# “Moderating role of location autonomy on technostress and subjective wellbeing in information technology companies”


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| **AUTHORS** | Pallavi Datta<br>Sathiyaseelan Balasundaram<br>Sridevi Nair<br>Rekha Aranha |



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**Pallavi Datta** (India), **Sathiyaseelan Balasundaram** (India), **Sridevi Nair** (India), **Rekha Aranha** (India)

# MODERATING ROLE OF LOCATION AUTONOMY ON TECHNOSTRESS AND SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES

## Abstract

Integrating digital tools into day-to-day work activities has become an undeniable reality. However, the unprecedented reliance on technology has brought with it the escalating degrees of technostress evident through health concerns like chronic musculoskeletal problems and decreased job satisfaction. And the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the negative impact, as IT industries adopted the hybrid workplace approach, especially in developing countries like India. This paper aims to find whether location autonomy moderates the effect of technostress on subjective wellbeing among IT employees working in a hybrid model. A purposive sampling method gathered 440 responses from IT professionals in Bengaluru tech parks. IBM SPSS and AMOS software were used to assess the constructs by SEM analysis, in line with the job demand-control theory. The results showed that location autonomy accounts for 31.6% of the variance in subjective wellbeing, while technostress explains 33.2% of the variance, with dimensions ranging from 21% to 46%. Additionally, location autonomy moderates and strengthens the link between technostress and subjective wellbeing. The study recommends that organizational leaders adopt HR policies that allow employees to choose their workplace rather than mandating a specific location for scheduled days in the week. This approach can potentially improve overall employee wellbeing, offering a favorable resolution to the challenges posed by technostress in the IT industry.

**Keywords** hybrid model, workplace autonomy, telecommunication, human resource practices, India, COVID-19, job demand-control theory, work environment

**JEL Classification** D23, M12, M14

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Pallavi Datta, Research Scholar, School of Business and Management, Christ University, India. (Corresponding author)

Sathiyaseelan Balasundaram, Ph.D., Professor, School of Business and Management, Christ University, India.

Sridevi Nair, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, School of Business and Management, Christ University, India.

Rekha Aranha, Ph.D., Associate Professor, School of Business and Management, Christ University, India.



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## INTRODUCTION

The year 2020 witnessed an unprecedented global upheaval – the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic prompted an unparalleled shift in work dynamics (Miller, 2022). Governments worldwide swiftly enforced stringent social distancing and lockdown measures, compelling organizations to swiftly pivot towards remote and hybrid work setups. As a result, the utilization of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) skyrocketed, becoming the bedrock of work functionality and collaboration (Shadbad & Biros, 2020; Yang et al., 2021). Although remote and hybrid work had been established in countries like the US and Europe, India witnessed a profound transformation in its work environment post-COVID-19. The leaders realized that remote and hybrid work could significantly reduce their real estate costs and resolve the talent acquisition dilemma to a great extent. Hence, many companies in India continued to function in this work setup post-pandemic, aiming to increase retention rates, among other benefits (Datta et al., 2023).

With the widespread availability of ICTs, individuals now have the flexibility to access work-related communications at their convenience,

regardless of time or location. This enhanced control over when and where work is performed can have a positive impact on overall wellbeing (Pfaffinger et al., 2020). Nevertheless, ICTs also possess a 'negative aspect', as they can result in heightened intricacy and inconvenience, frequent alterations in hardware or software, the likelihood of technical issues and mistakes, heightened anticipation for quick responses, perpetual availability for work demands, and intensified workloads. They hold the capability to blur the boundary between work and home settings, instilling a feeling of continual attachment to work obligations for employees (Pfaffinger et al., 2020). This continuous connectivity can hinder mental detachment and the ability to fully recover from work-related stressors (Korunka & Kubicek, 2018). As per the estimations from the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 15% of working-age adults in India have experienced a mental disorder. Notably, workplace-related stress has emerged as the primary factor influencing employees' mental health (Malik & Garg, 2017). A survey conducted by Deloitte found that a significant 47% of professionals report experiencing stress directly attributable to their workplace (Fisher et al., 2023). Additionally, according to a Gallup workplace report, employee stress has reached unprecedented levels (Beheshti, 2022). With the high job demands leading to stress in IT organizations in India, it is an immense challenge for the management to furnish job satisfaction and wellbeing to its employees. Consequently, problems such as technostress have emerged amidst this rapid adoption of technology-driven work (Christ-Brendemuhl & Schaarschmidt, 2020). Thereby, organizations are actively determining the optimal work model for their employees, aligning their policies with the evolving dynamics of the workplace.

## 1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Inadequacies in employees' ability to cope with the evolving demands of technology use gives rise to stress, encapsulated by the term "technostress" introduced by Ragu-Nathan et al. (2008). This trend is emphasized by numerous challenges linked to the organizational utilization of ICTs, such as multitasking demands, constant connectivity, information overload, and technical issues (Camacho & Barrios, 2022; Tarafdar et al., 2010). Consequently, technostress results in negative outcomes for both employees and organizations, including decreased productivity and job dissatisfaction (Camacho & Barrios, 2022; Tarafdar et al., 2007). Within the context of ICT, the stressor-strain process model elucidates that technostress commences with technology-induced environmental conditions, perceived by individuals as demanding or techno-stressors. These stressors deplete individuals' resources and subsequently result in strains, encompassing negative emotional responses and a range of psychological and behavioral outcomes (Tarafdar et al., 2010).

Originally identified as factors contributing to technostress by Ragu-Nathan et al. (2008), these elements include techno-overload, techno-invasion, techno-complexity, techno-uncertainty, and techno-insecurity, as outlined by Tarafdar et al. (2011). Research on telecommuting has predominantly centered on voluntarily chosen telecommuting setups. Such studies have underscored a range of personal and contextual factors (such as job dynamics, organizational environment, familial responsibilities, and technological aspects) encountered by telecommuters utilizing information and communication technologies (Camacho & Barrios, 2022). For instance, research has examined how labor-related factors within the teleworking context create job demands, such as time pressure, role ambiguity, and role conflict (Camacho & Barrios, 2022; Sardeshmukh et al., 2012). Additionally, the continuous evolution and advancement of ICTs may necessitate teleworkers to frequently revise their proficiency and agility to manage with increasingly complex hardware and software. Moreover, the experience of stress among teleworkers may differ from that of traditional office-based workers (Maier et al., 2015). The heightened and continual reliance of teleworkers on technology renders them susceptible to technostress, with detrimental implications for both themselves and the organization (Camacho & Barrios, 2022; Fuglseth & Sorebo, 2014).

The risk further magnified for individuals who suddenly transitioned to remote work due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A study also found that


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increased technology usage while working from home positively reinforced technostress. Similarly, studies have shown that heightened techno-exhaustion in forced work-from-home situations negatively affects employees' subjective wellbeing. Subjective wellbeing, as defined by psychologists like Ed Diener, encompasses individuals' cognitive and emotional assessments of their own lives, including factors such as life satisfaction, positive emotions, and the absence of negative emotions (Diener, 1999). This comprehensive perspective is significant as it provides a holistic understanding of an individual's overall sense of wellbeing, extending beyond mere happiness to encompass broader aspects of life evaluation (Lee et al., 2021). Low subjective wellbeing among employees can lead to reduced job satisfaction, increased stress levels, and diminished productivity in the workplace. Addressing and improving subjective wellbeing is essential for cultivating a positive work environment, boosting employee morale, and ultimately contributing to a more engaged and productive workforce (Wong et al., 2021).

A recent investigation in the Harvard Business Review aimed to analyze the future of work arrangements. The analysis of selected 5,000 knowledge workers worldwide showed the following results: 77% expressed a preference for working for a company that permits them to operate from any location rather than a luxurious corporate headquarters. However, with 61% of knowledge workers reporting that they would favor it if management permitted them to come into the office when they need to, their data also indicated that the flexibility they seek is contingent on their ability to utilize it in a form that accurately suits them. In essence, the reliance on flexibility hinges on their 'autonomy' (Reisinger & Fetterer, 2021). The terms autonomy and flexibility in the contemporary work models have together taken over how businesses articulate the future of work and comprise a series of ways to think about further integrating employment and life. Taking into consideration that these words possess divergent interpretations holds substantial significance.

