

A Pilot Study on Job Satisfaction of Medical Coders

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Abstract

A medical classification is used to transform descriptions of medical diagnoses (or) procedures into standardized statistical code in a process known as medical coding. Job satisfaction is the extent to which an employee feels self-motivated, content and satisfied with his/her job. India stands the second largest pool of medical coders after the US with an estimated Rs.15,000 – Rs.16,000. The US is believed to have over 2,50,000 coders. From the past few years, the nurses are more aspiring to join in a profession of medical coding. Therefore, the study aims to assess the level of job satisfaction among medical coding staff at Health care, Vijayawada, Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh, India.

Methods: A Cross sectional study was conducted including convenient sampling technique among 30 medical coders. The data were collected by self administered questionnaire scale related to socio-demographic data and job satisfaction and analyzed by descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results: The results revealed that, there was moderate level of job satisfaction and there is association between levels of job satisfaction with selected demographic variables of medical coders.

Conclusion: In this study medical coders are moderately satisfied with their jobs, the above findings of the study provides evidence that there are many factors which can affect the job satisfaction level which will in-turn affect the quality of productivity of the organization.

Keywords: Job satisfaction; Medical coders; Health care; Coding staff; Employer self motivation.

Introduction

Job satisfaction is a degree of favorableness with which employees view their work;¹ which is a great concern of medical coders. It is an important contributing factor towards a person's motivation and productivity.¹⁻⁴ Satisfied employees tend to be more productive, creative and committed to their

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employers; dissatisfied work area lead to high turn-over.⁵

It was found that separation of unpleasant emotion decreases job satisfaction and implication of pleasant emotions increases job satisfaction.⁵ Many studies have shown that job satisfaction can be influenced by a wide variety of factors such as competitive pay, adequate staffing, a pleasant working environment, opportunities for personal and professional growth, a reasonable workload, recognition, positive relationship with co-workers, autonomy on the job, job security, carrier advancement and contingent rewards.⁶⁻⁸

Job satisfaction can be measured in many ways with variety of questions and wordings; However, there is no standard way to measure job satisfaction.¹ A common item question regarding general job satisfaction is the most common one, however other multifaceted questions are also considered as a common component of job satisfaction measurement.¹

Researcher has analyzed the importance of job satisfaction among medical coders which has direct effect on work productivity of medical coders and indirect effect on absenteeism, and turnover. Therefore we felt the need to assess the level of job satisfaction and association with their baseline variables.

Objectives

1. To assess the level of job satisfaction among medical coders.
2. To determine the association between level of job satisfaction of medical coders with their selected variables.

Hypothesis

H_1 : There will be a significant association between levels of job satisfaction of Medical coders with their selected variables.

Materials and Methods

A cross sectional pilot study was conducted among medical coders (Nurses, Pharmacists and Biochemists) from 01.05.2019 to 30.05.2019 adopting convenient sampling approach. Thirty medical coders were chosen based on the following criteria, all staff or coders above age 20 years, both genders, with service period more than 6 months, willing to participate in the study; coders who were in leave were excluded from the study.

A self-administered questionnaire scale was used to collect the data from the medical coders. The questionnaire comprised of 2 main parts (i.e.) Demography and Job Satisfaction questions. The demographic data included information regarding Age, Gender, Education, Years of experience and Designation.

Job satisfaction questionnaire scale included 20 questions on different components like Job, Communication, Working relationship, promotion,

pay, supervisor role, ability to present skills, esprit decorps, prospects of advancement and welfare facilities provided by the organization. For each item, respondent can choose from a 4 point Likert scale, representing various degrees of satisfaction.

1. Strongly disagree
2. Undecided
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

The total score was graded as "80" and the level of job satisfaction was classified into three levels for statistical convenience (i.e.) Highly satisfied (71-80), Moderately satisfied (61-70) and unsatisfied (<60).

The data were collected after obtaining permission from the authorities, ethical concern from Institutional ethical committee and the consent was obtained from the participants. The data were gathered by using the job satisfaction questionnaire scale; It took 20 minutes to gather data from each employee and session was closed by thanking the employees. The collected data were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results

Out of 30 medical coders, majority 15 (50%) were with age between 21-25 years, 16 (53.3%) were males, 9 (30%) had B.Pharmacy and M. Pharmacy as qualification, followed by B.Sc., Nurses 8 (26.7%) and 18 (60%) were having > 6 months - 2 years of experience and 14 (46.6%) were executive coders (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2).

