



Your **DOST**

# Emotional Wellness State of Employees in 2023





## Executive Summary

In recent years, corporations have increasingly prioritized emotional wellness, offering support through initiatives like Employee Assistance Programs and wellness workshops. **This study aims to understand if the efforts are directionally correct and whether they have helped organizations tackle emotional wellness better.**

A detailed analysis conducted by YourDOST in partnership with various corporations gave us great insights. The following are some of the major ones:

- There has been a **31% increase in employees suffering from high and extreme stress levels.**
- **72.2% of female respondents reported high stress levels**, compared to only 53.64% of male respondents.

The key stressors that were identified include fear of judgment, lack of work-life balance, and feelings of under-recognition. Insights from YourDOST counseling sessions have helped identify these stress causes, underscoring the need for companies to refine their well-being strategies to address these escalating challenges.

This comprehensive report identifies the cause of high stress among Indian employees and emphasizes the importance of their emotional well-being.

# Introduction

This report focuses on the emotional wellness of employees in 2023, to identify factors that contribute to their well-being and suggest how companies can enhance support. At YourDOST, we conducted two key surveys involving **2,000 + employees** from the **age group of 21-70** from various companies to gather comprehensive insights into the workplace environment and individual or work-related stress factors.

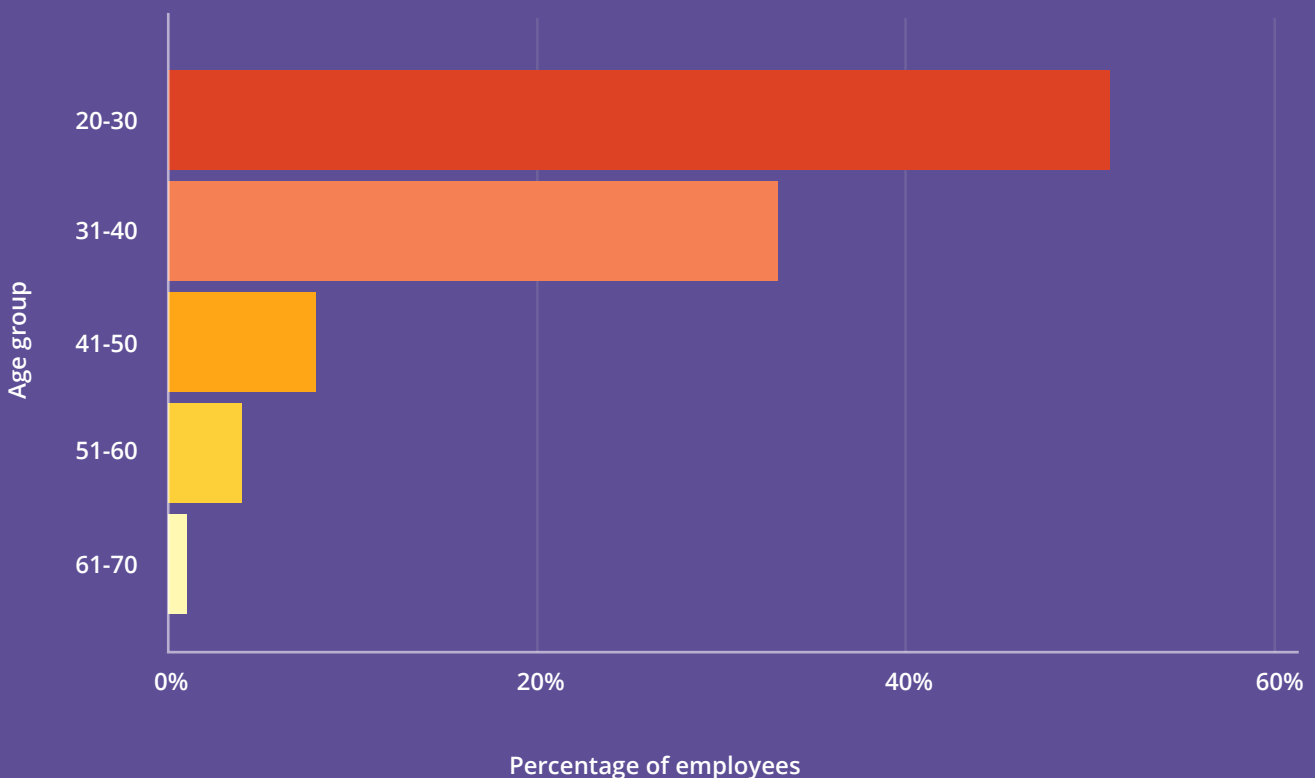
To assess the insights into the workplace environment, we considered the following three parameters:

- **Emotional Wellness Among Employees:** The overall mental health and emotional stability of employees within the workplace.
- **Perception of Support Received:** How employees view the help and resources provided by their organization for personal and professional challenges
- **Perception of Wellness within the Organization:** Employees' overall view of the organization's commitment to their physical, mental, & emotional well-being.