Commonly, workplace flexibility is defined as the opportunity to adjust the when, where, and how of work (Cowan & Hoffman, 2007; Hill et al., 2008). Nevertheless, in practicality, the flexible schedule is commonly pre-determined by the management or the employer (Bloom, 2021). For instance, employees are directed to work from home only on Mondays and Wednesdays every week, or employees can work remotely only two days a week. However, in the present context, when employees refer to the term 'flexibility', they represent the concept of 'autonomy'. Employees actually describe flexibility as the autonomy in making decisions for themselves and choosing where to work, when to work, and how to work, on their own terms (Miller, 2022). Within the context of hybrid work, this means being the primary decision-maker of where and when they do their work (Reisinger & Fetterer, 2021). Consequently, this data shapes a vision of a future work landscape centered on autonomy-driven flexibility. It indicates that hybrid work strategies that solely focus on flexibility without autonomy are likely to be substandard or rejected by most employees (Forum, 2022; Reisinger & Fetterer, 2021; Reporting, 2022).

Amidst this backdrop, the concept of location autonomy emerges as a potential mitigating factor. Autonomy, often lauded for its capacity to grant individuals control over their work, has been posited as a plausible mechanism to alleviate stress and its ensuing consequences (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006). Yet, its potential in moderating the relationship between technostress and subjective wellbeing remains an underexplored field. While a substantial number of studies has lauded the favorable outcomes of work autonomy on employee wellbeing and motivation (Karasek, 1979), some empirical evidence suggests that excessive levels of job autonomy, after a certain point, may no longer affect employees' mental health or even be detrimental (Warr, 2009). Similarly, as employees gain greater flexibility in their work schedules and locations, corporate real estate directors and management encounter challenges in forecasting the typical occupancy levels of physical office spaces. It is common for many employees to opt for remote work on Mondays and Fridays, potentially leading to higher occupancy during the middle of the week (Bloom, 2021). Additionally, it is crucial to understand whether a certain extent of autonomy greatly benefits employee outcomes and whether it is worth it for the management to make amendments to the workplace policies. It can be uncovered by analyzing the influence of varying degrees of autonomy on the employees. Identifying

its ramification on employee outcomes would enable organizations to design a suitable hybrid work model that fosters a healthy balance between autonomy and control and promote positive outcomes for employees and management (Allvin et al., 2011; Flecker et al., 2017).

The foregoing analysis underscores the absence of prior research exploring the relationship between technostress, location autonomy, and the subjective wellbeing of employees operating in India. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the role of location autonomy as a potential mitigator of the adverse impacts of technostress among the IT professionals' subjective wellbeing.

Consequently, the study puts forth the following hypotheses:

*H1:* *There is a significant effect of technostress on the subjective wellbeing of employees.*

*H2:* *There is a significant effect of location autonomy on the subjective wellbeing of employees.*

*H3:* *There is a significant moderation effect of location autonomy between technostress and the subjective wellbeing of employees.*

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of the study. The dependent variable measures the subjective wellbeing of the employees, while technostress is an independent variable with 5 dimensions, namely techno-overload, techno-complexity, techno-uncertainty, techno-invasion, and techno-insecurity (Shadbad & Biros, 2020; Tarafdar et al., 2011) as its latent variables. Location autonomy is a moderating variable.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The study's sample population consisted of individuals employed in the Information Technology (IT) industry based in Bengaluru, India. With over 67,000 registered IT companies, Bengaluru is renowned as the IT capital of India, hosting a total of 456 multinational IT firms. Approximately 75% of IT professionals in India are located in Bengaluru (The Enterprise World, 2019). Given this substantial concentration of IT professionals, the study selected employees working in Bengaluru as the target population. Furthermore, according to a report by the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) in collaboration with the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), more than 80% of IT organizations and Global Capability Centers (GCCs) in India are inclined to adopt a hybrid work model, which differs from trends observed in other industries (Baruah, 2022).

A pilot study was executed before the main data collection. Data were collected from 53 employees working in IT organizations operating in Bengaluru. Most respondents were females (64.2 percent), with 35.8 percent males and an average age range of 26 to 40 years. 18.9 percent were from the top/managerial level, 32 percent from the mid-level, and 49.1 percent from the entry/junior level. The positional average experience of the respondents was under the range of 1 to 2 years of working in a hybrid model. DeVellis and Thorpe (2021) stated that the Cronbach's alpha should be greater than 0.7 for a scale to be termed reliable. In this try-out, the Cronbach's alpha was .840, which showed significant reliability of the scale. Also, the normality of the scale was found