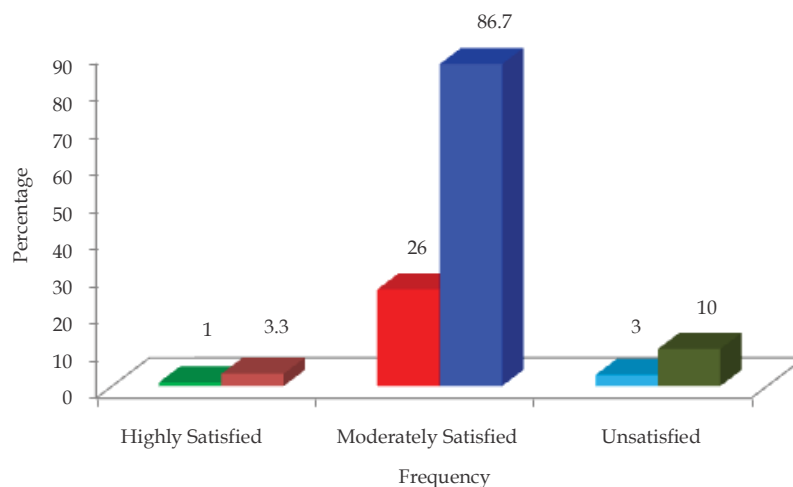


Fig. 1: Level of job satisfaction of medical coders.

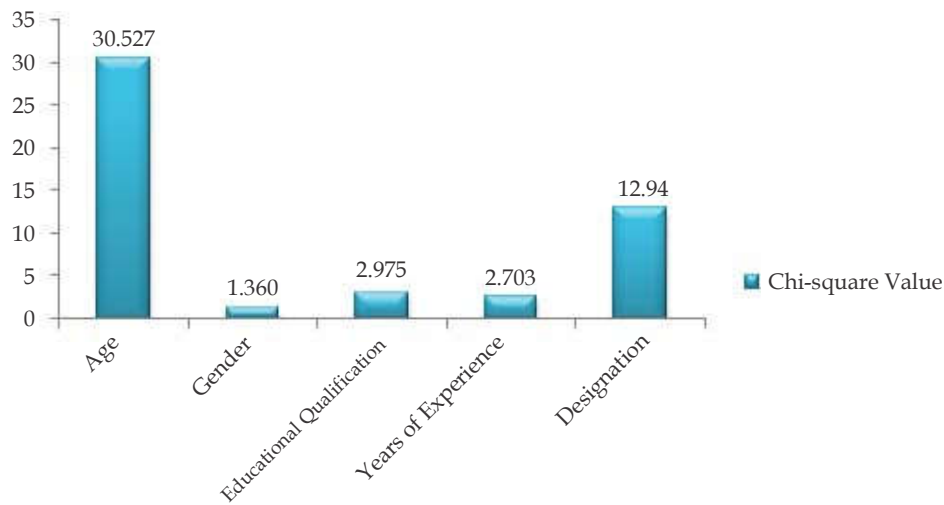


Fig. 2: Association between the level of job satisfaction with the selected demographic variables.

Discussion

Several studies have reported that job satisfaction dramatically influences the medical coders working setting. For, this reason we chosen a job satisfaction questionnaire scale to collect the data and has low refusal rate. Our findings showed that 86.7% respondents had moderate job satisfaction level with their job.

In this study the largest percentage of respondents felt satisfied with the general supervision in their department, working conditions in the organization, relationship with the supervisor, job security and proud to be part of organization. Majority stated that there is no prejudice or favouritism that play a role in the organization and their organization is better in comparison to others. Surprisingly, most of the respondents were not satisfied with their promotions at their current working place. This findings is in line with similar studies conducted in South India, South Africa, Malaysia and Pakistan. On the other hand, pharmacists working in Saudi Arabia, Iran and UK who do not face similar issues, were satisfied with their work. These findings are congruent with the study conducted by Akram Ahmad et al.¹

Many participants stated, they are moderately satisfied with their promotions, as they are not made on merit in this organization and even stated that there is average team spirit in work area and less preference for the job is based on ability and experience. Minimum welfare facilities were provided by the organization whereas job has helped to learn less skill with more workload and most of the time supervisors do not try to take

wishes into account and my performance. They give minimal opportunity to present problems and views to the management. Majority were undecided about feeling fresh at the end of day' work and many of them were not satisfied with the salary and it is not meeting the finance of the day to life and stated that they have less prospects of advancement in this job. These findings accord with the study conducted by Mumtaz Ali Menon et al.⁹

Level of job satisfaction predictors assessed by Shelledy DC et al.¹⁰ are promotions, participation in decision making, supervisor support, role clarity, independence, ease of obtaining time off and co-workers support.¹⁰ Hence, there is a need to focus on the impact of all these factors for the improvement of job satisfaction in the working area.

Present study shows significant association between level of job satisfaction and baseline demographic variables i.e., Age, Gender, Educational Qualification, Years of Experience and Designation which is supported by Sorman and Sudha et al library profession is a people slanting profession which connects escape from the authority of conflicts and frustra provisions and age, mental status and experience have an impact and professional role stress.^{11,12}

Limitations

The results of this study should be interpreted with consideration of the limits of measurement of satisfaction, analysis of data and recruiting methods of participants which could limit the generalizability of the results.

Conclusion

The study conclude that there are many factors which can affect the job satisfaction level among medical coders which will in-turn affect the quality of productivity and organization too. Thus, importance should be given towards salary, helping to learn more skills, promotions on merit, team spirit and prospects of advancement in job.

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