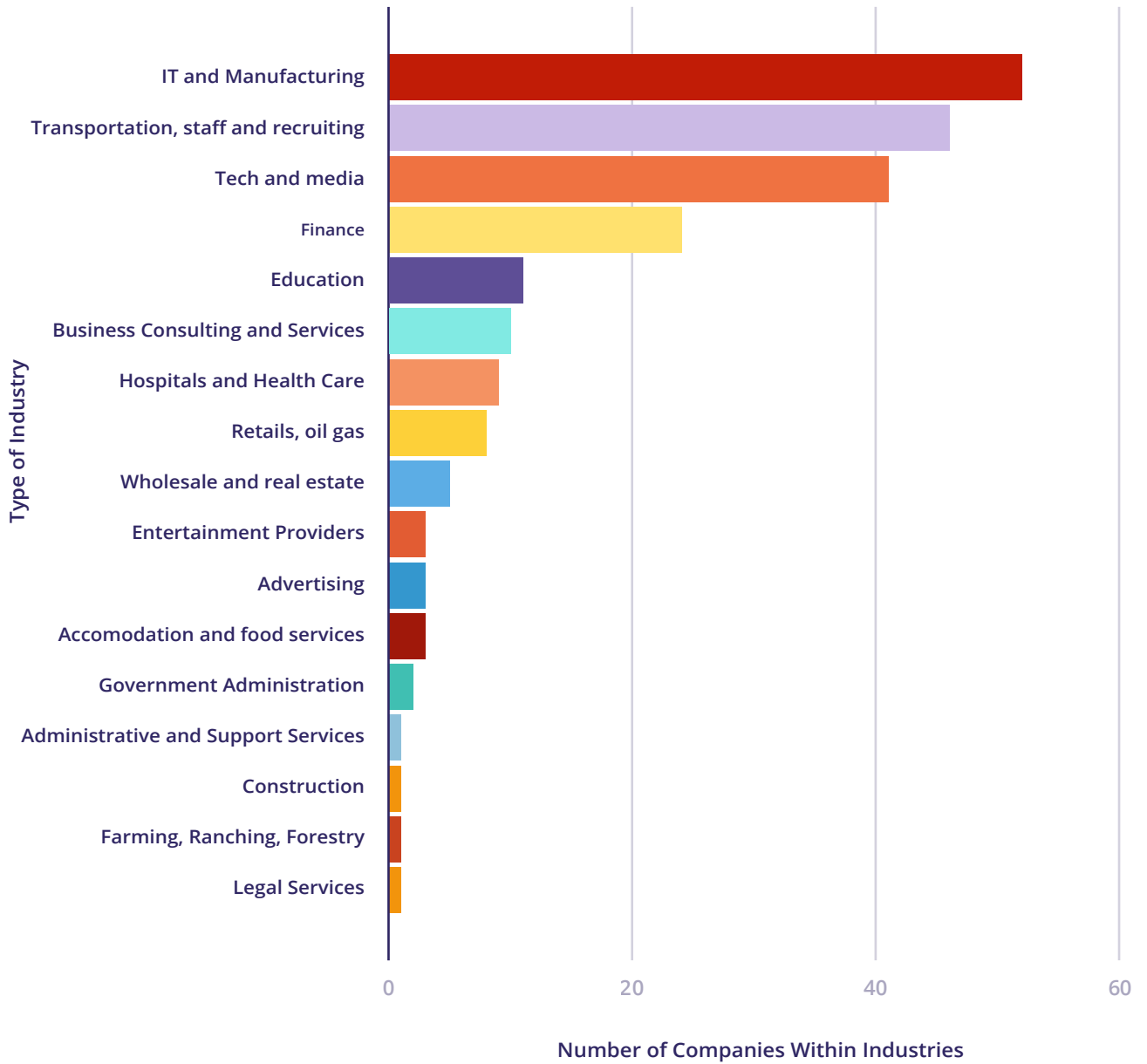
In addition to survey data, we analyzed participation in YourDOST counseling sessions to determine correlations between counseling usage and reported stress levels or workplace satisfaction.

Delving into the demographics of the employees who had taken the test:

