

# PEOPLE at WORK 2023



## Spotlight on: India

Stress, uncertainty and disruption —  
India's workplaces in state of flux



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# Introduction

People at Work 2023: A Global Workforce View explores employees' attitudes towards the current world of work and their expectations and hopes for the workplace of the future. ADP Research Institute® brings you vital intelligence into the attitudes, aspirations, **wants and needs of 32,612 workers in 17 countries, including 8,613 working exclusively in the gig economy.**

## India's current work landscape

At a time when technology is transforming entire industry sectors and creating new ones, workers are responding with adaptability by seeking flexibility in every facet of their work.

A whopping 95% of workers surveyed in India report they're satisfied with their current employment. But they express a need to prepare for disruption in the years ahead with 74% worried about skillsets needed in future and emerging technology skills not yet imperative in their job today.

Flexibility of hours and location is now the norm and an expectation. Nearly three out of four workers (74%) advise they feel empowered to take advantage of flexible working arrangements with their current employer.

But expectations of flexibility are expanding. Their views toward how and when pay is delivered are also evolving. In India, pay is not just a monetary transaction — it's a core foundation of financial wellness.

Increasing numbers of workers are demanding non-conventional approaches to pay including flexible payment arrangements, increased frequency, and the use of non-traditional payment methods like mobile wallets and pre-payment cards.

Employers have made positive progress in promoting diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) initiatives and in addressing stress and mental wellbeing in the workplace. However, 76% of workers claim that their work suffers because of stress. More needs to be done to create an inclusive workplace culture, train managers and mitigate the negative impacts of employee stress.

Despite progress and widespread optimism with the current work environment, economic uncertainties and technological disruptions make the future uncertain for workers in India.

# Data and methodology

**People at Work 2023: A Global Workforce View** explores employees' attitudes towards the current world of work and what they expect and hope for from the workplace of the future.

**ADP Research Institute**<sup>®</sup> surveyed 32,612 workers in 17 countries around the world between 28 October and 18 November 2022 including over 8,613 working exclusively in the gig economy:



## 15,290 in Europe

- France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Switzerland and the UK
- Including 4,046 in the gig economy



## 5,751 in Latin America

- Argentina, Brazil and Chile
- Including 1,516 in the gig economy



## 3,850 in North America

- USA and Canada
- Including 1,022 in the gig economy



## 7,721 in Asia Pacific

- Australia, China, India and Singapore
- Including 2,029 in the gig economy



Within the worker sample we identified gig workers and traditional workers. Gig workers were identified as those who work on a contingent, temporary or seasonal basis, or as a freelancer, independent contractor, consultant, gig worker, or use an online platform to source work. Traditional employees were identified as those who are not working in the gig economy and instead have a permanent full or part-time position.

The survey was conducted online in the local language. Overall results are weighted to represent the size of the working population for each country. Weightings are based on labour force data from the World Bank<sup>3</sup>, which is derived using data from the ILOSTAT database, the central statistics database of the International Labour Organization (ILO), as of February 8 2022.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Total world labour force, World Development indicators database, The World Bank, February 8, 2022

# People at Work in India

## Snapshot of key findings



Survey question:

**Which of the following, if any, is your current employer providing to your satisfaction?**



**Satisfied:**

1 **56%** Job security

2 **55%** Job title

3 **55%** Training and development



**Not satisfied:**

1 **51%** Salary

2 **51%** Career progression

3 **48%** Flexibility of hours



**Variations emerge across dissatisfied workers in different regions.** Woefully, 45% of workers in South India are unhappy because of fewer benefits than expected, followed by North India at 32%. Workers in East India are unhappiest with the gender pay gap (21%).



