-15 hours	2	1.7
More than 15 hours	4	3.4
Type of Work		
Patient Care	80	68.4
Academic	31	26.5
Research	6	5.1
Nature of Work		
Full time	90	76.9
Part-time	18	15.4
Online	9	7.7

Note: SLP= Speech-Language Pathology.

About the researchers' survey, 67% of the university speech therapists responded. The demographics of the participants can be seen in (Table 1), which includes gender, age, level of qualification, length of experience, and where they work. (Table 1) showed that most of the participants were 25 to 30 years old, having a degree of bachelors and masters in speech-language pathology. It was also shown in the table that most of the participants had in the initial stages of their career experience as a speech pathologist, and most of them worked in special care centers. In addition to this, most of the participants have a normal workload, and their working hours consist of 6 to 10 working hours per week. Furthermost

of the participants worked in the inpatient care department and had full-time jobs. For the purpose of viewing job satisfaction in different working conditions one way, ANOVA was run to identify the job satisfaction level of speech therapists working in different organizations as shown in (Table 2). One-way ANOVA reveals non-significant mean differences across the categories of workplaces of speech therapists i.e., hospitals (M = 38.25, SD = 6.40), clinics (M = 37.72, SD = 7.68), special need centers (M = 36.76, SD = 6.96), and schools/universities (M = 37.44, SD = 6.86) on scores of Job Satisfaction (F = .257, p > .05). So, it is found that organization doesn't make any difference in the context of job satisfaction.

**Table 2:** One-Way Analysis of Variance Job Satisfaction and Working Organization (N=117).

Variables η	Hospitals n =28		Clinics n= 25		Special Need Centers n =37				Schools/ Universities n=35	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	F	P
2										
Job Satisfaction	38.25	6.40	37.72	7.68	36.76	6.96	37.44	6.86	.257	.86

Note: GD = M = Mean, S.D = Standard deviation, p = Significance level at 0.05 level, Degree of Freedom between Groups = 3, Degree of Freedom within Groups = 113

### Discussion

This research was similar to others in that it showed speech therapists had modest levels of job satisfaction [11]. The results

are in agreement with earlier research; in which speech therapists saw their correlations with job satisfaction [12]. Relationships with colleagues can affect both intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction, which seems sensible in light of the substantial role that colleagues

play in the workplace. It was also shown that there is no difference in the job satisfaction level of speech therapists between those who work in speech therapy settings or in organizations. Since Watson (2000) discovered that speech therapists had dissatisfaction with their jobs and that such difficulties are outside the control of the working organization, this conclusion is consistent with this study [13]. Job satisfaction was correlated with age and educational level, according to this research. Educational level was linked to both intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction, with extrinsic job satisfaction also being linked to age. The results of earlier studies support this finding [14]. Previous research by Heritage, Quail, and Cocks (2019) found that administrators were satisfied with the extrinsic features of their jobs, such as benefits and work setting, at considerably greater levels than professors, hourly workers, or salaried workers [15].

Overall and extrinsic job satisfaction was considerably greater among employees older than age 50 than those in the other three groups (ages 20–30, 31–40, and 41–50). Similar to the finding of McLaughlin, Adamson, Lincoln, Pallant, and Cooper (2010), which states that speech therapists in their 50s are most happy with their professions, these findings are in conformity [16]. While age 50 is the traditional cut-off for defining someone as too old to do an action, studies have shown that people 50 and older have greater levels of extrinsic job satisfaction. Length of employment does not appear to affect overall job satisfaction among employees at the university. The results of future studies on this issue might benefit from open-ended questions that explore elements of job satisfaction in order to collect more detailed data, which will enable more precise conclusions to be drawn on the precise reasons for provided replies. Additional to this, job satisfaction and its associated intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics might be explored in connection to other, less-investigated variables, including communication, meaning, remuneration, and promotion regulations, as well as the potential to have an influence on the business.

## Conclusion

Finally, there is a clear need for a better understanding of the influence of several risk variables on SLP satisfaction and well-being. The demand for further research in which theory is a central consideration and longitudinal data is required to discover the link between a predictor and an outcome is pressing.

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## Declarations

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### Conflicts of Interest/Competing Interests

There is no Conflicts of interest or competing interests among authors.

### Ethics Approval

Ethical approval letter has been taken from REC committee.

### Consent to Participate

Applicable.

### Consent for Publication

All authors are mutually agreed for publication.

### Availability of Data and Material

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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