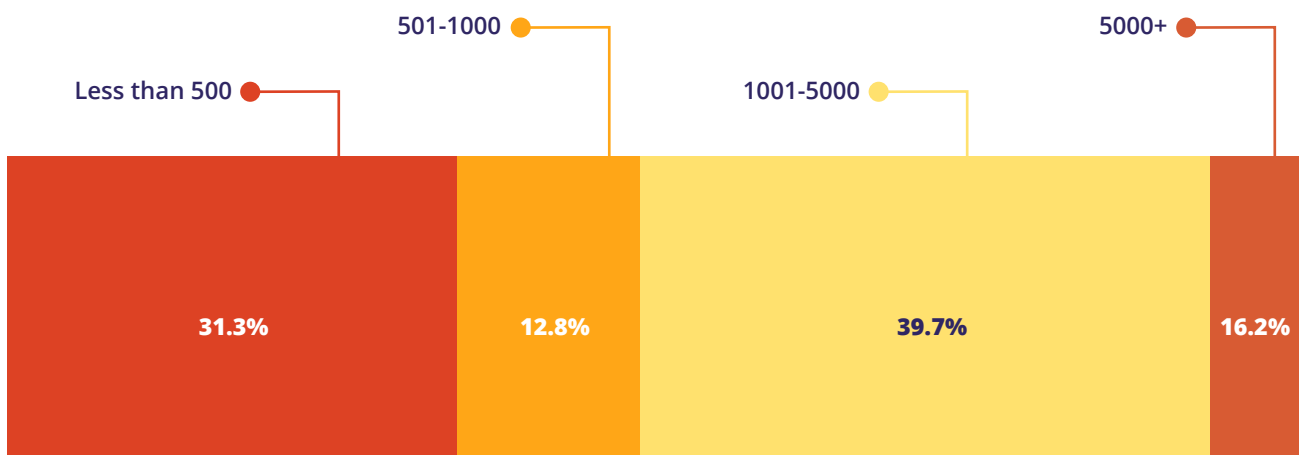
Percentage of employees vs. Age group



## Type of business

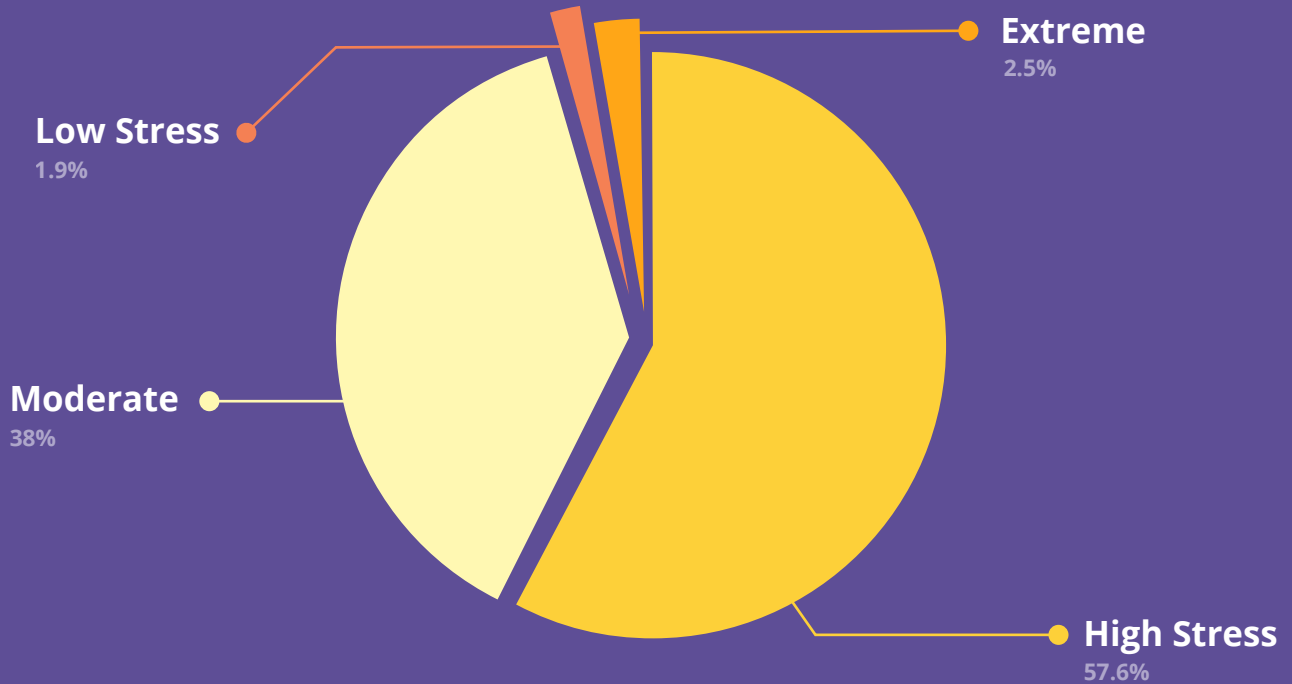


## Size of Companies



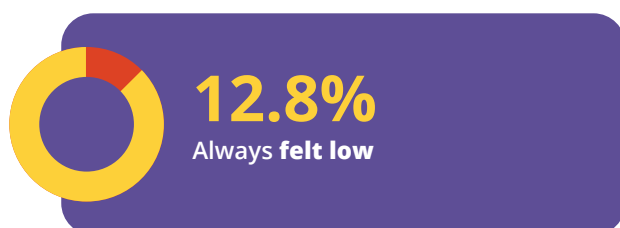
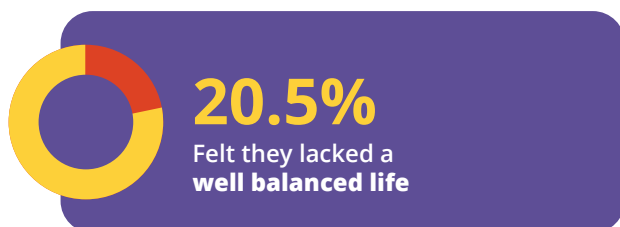
# Employee Stress Levels

In our recent 2023 survey conducted with employees from various companies, we uncovered some incredible insights. We found that 3 out of 5 employees, a majority, are experiencing high or extreme stress levels, a **whopping 30.26% increase from 2022**. These numbers pushed us to dig deeper into what might be causing such significant stress among employees.