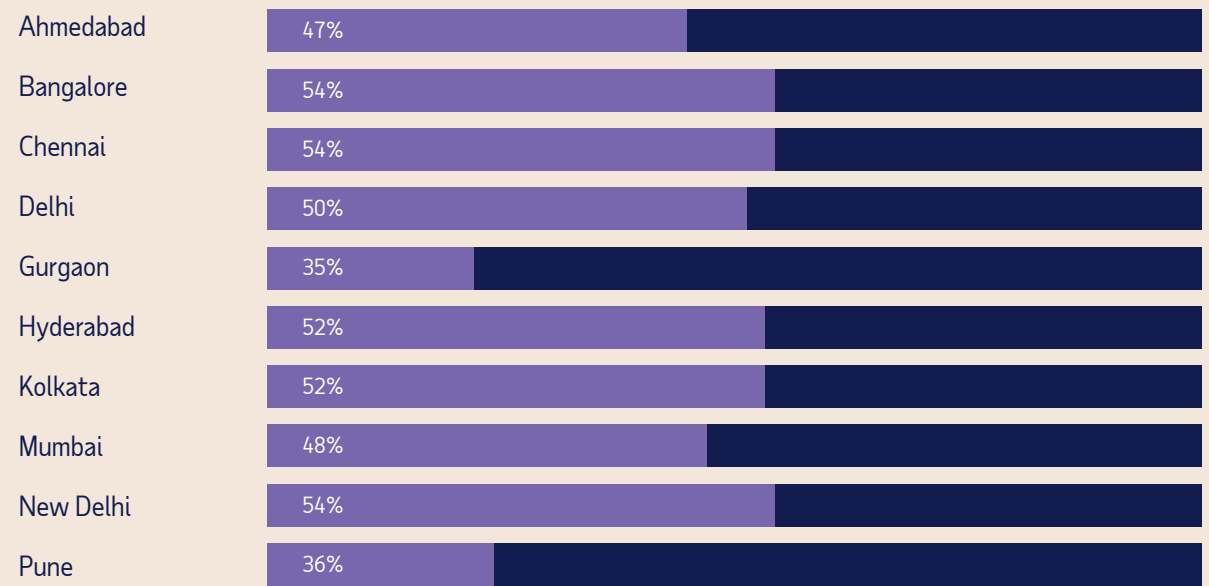
# Openness to evolving approaches to compensation

Pay is a core foundation of financial wellness. When workers are uncertain about or cannot rely on their pay, it triggers anxiety and worry about how they can care for their families, particularly in times of uncertainty and disruption.

More than half (56%) of Indian employees' pinpoint pay as the most critical factor in their job satisfaction, with job security trailing close behind at 48%.

Interestingly, India leads the Asia Pacific region in wage growth, with an impressive 78% of its employees reporting a salary hike in the preceding year. However, nearly half (49%) believe they are underpaid in comparison to their job responsibilities and skill sets. And the same proportion (49%) expect a salary increase in the coming 12 months.

## Top cities in which workers believe they are underpaid for their job



But not all businesses can offer pay rises. The good news is acceptance of pay rise alternatives is rising, specifically towards options that help alleviate family pressures. Approximately one-third of workers welcome one-off bonuses, travel vouchers, additional paid leave or grocery vouchers.

As the Indian employment sector undergoes rapid transformation, the method and frequency of pay distribution have also become subjects of discussion. Seeking more flexible options, employees are starting to reevaluate the traditional salary disbursement cadences.

Nearly 30% of employees would be content with increased pay frequencies, even without an increase in their annual compensation. To cope with the increasing cost of living, 27% of respondents expressed a preference for one-off payments from their employers.

# Regional variances

A one-off bonus is most coveted in Gurgaon, favoured by 61% of workers, followed by Pune at 41%. Comparatively, alternatives to pay rise are not as popular in Northeast India. For example, 19% in New Delhi say they wouldn't be happy with anything other than a salary increase.

	Ahmedabad	Bangalore	Chennai	Delhi	Gurgaon	Hyderabad	Kolkata	Mumbai	New Delhi	Pune
<b>One off bonus (e.g., Holiday/merit bonus)</b>	23%	35%	28%	31%	61%	36%	36%	37%	37%	41%
<b>Travel vouchers</b>	35%	37%	34%	32%	39%	35%	29%	36%	23%	30%
<b>Additional days of annual leave/paid time off</b>	30%	37%	34%	31%	35%	33%	30%	36%	31%	30%
<b>Grocery/shopping vouchers</b>	30%	38%	38%	28%	43%	36%	33%	34%	23%	33%
<b>Increasing pay frequency</b>	16%	36%	26%	33%	26%	35%	25%	37%	29%	39%
<b>Educational assistance</b>	23%	25%	28%	30%	30%	28%	29%	28%	29%	33%
<b>One off payment to help with cost of living</b>	26%	29%	28%	26%	43%	37%	32%	31%	25%	28%
<b>Shorter work weeks</b>	35%	26%	28%	29%	43%	28%	31%	27%	25%	26%
<b>Childcare vouchers/subsidy</b>	14%	22%	22%	22%	39%	21%	18%	24%	31%	20%
<b>Gym membership</b>	23%	15%	15%	20%	22%	14%	17%	14%	17%	23%
<b>Sabbatical</b>	12%	12%	13%	14%	22%	10%	12%	9%	10%	20%
<b>I would not be happy with anything but a salary increase</b>	12%	5%	4%	5%	0%	12%	6%	7%	19%	8%
<b>Other, please specify</b>	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	0%