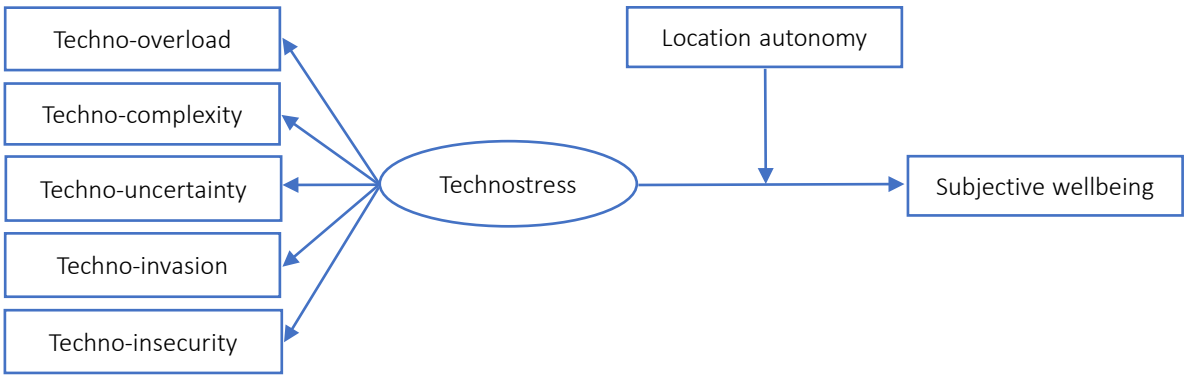


**Figure 1.** Conceptual framework


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with the skewness and kurtosis value between -1.96 and +1.96 for each item. This range is sufficient to establish normality in data for a small sample size (Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012; Mishra et al., 2019); hence, additional data was collected to perform the analysis required to test the hypotheses developed.

With a survey response rate of approximately 57% for IT companies in India (Krishnan & Poulose, 2016), the main study distributed 800 questionnaires, aiming for 400 valid responses, respectively. Data collection occurred between November 2023 to February 2024, resulting in response rate of 55%, respectively. Non-probability purposive sampling, aligned with research objectives, enhanced data and outcome credibility. Eligible respondents possessed a minimum of one year of experience in a hybrid work model and relevant knowledge. Inclusivity of a diverse array of IT companies aimed to encompass different autonomy dimensions offered by various Indian IT organizations (Campbell et al., 2020).

Table 1 presents the demographic details of the participants for the final study. Most respondents were females (60.2 percent), with 39.1 percent male and an average age range of 26 to 40 years. 12.5 percent were from the top/managerial level, 42 percent from the mid-level, and 45.5 percent from the entry/junior level. The positional average experience of the respondents was within the range of 1 to 2 years of working in a hybrid model.

**Table 1.** Demographic characteristics of the sample

| Characteristic | Particulars | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Male | 172 | 39.1 |
| | Female | 265 | 60.2 |
| | Other | 3 | 0.7 |
| | Total | 440 | 100 |
| Age | 14-25 years | 79 | 18 |
| | 26-40 years | 231 | 52.5 |
| | 41-60 years | 109 | 24.8 |
| | 61 and above | 21 | 4.8 |
| | Total | 440 | 100 |
| Work experience in hybrid model | Less than 6 months | 28 | 6.4 |
| | 6 months – almost 1 year | 91 | 20.7 |
| | 1-2 years | 208 | 47.3 |
| | More than 2 years | 113 | 25.7 |
| | Total | 440 | 100 |
| Current job level | Entry/junior level | 200 | 45.5 |
| | Middle level | 185 | 42 |
| | Senior/ managerial level | 55 | 12.5 |
| | Total | 440 | 100 |

The questionnaire incorporated multiple-item scales utilizing a Likert-type response format comprising 37 statements to assess diverse latent constructs (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree). Subjective wellbeing was evaluated using the Internationally Reliable Short-Form of the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) developed by Thompson (2007), drawing from established IT adoption studies. Concurrently, the technostress variable was assessed utilizing the Technostress Questionnaire devised by Tarafdar et al. (2011). Given the absence of an established scale for measuring location autonomy, a novel scale was developed employing the DeVellis Scale Development Process. This process was selected for its methodological rigor, contextual adaptability, and emphasis on psychometric properties, aligning with the needs of management and social sciences research (DeVellis, 2016). The refinement of these measures was guided by a comprehensive literature review, consultations with subject matter experts, and insights gleaned from industry professionals.

The constructs were analyzed using the IBM SPSS and IBM AMOS tool. Univariate and multivariate statistical methods (mean, standard deviation, factor analysis, ANOVA, SEM) were used to test the research results systematically. Structural equation modeling provides better estimates for evaluating complex relationship frameworks involving mediations or moderations (Hair et al., 2021).