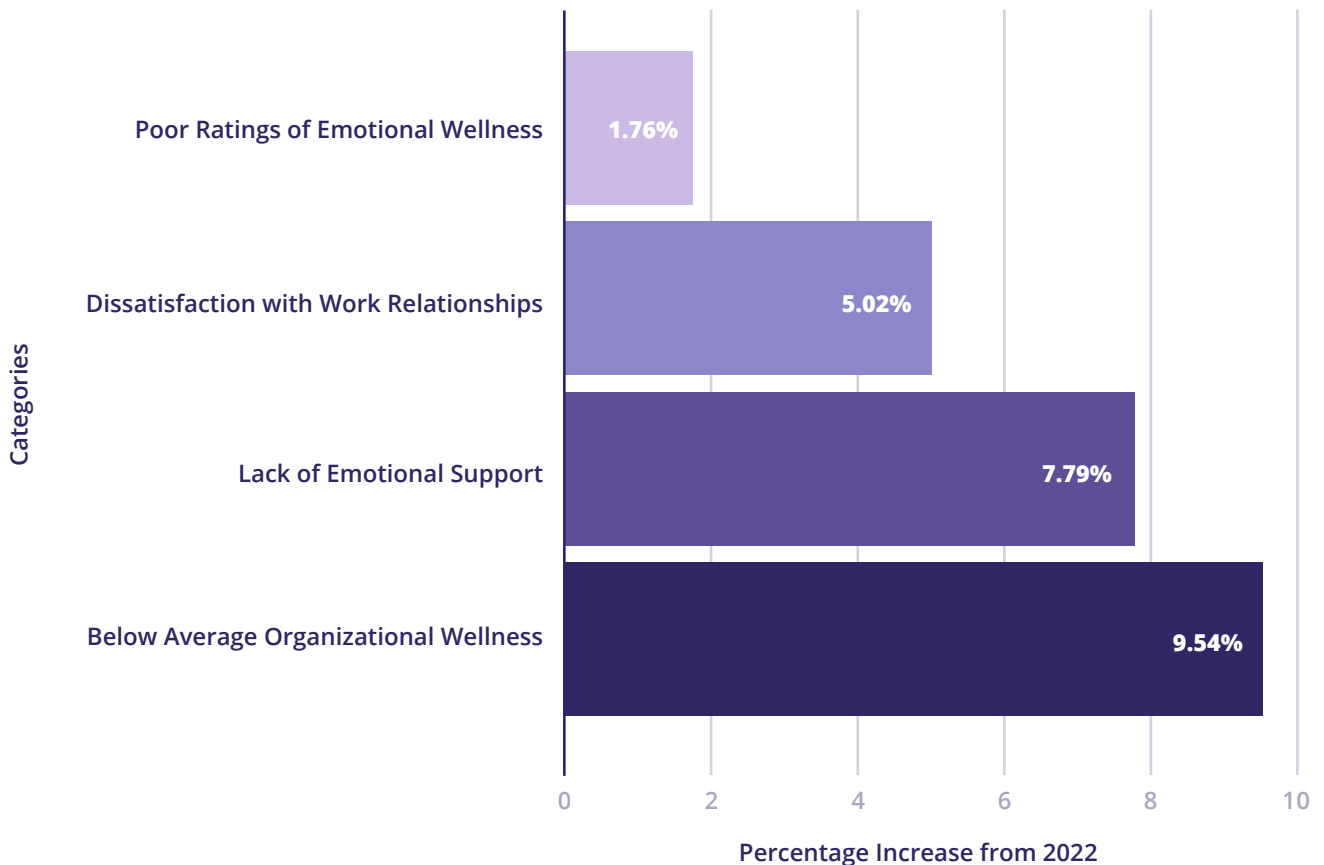
## Causes of Stress

High levels of stress in employees were reported majorly due to factors such as -



# Employee's Perception

Let's look at employees' perception of wellness and support provided by the organization:

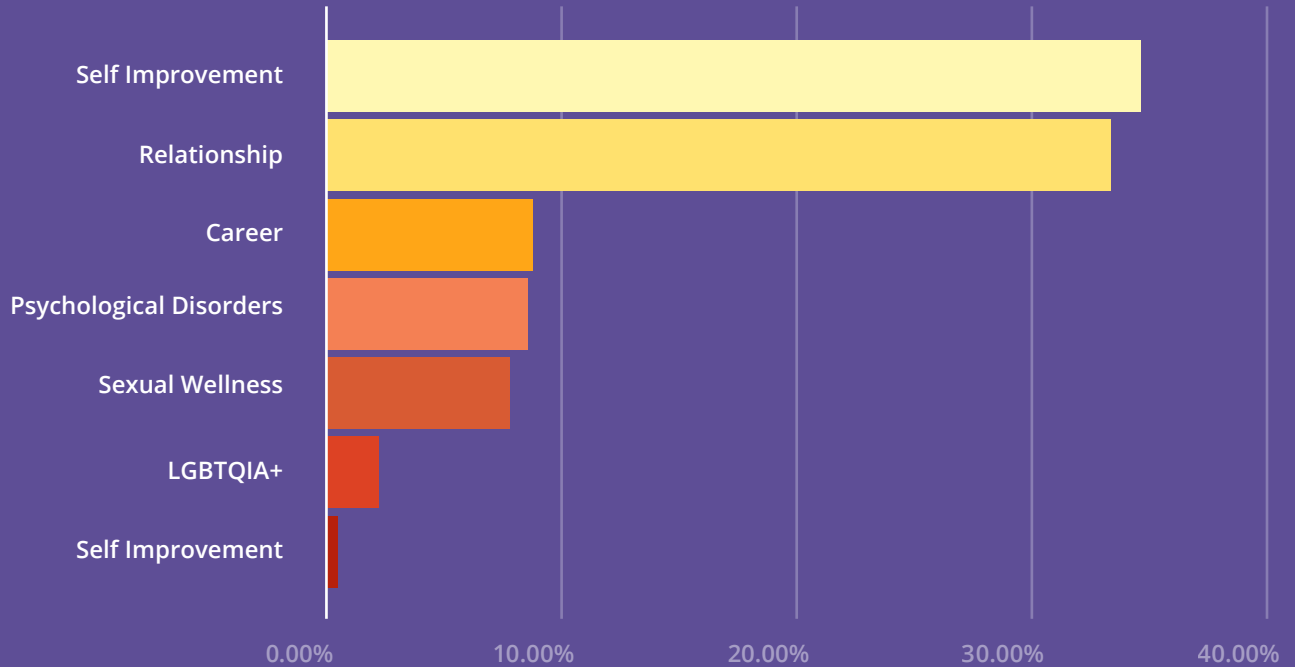


**We observed increases in negative workplace perceptions among employees suggesting a significant impact of high stress levels.** Specifically, there was a **9.54%** rise in perceptions of below-average organizational wellness, a **7.79%** increase in perceived lack of emotional support, a **5.02%** growth in dissatisfaction with work relationships, and a **1.76%** increase in poor ratings of emotional wellness. These statistics highlight stress as a key factor undermining workplace quality of life, indicating a need for targeted stress reduction interventions.

