



Mental Health and Digital Work Environments: Exploring Post-Pandemic Remote Work Experiences among Indian IT Professionals

Sukhdeep Singh

Research Scholar

Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture, Technology and Sciences, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh - IN

sukhdeep.singh3523@gmail.com

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic triggered a rapid transformation of work practices in India's IT sector, normalising large-scale remote and hybrid work. While this shift enhanced flexibility and business continuity, it also reconfigured the psychosocial dimensions of work in ways still unfolding. Drawing on Indian and international studies, industry reports, and frameworks such as the Job Demands–Resources model, boundary theory, and technostress research, this paper examines the mental health implications of post-pandemic digital work environments for Indian IT professionals. At the pandemic's peak, nearly 90% of IT and ITeS employees worked from home, and a strong preference for hybrid models persists even as firms reinstate office-attendance norms.

Research in India documents heightened stress, anxiety, loneliness, technostress, and work–family conflict, alongside benefits such as reduced commuting and greater autonomy. The paper synthesises how digital work features including constant connectivity, virtual meetings, digital monitoring, and cross-time-zone collaboration interact with India-specific factors like urban congestion, small housing spaces, gendered care burdens, and the digital divide to shape mental health outcomes. It argues that remote work acts both as a resource and a demand. While organisations have introduced wellness initiatives and hybrid policies, measures remain uneven. The paper proposes a multi-level agenda spanning digital work design, management practices, industry self-regulation, and labour policy.

Keywords: mental health, remote work, hybrid work, