



Mental Health in the Indian Workplace: Addressing the Challenges

Workplace mental health has become a leading issue in the Indian professional environment during the last few years. Workplace mental health discussions continue to evolve as Indian society shows increasing levels of awareness about these issues. In 2025 S.N. Subrahmanyam became the center of attention when he suggested workers could perform their duties over 90 hours per week as Chairman and Managing Director of Larsen & Toubro (L&T). The statement initiated widespread reactions from business leaders who disagreed on its implications through comments from Anand Mahindra and Rajiv Bajaj.

Understanding Workplace Mental Health in India

According to a 2022 survey by Deloitte which assessed employee mental health across India found that 80% of workers faced some form of mental health struggle in the previous year. The concern about how people might judge them prevented almost four in ten workers from getting professional mental health care. When mental health goes untreated it leads to absences from work along with lowered productivity levels and higher employee replacement needs. A tragic incident involving 26-year-old accountant Anna Sebastian Perayil at Ernst & Young (EY) in Pune created awareness about mental health at work. Anna Sebastian Perayil passed away in 2024 from work stress which led people to examine employee workload requirements and mental well-being counseling options.

Considering the Effects of Extended Work Hours

The discussion about extending the workweek to 90 hours leads to concerns about worker health. Working beyond 55 hour workweeks shows evidence of elevating individuals' probability of both heart problems and strokes. Researchers from the World Health Organization (WHO) and International Labour Organization (ILO) conducted their 2021 study to explore how long work hours can lead to stress-related burnout problems.

Different industrial leaders have presented various viewpoints about this issue. Industry leader Anand Mahindra suggested work quality as the key topic for discussion instead of work duration whereas Rajiv Bajaj expressed worries regarding extra-long work shifts. The presented views demonstrate how organizations need to strike a proper equilibrium between work efficiency and staff welfare.

Strategies for Supporting Mental Well-Being in Workplaces

Employers need to establish preventive measures which help improve mental wellness in their work environments.

Some potential strategies include:

- Organizations should create open talk environments because this enables staff members to feel comfortable when searching for support.
- The organizations Capgemini India and ICICI Lombard both launched Employee Assistance Programs that provide mental health resources along with counseling services to their staff members.
- A strategy to prevent burnout is establishing work expectations reasonable enough for employees to handle their duties.
- A supportive workplace emerges through offering employees mental health training which includes stress management and emotional intelligence and coping strategy education.

- Employees receive better well-being when their organizations both encourage vacation periods and flexible work schedules.

Conclusion

The 90-hour workweek discussion has highlighted the importance of considering mental health in workplace policies. As organizations focus on productivity, it is also essential to support employee well-being. A well-balanced approach can lead to greater engagement, retention, and long-term organizational success. Addressing mental health in Indian workplaces is an ongoing conversation that requires a thoughtful and inclusive approach.

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