0.00% 0.00%

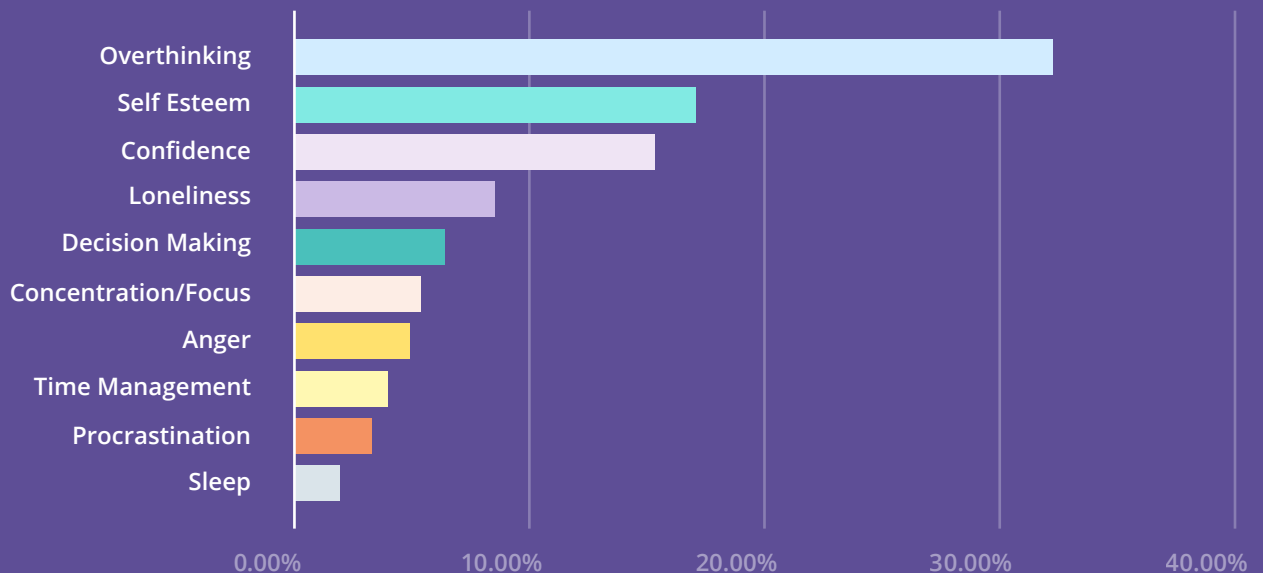
# What are Employees Seeking Help For?

The graph depicts overall sessions taken by employees due to stress caused by the factors:



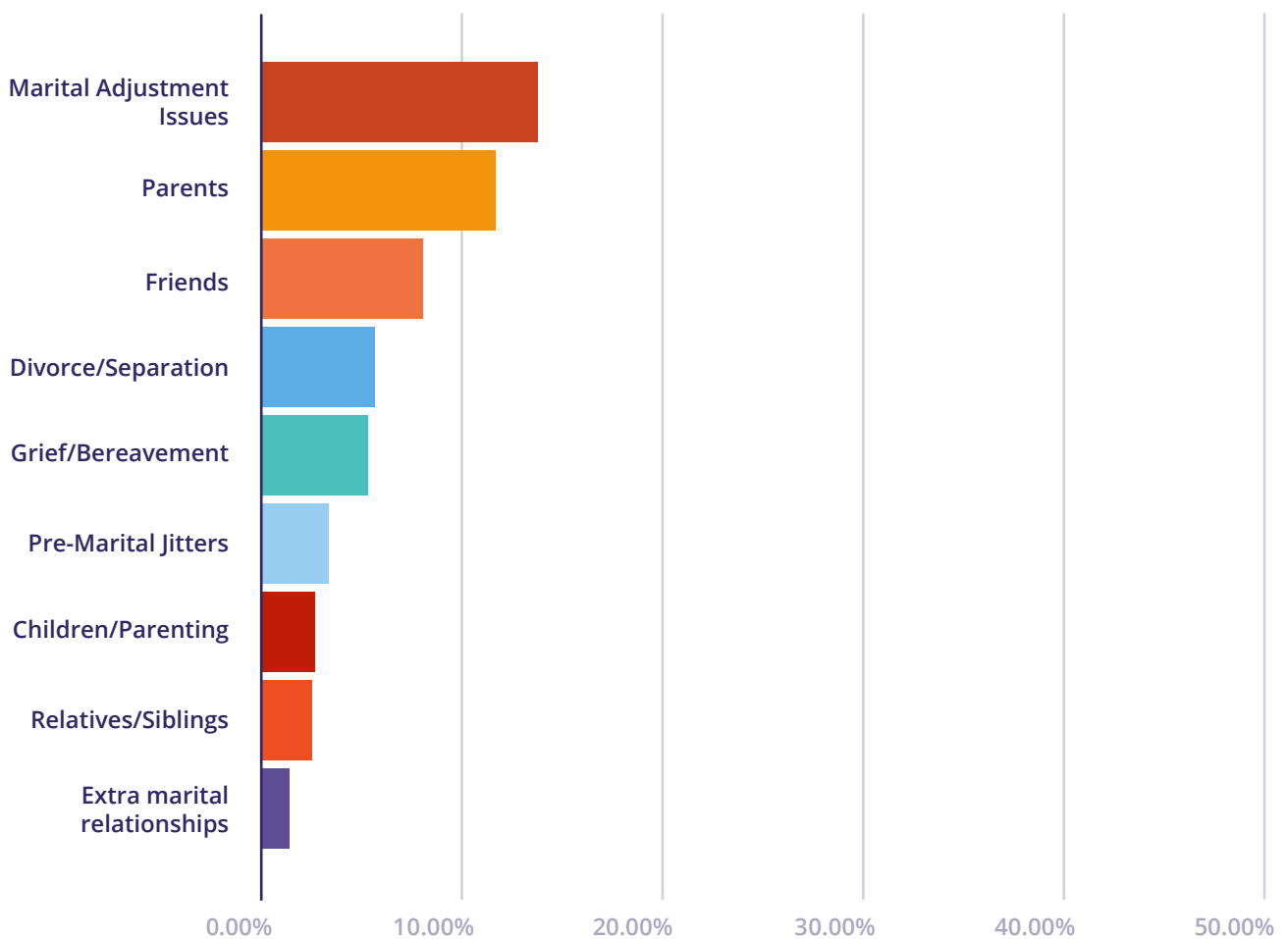
According to the data, **relationship problems and self-improvement rank highest among the reasons people seek counseling, followed by career anxiety.** This implies the need for an employee support program that would cover a wide range of topics, such as career counseling, diversity, and mental health in addition to personal growth and development.