## 3. RESULTS

To examine the absence of common method bias in the dataset, Harman's single-factor method was utilized, analyzing the scale items (Harman, 1976; Podsakoff et al., 2003). The findings indicated no dominance of a single factor, with the first factor explaining 23.19% of the variance, falling below the recommended 50% cutoff suggested by Podsakoff et al. (2003). Consequently, there are no

indications of common method bias concerns in the data, allowing for the continuation of other statistical analyses. Table 2 presents descriptive statistics, including the mean and standard deviation (SD) of 440 responses.

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics

| Variables | N | Mean | Std. Dev. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Techno-overload | 440 | 3.97 | 0.54 |
| Techno-complexity | 440 | 3.22 | 0.52 |
| Techno-invasion | 440 | 3.61 | 0.53 |
| Techno-insecurity | 440 | 4.01 | 0.58 |
| Techno-uncertainty | 440 | 3.11 | 0.52 |
| Location autonomy | 440 | 3.27 | 0.41 |
| Subjective wellbeing | 440 | 3.47 | 0.53 |

Employees associate technological overload with the pressure for increased speed, intricate problem-solving, and the holistic understanding required by emerging technologies. This complexity exacerbates competition among employees, potentially compromising collaboration and self-assurance (Borle et al., 2021). Moreover, employees must continuously adapt to and engage with technology to avoid penalties, which could result in unjust treatment. The invasion of technology into personal life blurs the distinction between work and personal time, complicating efforts to maintain a healthy balance (Nisafani et al., 2020). Additionally, technological insecurity fosters a sense of vulnerability, emphasizing the importance of sustained performance and hindering knowledge sharing within organizations due to the fear of job loss. This lack of knowledge sharing obstructs technology uptake, preventing the realization of potential benefits and innovative solutions. This could hinder technological advancement and innovation (Tarafdar et al., 2011). Furthermore, the element of uncertainty, reflected not only in technical knowledge gaps but also in disparities in learning speed with hardware and software replacements and the pace of change, can result in superficial understanding, inadequate depth of knowledge, errors, and deficiencies (Upadhyaya & Vrinda, 2020).

The elevated standard deviations observed in the data suggest a lack of consensus among respondents in their assessment of the statements. Specifically, there was a notable heterogeneity of opinion concerning the perceived impact of technological insecurity. This variability is likely influenced by diverse workplace expectations, rapid evolvement of technology and increased competition among employees.

In line with Devellis' recommendation, construct validity, encompassing discriminant and convergent validity, was evaluated using principal component exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation for the variable of location autonomy. This method aims to reveal underlying factors by maximizing variance while minimizing the number of components. Items with weak associations were considered for elimination, guided by two criteria: (a) retaining components with eigenvalues greater than 1, and (b) retaining items with associations of 0.50 or higher, which are considered practically significant (Hair et al., 2014). Additionally, the following assumptions were adhered to in testing for principal component exploratory factor analysis (Gunawan et al., 2022):

1. The data exhibited a normal distribution, as indicated by a skewness value within the range of -1 to +1.

2. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test demonstrated high significance for the matrix ($p < .001$).

3. The Pearson correlation coefficient ranged from +1 to -1.

4. Item correlation analysis revealed values between .15 and .50, with an overall Cronbach's alpha exceeding .70.

The results were found to be within acceptable limits (Gunawan et al., 2021). The next step was testing EFA of the developing variable 'location autonomy' to assess whether the dataset was appropriate for CFA. A KMO index of .871 and Bartlett's test result of $p = .000$ ($n = 440$), indicated the dataset's suitability for factor analysis (Table 3).

**Table 3.** KMO and Bartlett's test

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy | | .871 |
| Bartlett's test of sphericity | Approx. Chi-square | 4458.866 |
| | df | 153 |
| | Sig. | 0.000 |

In the first round of principal component analysis involving the 4 items, it was observed that all items had communalities exceeding .30, with values ranging from .52 to .76. Consequently, no indi-


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vidual item was eliminated from the analysis. In the subsequent step, which involved the second order of principal components using varimax orthogonal rotation and sample size of 440, only one dimension was identified hence the variable is termed as an observed variable (Gunawan et al., 2021).

