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WORK-RELATED QUALITY OF LIFE AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH WORK PRODUCTIVITY AMONG THE EMPLOYEES OF THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ENABLED SERVICE (ITeS) INDUSTRIES IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Objective: (1) To Study the Constructs of the Work related Quality of Life among the employees working in a selected ITeS Industries in India; (2) To find out whether there is any association between the Quality of Work Life and the Work Productivity of the ITeS Employees in India.

Study Design: A Descriptive study design was adopted to study the constructs of Quality of Work Life among the ITeS Employees working in India. Further, it captured the association between the Work-related Quality of Life and the Productivity of the employees at their Job.

Materials and Methods: The ITeS employees (N=150) belonging to Medical Transcription division which are functioning at three Metropolitan cities (Bangalore, Chennai and Coimbatore) formed the sampling frame for this study. 50 Employees from each of the three ITeS Industries located in selected cities were recruited based on criterion based sampling approach. The Primary data consisting of the employee's opinion about the Work related Quality of life were captured using a standard Work-related Quality of life Scale (adopted from the University of Portsmouth). The data were captured with respect to six factors viz: (i) Control at Work; (ii) General Well-being; (iii) Home-Work Interface; (iv) Job career Satisfaction; (v) Stress at Work; (vi) Working Conditions. The Secondary data consisted of Work productivity of the employees were captured with respect to their Accuracy percentage in the preparation of Transcript using a standard methodology adopted from American Association of Medical Transcription Metrics for measuring the Quality of Medical Transcription.

Statistical Analysis: The descriptive statistics was done using Mean, and Cumulative percentage of '4' or '5' to study the constructs of Quality of Work Life among the ITeS Employees in India. A Chi-square statistics were adopted to study the association between the Employee's overall opinion on Quality of Work life and their Work productivity.

Results & Conclusions: This study brought about the opinion of the ITeS employees about their Work related Quality of Life in India. Overall, 59% of the Medical transcription employees belonging to the ITeS Industries were satisfied with their Work related Quality of Life. This study also established a significant association between the Work-related Quality of life and the productivity of the employees working in the ITeS sector in India.

KEYWORDS: Employees, Information Technology Enabled Service Industries, India, Productivity, and Work Related Quality of Life (WRQoL)

INTRODUCTION

The Human resources play an important role in the successful functioning of any organizations including the

Information technology Enabled Service Industries (ITeS). These ITeS sector consist of two service categories: (i) Voice Based service which includes Call Centers and; (ii) Non-Voice Based service which includes Medical Transcription and Medical coding etc. The nature of work in Medical transcription involves preparing a medical report (document) based on the doctor's recorded message about the patient's diagnosis and treatment. The doctors dictate into a telephone as they proceed with their interaction with the patient and the message gets digitally recorded into a computer attached to the telephone. This recorded message is transcribed by a medical transcriptionist by careful listening and processes the data on a word processor in the form of a medical document. The process involves specific procedures and editorial policy guidelines. The transcribed document goes through two or three stages of editing by professional consultants and senior experienced transcriptionists. The medical report is then bounced back to the doctors via satellite communications (Kum Kum Tendon, 2011).

Broadly, there are many aspects of work that affect the management of human resources in ITeS industries in general and, more specifically in the Medical Transcription division and one of such aspect are the "Quality of Work Life" (QWL). The term 'Quality of Work Life (QWL)' is reputed to have originated from an international labor relations conference in 1972 at Arden House, Columbia University, New York (Davis & Cherns, 1975). Although there is no agreed upon definition of QWL, it has been used as construct which relates to the Well-being of the employees. Moreover, the constructs of the "Quality of work Life (QWL) has been defined by different authors by stressing different constructs in the Literatures. Lawler (1982) defines QWL in terms of Job characteristics and work conditions and highlighted that the core dimension of the entire QWL in the organization is to improve employees' well-being and productivity. From a Business perceptive, Quality of work life (QWL) is important since there is evidence demonstrating that the nature of work environment is related to satisfaction of employees and work related behaviors (Greenhaus et al., 1987). In extension to this concept, other authors defined QWL as a multi-dimensional context, made up of a number of interrelated factors and it is associated with Job Satisfaction, Job involvement, motivation, productivity, health, safety and well-being, Job security, competency development and balance between work and non-work life (Hood and smith, 1994; European Foundation for the improvement of living and work conditions, 2002).