The following graph represents the individual issues under self-improvement for which employees have taken assistance



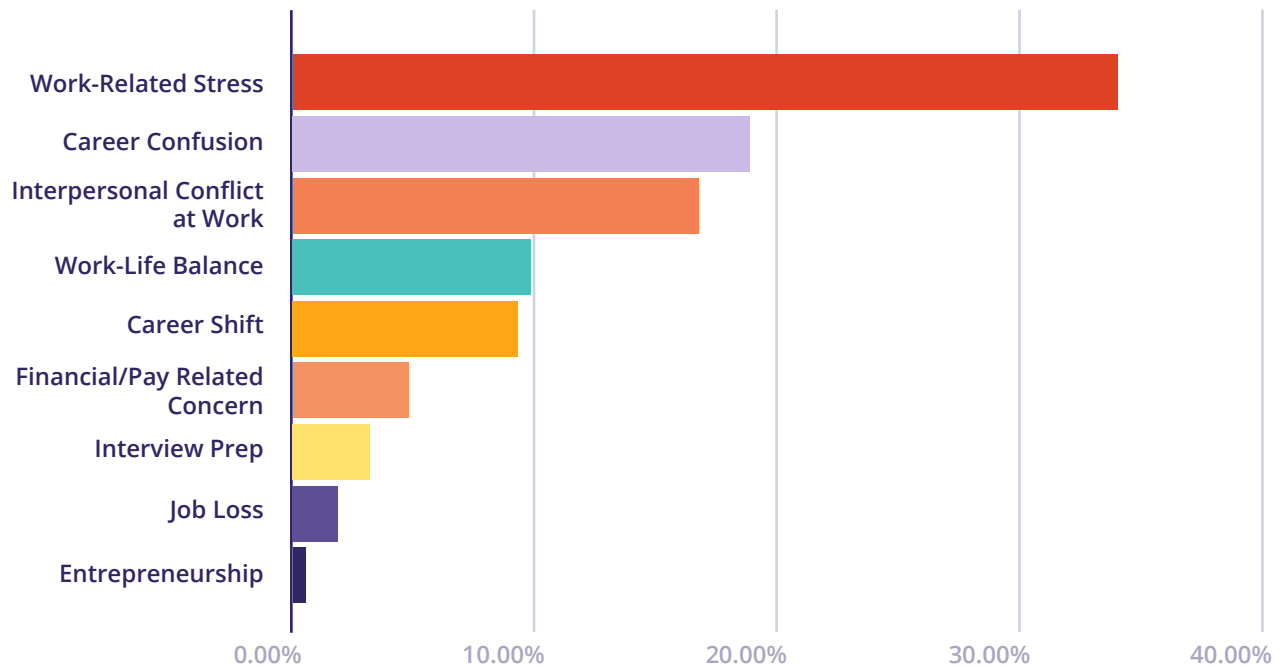
The data on counseling sessions related to self-improvement issues highlights various areas where individuals seek personal development support. **The most significant concern is overthinking, which accounts for 32.32% of sessions, indicating that many individuals struggle with excessive rumination and anxiety.** This data underscores the diverse range of self-improvement areas that individuals are looking to address, pointing to the necessity for comprehensive personal development programs. Increasing sessions around self-improvement indicates a sign of early help-seeking behavior. This is seen in corporates which proactively focus on spreading awareness and encouraging open dialogue around the importance of Mental Health.