The next step involved conducting CFA to establish construct validity of the scale. The model fit was evaluated using several indices as recommended by both Kline (2015) and Schumacker et al. (2015) and used in numerous researches (Alagarsamy et al., 2022). The discrepancy divided by degree of freedom (CMIN/df) value <3 indicated that the model was usable. Kline (2015) suggested that a minimum index as the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) should report values nearer to zero indicating good fit. Additionally, the model fit was assessed using the Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), where values nearer to one indicate a good fit (Alagarsamy et al., 2022; Hair et al., 2014). The results from the analysis showed that the model is a good fit (Table 4).

Composite reliability (CR) for all variables exceeded the recommended threshold (0.7), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) scores surpassed 0.5 (Brown, 2015). Discriminant validity (Table 5) was confirmed through Fornell-Larcker and Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) criteria, with HTMT values below 0.90 (Boateng et al., 2018; Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006).

Each scale's Cronbach's alpha was computed above 0, indicating high reliability (Table 6). To reaffirm reliability, composite values were calculated. Following Hair et al.'s (2014) guidelines, the composite value (CR) is a reliable indicator of construct reliability, with a recommended threshold of 0.7. CR assesses internal consistency among all items within the construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The CR values, illustrated in Table 5, notably exceed the threshold, affirming strong internal consistency.

The proposed structural model aims to depict how the interaction between technostress and the subjective wellbeing of IT employees is influenced by location autonomy (see Figure 1). According to the data presented in Table 7, there exists a positive and statistically significant association between location autonomy (LA) and subjective wellbeing (SWB) (0.316; $p < 0.05$), thereby confirming *H1*. Similarly, a negative and statistically significant correlation is observed between technostress (TS) and subjective wellbeing (-0.332; $p < 0.05$).

**Table 4.** Model fit ($n$ = 440)

| Goodness of fit | CMIN/df | RMSEA | GFI | AGFI | NFI | TLI | CFI |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Baseline | ≤3 | ≤0.09 | ≥0.90 | ≥0.90 | ≥0.90 | ≥0.90 | ≥0.90 |
| Results | 1.451 | 0.038 | 0.939 | 0.92 | 0.959 | 0.984 | 0.987 |

**Table 5.** Construct validity measures

| Constructs | CR | AVE | Fornell-Larcker criterion and HTMT | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | TS | SWB | LA |
| TS | 0.921 | 0.83 | 0.911 | | |
| SWB | 0.848 | 0.821 | 0.291<br>(0.316) | 0.904 | |
| LA | 0.946 | 0.49 | 0.009<br>(0.052) | -0.077<br>(0.097) | 0.872 |

*Note:* HTMT values are displayed in parentheses.

**Table 6.** Reliability statistics

| Variables | Cronbach's alpha (> 0.7) | No. of items |
|---|---|---|
| Technostress | .832 | 23 |
| Subjective wellbeing | .728 | 10 |
| Location autonomy | .867 | 4 |

**Table 7.** Analysis of hypothesized relationships with PLS path algorithm

| Relationship | Path coefficient | t-statistics | p-values |
|---|---|---|---|
| LA → SWB | 0.316 (*H1* is accepted) | 2.733 | 0.000 |
| TS → SWB | -0.332 (*H2* is accepted) | 3.128 | 0.000 |
| LA →TS → SWB | -0.189 (*H3* is accepted) | 2.115 | 0.001 |

Furthermore, the analysis indicates that location autonomy impacts the relationship between technostress and subjective wellbeing (-0.189; $p < 0.05$).

## 4. DISCUSSION

In evaluating *H1*, the results demonstrate a positive and moderately significant association between employees' location autonomy and subjective wellbeing within the IT industry ($\beta = 0.316$; $p < 0.05$). Existing literature offers several studies indicating the impact of job autonomy on the psychological wellbeing of both students and employees across various countries such as Denmark, Spain, and China (De-Juanas et al., 2020; Melendro et al., 2020; Yang et al., 2023). This study contributes to the literature by investigating the relationship between a specific and emerging facet of job autonomy, namely location autonomy, and the subjective wellbeing of Indian employees. Consequently, this research expands the theoretical understanding and posited association between these constructs within a novel geographical context. Nevertheless, it is pertinent to acknowledge the Vitamin model, which suggests that an excessive level of autonomy may potentially result in negative psychological consequences (Clausen et al., 2021). However, the analysis conducted in this study could not align with the anticipated outcomes of the Vitamin Model proposed by Warr (1994).