A definition adopted by Serey (2006) on QWL is quite conclusive and best meet the modern-day work environment which is mainly related to meaningful and satisfying work. Based on the above definitions on QWL, it is summarized that the QWL is viewed as a wide ranging concept, which includes adequate and fair compensation, safe and healthy working conditions, and social integration in the work organization that enables an employee to develop and use all the his or her capabilities. Moreover, the Quality of Work Life (QWL) is also concerned with quality of relationship between the employees and the total working environment" and it includes the overall climate of work and the impact on work and people as well as on organization effectiveness (AnsariRenani G. and SabziAliabadi S., 2010). In any organization, a high level of quality of work life (QWL) is obligatory to attract and retain skillful employees.

Understanding the nature of work in the contemporary work environment prevailing in the information and communication technology industries, recent study done by Gunaselan Rethinam and Maimunah Ismail (2008)[2] described five dimensions of QWL with specific reference to the IT Professionals and these includes: (i) Health and Well Being; (ii) Job security; (iii) Job satisfaction; (iv) Competency development and; (v) the balance between work and non work life. This present article concealed and explored various dimensions adopted and studied by the previous literatures with respect to QWL for the purpose of achieving generalizations specifically in the context of ITeS Professionals. Thus, based on the constructs studied earlier, and also taking into consideration of the nature of work in Non Voice based (i.e. Medical Transcription division) ITeS Industrial sector, six constructs were explored in the present study viz. (i) General well being;

(ii) Control at work; (iii) Home-Work Interface; (iv) Job career Satisfaction; (v) Stress at work and; (vi) Working conditions (Simon Easton and Darren van Laar, 2012).

The General Well-being factor (GWB) assesses the extent to which an individual feels good or content with their life as a whole and it incorporates broader psychological well-being as well as general physical health aspects.

The Control at work factor (CAW) reflects the level at which an employee feels that they can consider to be an appropriate level of control within their work environment. It has been suggested that the perception of personal control can strongly affect both an individual's experience of stress and health. Job and Career Satisfaction (JCS) represents the level to which the workplace provides a person with the best things at work-the things that make them feel good, such as: sense of achievement, high self esteem and fulfillment of potential. Working conditions (WCS) assesses the extent to which the employee is satisfied with the fundamental resources, working conditions and security necessary to do their job effectively. In the present study, term 'Work related Quality of Life (WRQoL) has been used extensively to indicate the Quality of Work life of the Medial transcriptionists belonging to selected ITeS companies located in three metropolitan cities (i.e Coimbatore, Chennai and Bangalore).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Settings: The Employees working at the IT enabled services Industry (Non- Voice Based) were formed the population of this study. Among them, only (N=150) the employees belonging to Medical Transcription unit which is functioning at three Metropolitan cities (Bangalore, Chennai and Coimbatore) formed the sampling frame for this study.

Study Samples: 50 Employees from each of the three ITeS Industries (N=150) located in three selected cities were recruited based on criterion sampling approach. The Primary data consisting of the employee's opinion about the Work related Quality of life were captured using a standard Work-related Quality of life Scale (adopted from the University of Portsmouth).

The scale is already been validated and the overall Cranach's alpha for all the 23 items were found to be 0.94. The Secondary data consisted of the productivity of the employees were captured with respect to their Accuracy percentage in the preparation of Transcript using a standard methodology adopted from American association of Medical Transcription Metrics for measuring the Quality of Medical Transcription.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Samples Included in this Study

S.No	Gender	N, (%)	Mean Age	Working Hours	Working Experiences
1	Males	85, (57)	28.5 Years	8.20 Hours	4.5 years
2	Females	65,(43)	26.5 Years	8.05 Hours	4 years

METHODOLOGY

Study Design: A Descriptive study design was adopted to study the constructs of Work-related Quality of Life among the employees of ITeS Industry in India. Further, it attempted to establish an association between Work-related Quality of Life and the Productivity of the ITeS employees at their Job.

Subjects: The Medical Transcriptionists (N=150) working in selected ITeS industries were recruited as samples using a criterion based sampling method. The Criteria for including subjects in his study consists of: (i) Medical transcription employees of both sexes aged between 25 and 35 years who are working on only day shifts; (ii) Professionally certified Medical Transcription Employees (at the Professional Level 2 as stipulated by AAMT) who have more than 2 years of

experience in Medical Transcription; (iii) Employees who are performing Transcription work for least five days a week during which at least four hours a day.