The following graph represents the individual issues under relationships for which employees have taken assistance



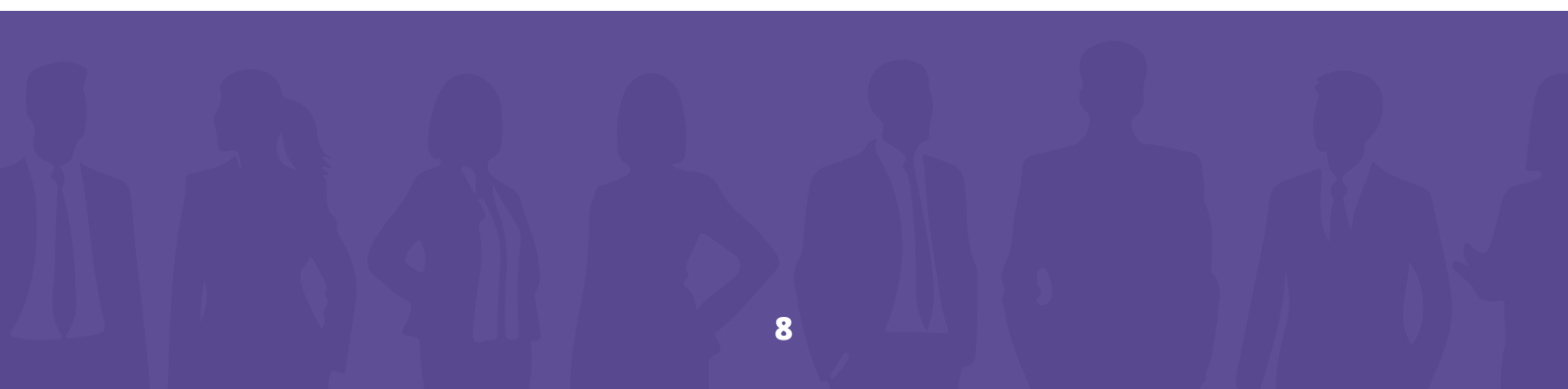
The data on counseling sessions related to relationship issues reveals diverse areas where individuals seek support. The largest category, "Relationship Issues," accounts for 44.62% of sessions, highlighting the significant impact of general relationship dynamics on mental health.

The following graph depicts the areas under career concerns for which employees have been seeking help



Career being one of the other major causes of stress remained low while seeking support. Some of it could be attributed to better support systems at the workplace in the form of peers and managers. A few qualitative interviews also highlighted a hesitation to seek career-related support due to a perceived lack of trust in employers - some employees were worried that details might get shared with their managers/employers and might affect their careers.

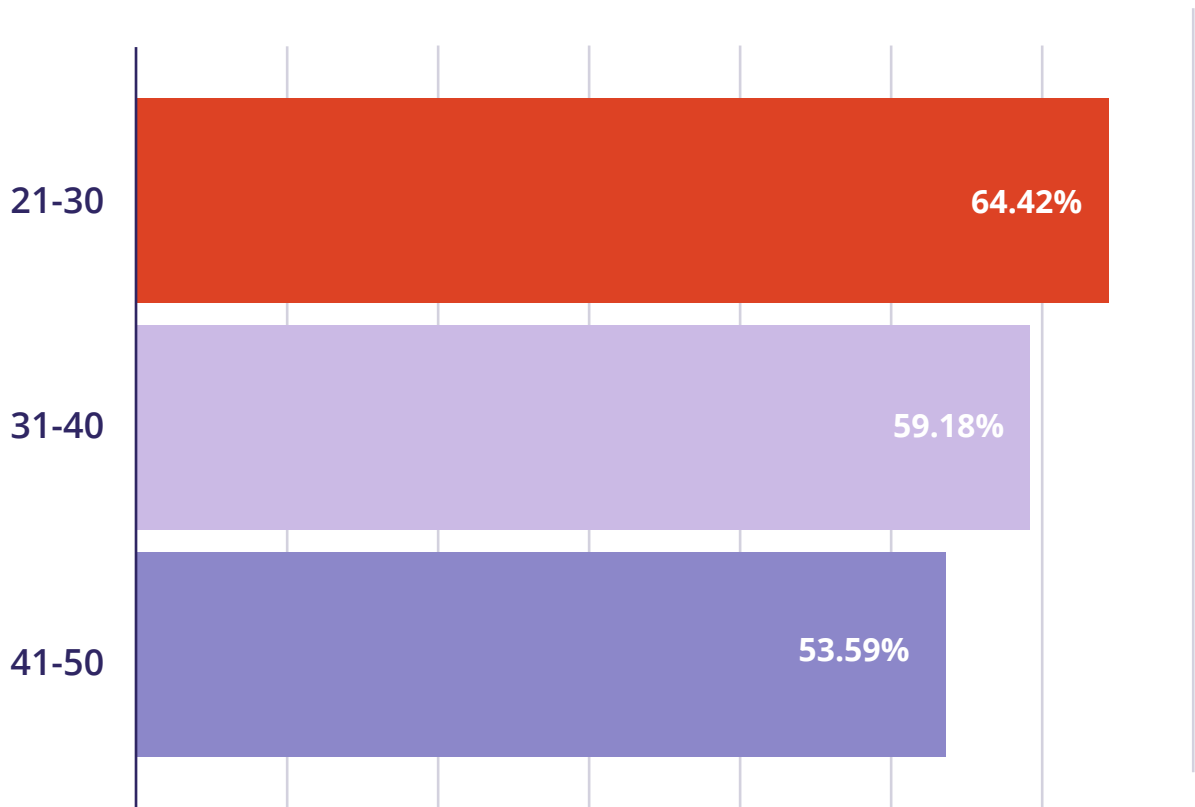
**The major concerns highlight the need for targeted support in managing stress, clarifying career paths, and improving workplace relationships.**



# What Portion of the Population is the Most Stressed?

## Age and Stress

To delve deeper into the causes of stress among employees we divided the sample into different age groups.