# Embracing the next normal

## Reimagining pay

**With pay and access to pay being crucial and fundamental to employee experience, employers strongly recognise the need to adopt a mix of non-conventional approaches towards pay over the next five years.**

- 80% agreed or strongly agreed they'll need to introduce faster access or early access to wages to fund "emergencies" or "unplanned expenses" to achieve the financial wellness of employees
- 56% agreed or strongly agreed they'll introduce a mix of alternative non-traditional pay methods like mobile wallets, pre-payment cards, etc.
- 52% agreed or strongly agreed they'll need to adopt flexible payment methods in terms of employees choosing their salary date
- 39% of the respondents want to adopt more frequent pay cycles like weekly or semi-monthly, similar to other countries
- 66% agreed or strongly agreed they'll continue with direct deposit to employee salary accounts as the only payment method over the next five years

*Excerpt from **Future of Pay in India 2023**, a comprehensive study on the state of pay in medium and large enterprises*



As the work environment in India continues to evolve, both employers and employees are increasingly open to alternative compensation structures, pay frequency and benefits.

# Where flexibility comes first — workers in India embrace flex locations and hours



Many workplaces in India have actively embraced hybrid working models, with the majority of workers (84%) stating they have some or complete flexibility of work location.



Three-quarters (74%) of workers say they feel empowered to take advantage of flexible working options, and 44% are reaping the benefits of a flexible workspace, toggling between their homes and workplaces.



This flexibility extends beyond just the workspace, as over a third (35%) of respondents share they could now work remotely from any global location.



Seven in 10 (69%) Indian employees now have the option to share job responsibilities.



Unquestionably, the future of work in India appears to be moving towards further flexibility. Nearly four in 10 (39%) respondents envision a not-too-distant future — within the next five years — where work hours are no longer rigid but based on productivity and results metrics.



The work landscape in India is undergoing a monumental shift where flexibility is a priority for workers and employers are responding.





# Driving and supporting an inclusive workplace culture

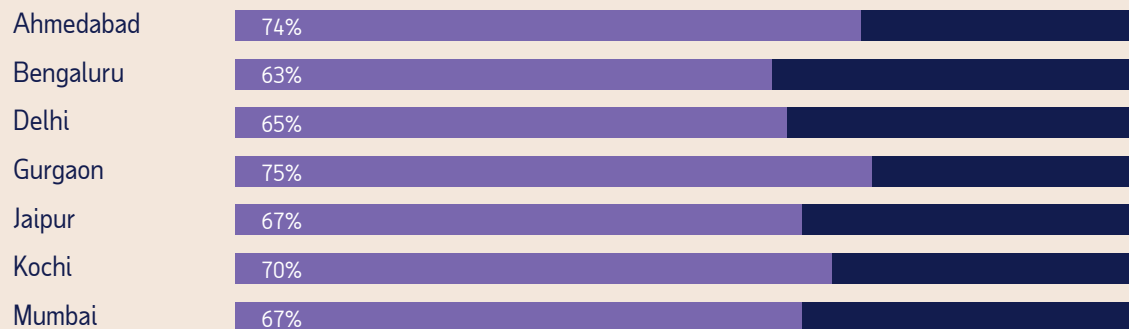
## Employees recognise their employers' efforts to cultivate a culture of fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).

Nearly two-thirds (63%) of Indian employees acknowledge their employers' efforts in bridging the gender pay gap, and 59% have witnessed strides in fostering diversity and inclusion — both results are the highest regionally.

Among DEI initiatives, training and development have emerged as essential tools with 25% of Indian employees participating in staff training aimed at promoting DEI initiatives.

Just 6% of Indian employees state that their company has no active DEI initiatives — lower than the Asia Pacific average of 9%.

## Top cities in which workers report their company is better towards gender pay equality compared to three years ago



Employees welcome employers' progress toward creating a more diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace culture, which is essential to recruiting and retaining talent in India's dynamic economy.