The standard Work-related Quality of Work Life (WRQoL) Questionnaire was distributed to the participants and the respondents were requested to kindly complete the questionnaire, and return the same to the Researcher. Respondents were given sufficient time to respond without induce pressure. Throughout the study, care was taken to protect anonymity of the evaluators.

Methodology Adopted for Calculating Work Productivity in the ITeS Employees: The American Association of Medical Transcription's (AAMT) recommended that organizations set the following goals for transcriptionists: at least 98% accuracy with respect to all errors, at least 98% accuracy with respect to major errors, and 100% accuracy with respect to critical errors.

The above criteria stipulated by AAMT, was adopted in this study. In this study, the Productivity of the Employees is expressed as Accuracy percentage of the document transcribed by the transcriptionist.

It is calculated by adopting the mechanism suggested by AAMT by following below 4 steps Process:

- Calculate the types of Error committed by the transcript in a document (i.e. Critical Error, Major errors, Minor errors and the Dictation flaws). A Typical Error points are assigned to each of the errors as stipulated by AAMT for the calculation of Accuracy percentage;
- Calculate the number of lines in the Report by adopting the 65 character line Standard. The total numbers of lines in the report has been calculated by summing up the total number of characters in the report and then subtract the value by 65 to get the result.
- Subtract the total error points (obtained in step 1) from the total number of Lines in the Medical report (score obtained in Step-2);
- Divide the sum obtained in step (3) by total number of lines in a Report and then multiply by the number '100' to obtain the Accuracy percentage.

Statistical Analysis

The WRQoL Questionnaire has 23 items and all items in the Questionnaire are typically "Likert type item" and each item was in five points [1], indicating the degree of agreement with a statement in ascending order: 1= Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; 3=True Sometimes; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree. Three questions (Q.No.7, 9, 19) were negatively phrased in the WRQoL Questionnaire and agreement scores were reversed in the Likert scale.

The researcher used one parametric approach "Mean" and one non-parametric measure "Cumulative percentage of the option 4 or 5 in the likert Scale as an outcome variable. Chi-square statistics were applied to study the association between overall Quality of work life and the Productivity of the employees expressed as Accuracy percentage gained by the employees in the Transcripted document.

For the purpose of Productivity measurement, one full week data of the employees were utilized and average productivity expressed in Accuracy percentage was used in this study. All the analysis was done by using SPSS 19.0 version. A p-value less than 0.01 were considered as significant.

Table 2: Work Related Quality of Life among the Employees of the Medical Transcription Division of Information Technology Enabled Service Industries in India

S.No	WRQoL Factors and its variables	Mean Score	Cumulative % of 4 or 5 in the Likert Scale
I.	**Job Career Satisfaction**		
1.	Clarity of Goals and Aims that enables the employees to do the Job	3.68	65
2.	Opportunity to use the abilities at Work	3.66	63
3.	Acknowledgement given by the Line Manager for doing good job	3.74	66
4.	Encouragement prevailing in the work environment to develop new skills	3.68	60
5.	Satisfaction towards career Opportunity available in the work Environment	3.62	61
6.	Satisfaction towards Training received to perform the work efficiently	3.76	65
II.	**Working Conditions**		
7.	Provisions/Facilities provided by the employer to do the Job Effectively	3.87	67
8.	The Working Environment is Safe.	3.90	70
9.	Satisfaction of the Working Conditions	3.83	68
III	**Control at Work**		
10.	Ability to Voice Opinions and Influence changes in the areas of work	3.38	52
11.	Involvement in decisions that affects the areas of Work	3.50	54
12.	Involvement in decisions that affects members of public in my own	3.33	48
IV	**Stress at work**		
13.	Feel under pressure at Work	3.72	64
14.	Feel Excessive stress at Work	3.79	65
V.	**Home-Work Interface**		
15.	Employer provided adequate facilities and flexibility to fit me to the work	3.65	59
16.	Working Hours and work Pattern suits my personal circumstances	3.63	60
17.	Line Manager actively promotes Flexible working Hours/patterns	3.61	58
VI.	**General Well Being**		
18.	Feeling Well at a moment	3.84	69
19.	Feeling Unhappy and depressed recently	3.52	60
20	Satisfaction towards life	3.62	65
21.	Feeling that the life is close to ideal in most ways.	3.65	62
22.	In general, Things are working out well	3.58	65
23.	Recently, I am feeling reasonably happy with respect to all the things considered together	3.62	63
24.	**Overall satisfaction towards the Quality of Working Life**	3.57	59