**This observation shows that the percentage of employees under high or extreme stress zones decreases gradually with age.** This could be attributed to increasing maturing and support systems to manage stress better (family, friends, self-capacity) or could also be indicative of the reduced stigma and openness to seek help among the younger cohort. Qualitative interviews indicated a prevalence of both these reasons.

# Are Women More Stressed?

A significant observation from our data revealed that overall, 72.2% of female respondents reported high-stress levels, compared to only 53.64% of male respondents.

Diving deeper into the gender aspects of stress:



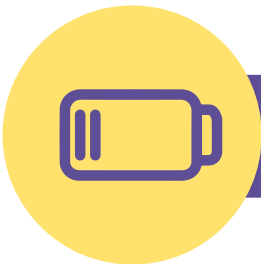
## No Work-life balance

A higher percentage of women (18%) report a lack of work-life balance compared to men (12%), which can be attributed to societal expectations and the dual burden many women face in balancing more domestic responsibilities alongside their careers. Additionally, workplace flexibility often remains less accessible or more stigmatized for women, exacerbating their challenges in achieving a balanced life.



## No Recognition

The disparity in work recognition between women (14.5%) and men (8.8%) may stem from the visibility bias, implying implicit workplace biases, lower visibility of women in certain roles, and societal expectations that often undervalue women's contributions.



## Always Feeling Low

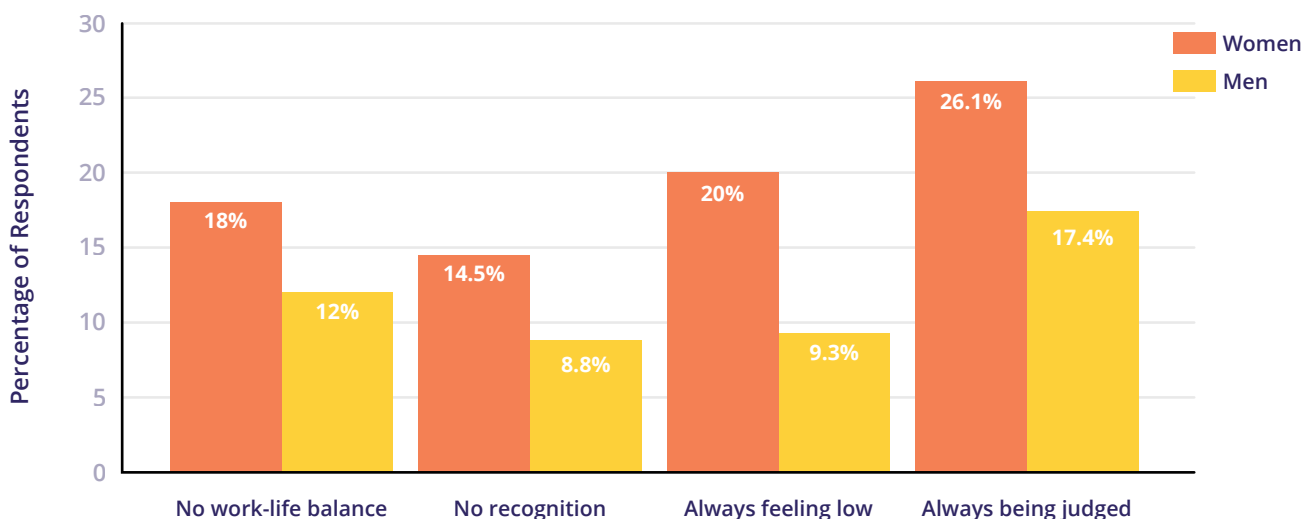
20% of women always feel low compared to 9.27% of men. This significant difference could be due to various factors, including greater social and emotional pressures on women, or differences in how men and women typically report and manage feelings of distress.



## Always being Judged

Women report feeling judged significantly more often than men, with 26.1% of women experiencing this compared to 17.4% of men. This disparity may be attributed to tightrope bias, where women always feel judged against conflicting stereotypes.

For more insights, we have also viewed the gender distribution amongst the employees where we identified - that more women are in the higher stress zones compared to men.



Such gender-related stressors not only affect women but also highlight broader systemic issues that contribute to workplace stress across all employee demographics.

## Conclusion

The significant increase of approximately 20% in employees who consider the quality of life at work as below average in 2023 indicates a misalignment between the efforts of the companies and the expectations of the employees. Therefore, our goal should be to reduce the communication gap between the employer and the employee.

### Some of the areas where changes can be implemented are:

- Despite career being a big contributor to stress levels, the support sought remains small. **There is a need to reinforce confidentiality and build trust among employees to seek support on the same.**
- Lack of appreciation, overthinking, and self-esteem emerged as major areas of concern. **Organizations can focus on these areas to create avenues for practicing gratitude, confidence building, and increasing a sense of belongingness among employees.**
- Practices to be implemented can be **more inclined towards the age group of 21-30** due to more reported issues there.
- At the same time, **counseling sessions can be more popularised for the higher age groups** in case they find it hard to report or open up due to reasons like social stigma or the fear of being judged.
- As observed from the data, **women face more stress than men due to balancing multiple roles, experiencing gender discrimination, and managing societal expectations.** They often lack access to supportive networks, endure higher rates of workplace harassment, and shoulder more household responsibilities. **Targeted support and inclusive environments can help alleviate this stress.**