Concerning *H2*, the findings reveal a statistically significant negative correlation between technostress and subjective wellbeing of employees ($\beta = -0.332$; $p < 0.05$). Existing literature predominantly highlights a robust association between technostress and subjective wellbeing, particularly within the student demographic (Estrada-Munoz et al., 2022; Umair et al., 2023). However, researchers have scarcely explored this relationship among employees operating within a hybrid work model (Whelan et al., 2022). The present study sheds light on various dimensions of technostress and their impact on subjective wellbeing within the IT industry. Each dimension – techno-overload, techno-complexity, techno-invasion, techno-insecurity, and techno-uncertainty, developed by Tarafdar et al. (2011) demonstrates a statistically significant negative correlation with subjective wellbeing, ranging from -0.217 to -0.462. These findings underscore the necessity of comprehensively examining each dimension of technostress in future research endeavors, given their pivotal role in safeguarding employee health, thereby fostering productivity and engagement (Wong et al., 2021).

In reference to *H3*, it can be inferred that the association between technostress and subjective wellbeing within the Indian IT sector is influenced by the degree of location autonomy ($\beta = -0.189$; $p < 0.05$). Although the study anticipated more robust outcomes, the evidence presented adequately supports the acceptance of *H3*. Specifically, within organizational contexts, variables such as job autonomy are shown to mitigate the adverse impact of stress on psychological wellbeing, a concept supported by extant literature such as the job demand-control theory proposed by Karasek (1979) and corroborated by recent studies (Berger et al., 2019; Mendoza & Dizon, 2023). Moreover, the analysis indicates that the moderating effect of location autonomy is more pronounced when considering three dimensions of technostress – techno-overload, techno-complexity, and techno-uncertainty ($\beta$ ranging from -0.213 to -0.377) compared to techno-insecurity and techno-uncertainty, which exhibited negligible effects. Nonetheless, it is posited that the proliferation of technostress may occur if employees possess greater autonomy in selecting their work environment, leading to persistent connectivity to work and blurring the boundaries between personal and professional domains, thereby impeding work-life balance. Conversely, location autonomy appears ineffective in moderating the impacts of techno-insecurity, a finding consistent with prior research. The findings are on a similar line with studies that depict job demands control model for reducing strain created by Karasek (1979). As the theory says job control can buffer the effects of job demands on strain. Similarly, technostress is a form of job demand


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that negatively impacts the wellbeing of employees. Thereby, this study contributes empirical evidence regarding the efficacy of location autonomy in mitigating the adverse effects of techno-overload, techno-complexity, and techno-uncertainty on subjective wellbeing within the Indian context. Consequently, human resource practitioners and scholars engaged in devising optimal hybrid work models are encouraged to reassess the relationship within their respective organizational settings and devise policies conducive to enhancing employee wellbeing and productivity over the long term.

## CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate how location autonomy moderates the relationship between technostress and subjective wellbeing, specifically among IT employees operating in a hybrid work setup. Moreover, unlike previous researches in this area, this study is one of the first to be conducted on an Indian target population that is working in a complete hybrid model. The results obtained validated the research hypotheses, demonstrating that autonomy in location positively impacts employees' subjective wellbeing while technostress has a detrimental effect on it. Moreover, the analysis confirmed that location autonomy moderates the relationship between technostress and subjective wellbeing of IT professionals. Based on the findings, it is recommended that organizations establish workplace policies granting employees decision-making authority in selecting their work locations throughout the working days. Allowing employees the flexibility to choose between working from home or office can substantially minimize the negative effects of technostress on their subjective wellbeing. Instead of adhering to a scheduled hybrid model like three days' work from home and two days from office, organizations should consider to structure their workplace practices that empowers employees and their teams to determine their own office and home working schedules leading to enhanced overall employee wellbeing.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Pallavi Datta, Rekha Aranha.
Data curation: Pallavi Datta.
Formal analysis: Pallavi Datta.
Investigation: Sathiyaseelan Balasundaram.
Methodology: Sathiyaseelan Balasundaram, Rekha Aranha.
Project administration: Sathiyaseelan Balasundaram.
Resources: Sridevi Nair.
Software: Sridevi Nair.
Supervision: Sathiyaseelan Balasundaram.
Validation: Pallavi Datta, Sathiyaseelan Balasundaram, Sridevi Nair, Rekha Aranha.
Visualization: Sridevi Nair.
Writing – original draft: Pallavi Datta.
Writing – review & editing: Sathiyaseelan Balasundaram, Sridevi Nair.

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