The table 2 illustrates the opinions of the employees of Medical transcription division of the Information technology Enabled service Industries about their Work-related Quality Life. The comments are restricted with respect to the Cumulative percentage of 4 or 5. Overall, 59% of the employees were satisfied with their Work related Quality of Life. Specifically, more than 60% of them were satisfied with their Job Career, and 68% of them were satisfied with their working conditions. 64% of the employees felt under pressure at work and 65% of the employees felt excessive stress at work.

Less than 55% of the employees were involved in decisions related to their area of work and only 52% of the employees agreed that they could voice their opinion and influence changes in their areas of work. Around 60% of the employees agreed that their line manager promotes working hours and work pattern that suits their personal circumstances. 65% of the employees agreed that the things are working out well for them and they are satisfied with their life.

Even though, 60% of them registered their opinion that they are feeling unhappy and depressed recently, 69% of them felt well at that moment while the survey is being administrated. While taking into consideration of all the things together with respect to General Well-being, 63% of the employees felt that they were reasonably happy and contented.

Table 3: Association between the Work-Related Quality of Work-Life (WRQoL) and Productivity of the Employees Working in the Medical Transcription Division of the ITeS Industry

S.No	Productivity of the Employees (Expressed in Percentage)	Work-related Quality of Life (Agreement Scores)			Chi-Square Statistics
		Disagree/Strongly Disagree N, (%)	Neutral N, (%)	Agree/Strongly Agree N, (%)	
1	Above 96% and up to 98%	25, (69.4)	10, (27.8)	1, (2.8)	χ^2=117.022 df=4; p<0.01
2	Above 98% and up to 99%	4, (8.7)	21,(45.7)	21, (45.7)	
3	Above 99% and up to 100%	0, (0)	2, (3.2)	60, (96.8)	
4	Overall productivity of the employees taken together	29, (20.1)	33, (22.9)	82, (56.9)	

The Table 3 depicted the association between the productivity of the employees and their agreement scores on overall Work related quality of Life. While analyzing the table values, it is found that there is a significant association between the Work-related Quality of Life of the employees and their productivity as expressed by the p value (<0.01). Furthermore, 96.8 % of Employees whose productivity (expressed as the Accuracy percentage in the Transcript) reported to be above 99%, expressed their satisfaction with their Work Related Quality of Life. Thus, it is noted the employees who are satisfied with their Quality of Work Life have demonstrated high productivity in their Job.

DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

This study is the documentation of the opinion of the Medical transcription employees about their Quality of Work Life and its association with Work Productivity. Six Psychosocial factors contributing to overall quality of working life were captured using a standard Work-related Quality work life Questionnaire (WRQoL) adopted by the University of Portsmouth, after due permission Obtained to use the Questionnaire for this study. To nullify the effect of productivity variation among the employees, employees whose yearly average productivity over 95% were recruited in this study.

The first construct studied was the Job career satisfaction. It is a cognitive behavioral component which represents an employee's belief about his job or Job Situation. In the present study, over 60% of the employees were satisfied with their existing Job career perspectives. The Job Career Satisfaction are always reflected in various positive work related behaviors such as attending work regularly, working hard, and intended to stay in the organization for long time (Lokananda Reddy and Mohan Reddy, 2010). Other aspects of the Job such as nature of work, Pay, Promotions, Quality of supervision, fridge benefits, co-workers support and excessive working hours (Watson et al, 2003) are associated with levels of Satisfaction. The one reason attributed to this moderate agreement score (over 60%) on Job satisfaction is the nature of work in Information system professionals including those who are working in Medical transcription division that requires high demand and high control and is defined as the active work situation (Gunaseelan Rethinam and Maimunah Ismail, 2008). Such situation provides an opportunity for the Employees to experience hands on skill in problem solving, managing uncertainties and coping strategies.

