

IMPACT OF WORKPLACE SURVEILLANCE ON MENTAL HEALTH OF IT PROFESSIONALS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY SECTOR IN SRI LANKA.

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ABSTRACT

The advent of remote work and technological advancements has led to an increase in the prevalence of workplace surveillance in various industries. This trend has sparked concerns regarding the potential detrimental effects of workplace surveillance on employees' mental health. Despite this, there is a lack of comprehensive research examining the specific impact of workplace surveillance on mental health in the Sri Lankan context. This gap hinders the development of informed policies and practices that balance organizational needs with employee well-being. Unmitigated surveillance has the potential to contribute to increased stress, anxiety, and depression among employees and a general decline in employee well-being. Therefore, drawing on equity theory and psychological reactance theory, this study examines the impact of workplace surveillance on the mental health of IT professionals, focusing on the IT sector with its distinctive surveillance methods, and finding links between exposure to surveillance and its impact on employees' mental health. This study utilizes positivist philosophy and a deductive approach. A cross-sectional survey was conducted with 200 employees in the IT sector, with individuals as the unit of analysis. Data were collected through a self-administered questionnaire and analyzed using IBM-SPSS version 25 and Excel 2016. The empirical data revealed that workplace surveillance had a significant negative impact of 0.820 on the mental health of IT professionals at a 99% confidence level. The validity of the measurement was also ensured, with a value of 0.674 at a 99% confidence level. This study provides insights into the delicate balance between the security needs of the organization and the mental health of IT professionals. Consequently, it is recommended that organizations review their current practices to assess how to minimize the negative effects of workplace surveillance on mental health. Suggestions include moving towards preventive measures, investing in the introduction of less invasive methods, further developing employee assistance programs (EAP), and providing access to tailored intervention programs where necessary to foster healthier work environments in surveillance-intensive industries.

Keywords: Information technology, mental health, psychological stressors, well-being, workplace surveillance