# Stress and mental wellbeing concerns in the workplace

Three in four workers in India (76%) claim their work suffers because of stress — the highest in Asia Pacific. And nearly half (49%) admit that their work performance suffers due to mental health issues. However, employers are responding with 71% of workers noting their managers are willing to provide support in times of mental distress and the same (71%) advising they feel comfortable discussing their mental health issues openly at work. Fewer than 6% of Indian employees say their employer isn't doing anything to help promote positive mental health.

This view extends to peers as well, with three-quarters affirming that their colleagues also provide support.

Furthermore, employers in India are not limiting their support to just emotional and psychological wellbeing with 74% of workers sharing their employers actively provide financial wellbeing advice.

## Highest reported daily stress



19% of workers in East India say they experience stress daily, the highest reported level across all regions



By city, the experience of daily stress is highest in Gurgaon (22%), Pune (21%) and Hyderabad (16%)



More needs to be done considering the current impacts of workplace stress on productivity, but employers in India score relatively high in supporting mental wellbeing. Increasing numbers are also providing financial wellbeing advice to support financial wellness.



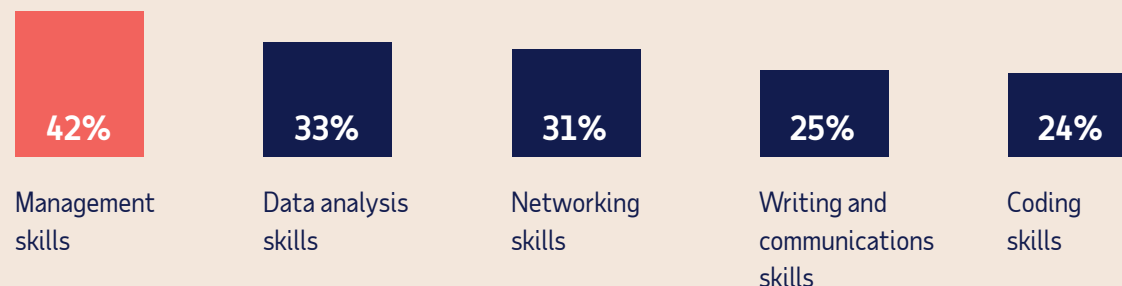
# Digital transformation and tech profoundly impacting the Indian workplace

The top three industries Indian workers see as primed for the future are Tech and Information (35%), Education and Health (29%) and Financial and Real Estate Services (23%).

Nearly three-quarters of workers in India (74%) believe that the skillsets crucial for tomorrow will predominantly revolve around technological capabilities not considered imperative today.

While digital transformation offers flexibility and diverse opportunities, the gig economy has also ushered in longer work hours for many. Just 8% of Indian gig workers state that they work no extra hours in a week, and nearly half (46%) claim to work an additional 6-10 unpaid hours weekly.

## The key skills Indian employees think will be most important for their role in the next five years include:



Upskilling, reskilling, and the constant adaptation to new tech tools and methodologies have become the norm. Steps must be taken to ensure workers are equipped with the necessary training and skills while mitigating the need for longer working hours.







## Conclusion

India's work landscape is in a state of flux, driven by economic transformation and technological evolution. Yet, Indian workers are proving to be highly adaptable.

### Here are five action items for employers:

- 1. Adopt alternative approaches to compensation:** Recognising the changing perceptions of pay, employers should consider implementing alternative compensation structures, benefits and non-traditional payment methods.
- 2. Prioritise flexibility:** Developing and promoting work policies that accommodate preferences for flexibility in time and location will make your organisation more attractive to potential employees and increase retention.
- 3. Cultivate inclusivity:** As employee expectations evolve, ramp up your DEI efforts with clear policies and practices to attract and retain top talent.
- 4. Enhance mental and financial wellbeing support:** While progress has been made, further initiatives should be explored, including manager training and offering financial wellbeing advice or workshops.
- 5. Invest in continuous learning:** Invest in new skills and mindset and knowledge training for your workforce. This involves upskilling and reskilling initiatives, to ensure your employees are ready to adopt the latest tools and methodologies, while also addressing concerns of long working hours.

If employers in India continue to respond to workers' expectations of flexibility across all facets of their work, they can shape new ways of work and pay and ensure a productive, satisfied and forward-looking workforce.

Our annual People at Work report is a vital source of intelligence that delivers insight into the global labour force and employee sentiment.



**Download the full report to discover insights that will help you better understand, motivate and retain your people.**

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