The Second construct studied was working conditions. The employees' satisfaction towards the fundamental resources and Physical working conditions prevailing in the company is necessary to do their job effectively. Conversely, dissatisfaction with the Physical working conditions such as health and safety and work Hygiene have adverse effect on employee WRQoL. With respect to the Information technology Industries, the Physical Working condition also includes the Ideal Computer work station setup and its proper arrangements. Improper computer workstation arrangements will adversely affect the health of the employees by exposing them musculoskeletal health hazards (Arun Vijay, 2013). In the present study, around 68% of the employees are satisfied with the existing working condition which is considered as

"Suboptimal" and the chances of exposing the employees to health hazards are intense.

The third construct studied was Control at Work. In the current study, less than 55% of the employees were satisfied with their control at work. This result indicated that the ITeS employees experiencing a moderate level of control at work and it may be attributed to the fact that negative emotional reactions (e.g. anxiety), Physical health problems in both the short term (headache or stomach distress) and the long term (e.g. cardiovascular disease), and counterproductive behavior at work are all work conditions related to individual perceptions of control at work (Spector, 2002). Thus, the perception of personal control at work can strongly affect both an individual experience of stress and their health (Steptoe & Appels, 1989). The fourth factor studied was Stress at work. The level of stress that the IT & ITeS employees face is comparatively higher than other employees. Any kind of a job has targets and an employee becomes stressed when he or she is allotted with unachievable targets and are unable to manage the given situation (Uma mageswari, 2011). Previous studies also demonstrated the relationship between job stress and quality of life of the IT/ITeS employees and it is interpreted that higher the level of job stress, lower is the level of quality of life of the respondents (Ranjit and Mahes priya, 2012). In conformance to previous findings, the present study also reported that 65% of the employees of ITeS Industries face excessive stress at work and they feel under pressure at work.

The fifth construct studied was Home-Work interface. Allen et al. (2000) emphasized that problems associated with family responsibilities are additional sources that may diminish WRQoL among the IT professionals ((Gunaseelan Rethinam and Maimunah Ismail, 2008). Such a scenario is applicable for ITeS employees too since the nature of work is almost similar. Burke (1998) proposed three hypotheses to explain work-family relationship viz- (1) Spillover-Events of one environment affects other; (2) Compensation-Employees attempt to compensate in one environment for what is lacking in the other and; (3) the Environment can be described as Independent. The present study results indicated that 60% of the employees are satisfied with their working hours and work pattern prevailing in the Medical Transcription division of ITeS Industries in India. Thus, the results of this study demonstrated that a moderate proportion (60%) of ITeS employees especially those working in the Medical Transcription division can able to balance their Home-Work life. The sixth and last construct studied was General Well-being. The routine work, badly designed instruments such as computers and furniture in the Computer work environment have significantly increased work related disorders (Blatter and Bongers, 2002). When employees are affected by Physical Health problems, their performance at the work could be reduced. This notion supports the fact that the general well-being of the employees at work needs to be addressed positively by providing a conductive working environment that impedes the risk to health and well-being. In the present study, over 60% of the employees expressed their satisfaction towards their life and their General well being. This study has some limitations viz. (1) Difference in the technical competencies of the employees with respect to the preparation of the Medical transcript could not be controlled in this study; (2) The Results of this study is applicable only to the Medical transcription employees and it cannot be generalized to other Information Technology sectors.

Association between the Quality of Work Life and Productivity

Further exploration was made in this study to find out whether any association between the overall Quality of Work Life and the Productivity of the Employees. Since the study samples belong to the Medical Transcription division of ITeS industry, an appropriate measure of productivity was chosen with respect to their Job domain. To facilitate that, the Metrics adopted by the American Association of Medical transcription was chosen. The Accuracy percentage of the transcribed document was chosen as a measure of Productivity. The results of this study indicated that there is an association between the Work-related Quality of life and the productivity of the employees as shown by the chi-square analysis (table 3).

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, 59% of the Medical transcription employees of ITeS Industries were satisfied with their Work related Quality of Life. Specifically, over 60% of the ITeS employees were satisfied with both their Job career and the working conditions prevailing in their ITeS companies. Less than 55% of employees registered their satisfaction with respect to their ability to exert control in their areas of work. With regard to Work-Place Stress, 65% of the employees felt excessive stress at work. Ironically, only 60% of the employees' were satisfied with Health and General Well-being and accordingly maintained a balance between Work and Home Life. First of its kind research, this study also demonstrated a significant association between the Overall Quality of Work Life and the Work Productivity of the employees working in the ITeS sector.

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