

The Effect of Mental Illness on Compensation for IT Developers

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Abstract

Nearly 20% of US adults suffer from some form of mental illness. The indirect effects of the COVID-19 virus have increased this number significantly. The effect of mental illness on ability to work effectively and efficiently has been studied extensively and the consensus is that mental illness has a stigma associated with it that reduces employment opportunities for those so afflicted. Our study reviews this assumption by analyzing compensation for information technology developers who self-identify as having one of many mental illnesses. A large sample set from Stack Overflow was used to compare compensation levels based on this self-identification of one or more mental illnesses to determine if there was any significant impact. Our results found that overall mental illness does reduce compensation levels for information technology developers but less than many other variables. Other demographic factors, including a lower level of education, female gender, and younger age, are more significant factors for lower developer compensation. There is also a small effect based on ethnicity.

Keywords: Mental Illness, Compensation, Gender, Education