**Mental health crises of workforce in India**

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**Understanding mental health crisis at workplace**

India has the world's largest number of young workers as a developing country. In recent years, it has also emerged as a stable nation. All sectors of the Indian economy have seen alarming growth over the last 25 years. Key drivers of the nation's growth are infrastructure, IT, and medical industries. Technology and innovation have grown tremendously in India. With the advent of modern technology, the use of technology has multiplied. Mental health crises affect one in seven people in India, according to a study conducted until 2017. (Sagar et al., 2020)

However, the question remains, are we taking care of our mental health properly? There have been many health issues related to physical well-being addressed by the medical industry. According to a survey conducted by the live love laugh foundation, India is the world's most depressed country. (LLLF\_Mental\_Health\_Report\_2021, n.d.). According to NIMHANS' recent study, approximately 15% of Indians suffer from mental health issues, and only 3% of them receive treatment (*India Fails to Address Growing Mental Health Problem \_ Health - Hindustan Times*, n.d.). Despite this, a large part of our mental health is still unaddressed. There are very few open forums and discussions on mental health.

Several factors contribute to mental health crisis in humans. In one way or another, each triggers the other. This map shows the description.

The above characteristics are not necessarily seen in individuals who are dealing with the mental health crisis in the workplace. The maps show the most common reasons for mental health crises among workers.

As a result of these factors mental health issues raise and vulnerable to affect the functionality of the company. Temporary and chronic ailments develop in due course of time. The map depicts the major ailments seen in workforce over time.

There are few more mental health issues that arise due to excessive workload and mental pressure. The map lists those effectively.

On an average, Indian employees spend 52 hours at workspace. The various factors related to work that elevates the stress levels shown in the graphic.

There are other factors related to work environment that elevates stress levels is to be understood in the following list. (*Mental Health May Hurt India to Tune of $1.03 Trillion; Here’s a Dose for Cos - The Economic Times*, n.d.)

In general, industry contains individuals of different ages. Few health ailments exist prior to joining the company. As a result of employment, they develop these health crises. (Padma et al., 2015) makes the following observations in study conducted on IT and BPO employees. Employees with depression, diabetes, and hypertension are more likely to experience stress issues.

**Future crisis due to ignorance of mental health**

Current day industry and society needs to address mental health crises. The effect of mental health crises on a broader perspective is shown in the graphic.

The workforce is likely to get affected by the mental health crises. It is observed all over the world that people working for long work hours and lack of training leads to mental health crises. The list shows the common effects on company due mental health crises.

According to WHO forecast, India will lose 1.03 trillion dollars by the end of 2030, due to mental health crisis. (Nawab, n.d.). In the recent statistics on mental health crisis, it is observed that 42.5% of Indian workforce suffer from depression and anxiety disorders. (*Mental Health May Hurt India to Tune of $1.03 Trillion; Here’s a Dose for Cos - The Economic Times*, n.d.).

The most challenging issue with Indian workforce regarding mental health crises is that they suffer inside but they don’t complain outside. (*Mental Health: The Elephant in the Rooms of Corporate India*, n.d.). After the pandemic, India has suffered a great loss in mental health of its workforce due to the constant switching of work from home to office. The layoffs of major IT giants resulted in extensive work for existing employees. As a result of the lack of efficient workers, this scenario will increase.

Post-pandemic, Indians recognized the importance of family life. Many companies have observed a decrease in employee retention following the pandemic. There is a lack of awareness and government initiatives to address mental health issues among employees in most companies. It is difficult for employees with mental health crises to discuss the issue in the workplace. A major issue for many companies is creating interest at work and engaging their employees. Mental health crises are bound to force employees to leave their jobs. The company loses money through constant attrition.

**Development of awareness and planning of counselling and training strategies**

In India, there are 0.75 psychiatrists per lakh people. Compared to many developed countries, it is much lower. A common misconception is that psychologists and psychiatrists are the same thing. Both sides take care of counseling when it is necessary. When treatment is unavoidable, a psychiatrist is needed.

A consortium of both public and private entities is required to address the mental health crisis of the Indian workforce. The government sector benefits from public entity initiatives. Initiatives by private entities benefit their workforce. Public mental health crises have to be managed through joint initiatives.

Below is a graphic that illustrates how the initiatives must be stared.

**Steps to improve mental health in workforce.**

Employers in public and private sectors need to develop mental health improvement programs. A workplace mental health program should be implemented to improve employee wellbeing.

Programs such as the ones mentioned above help employees engage with their work environment easily. A positive mental health is of crucial importance today, and every individual has a responsibility to actively participate in programs aimed at improving this.

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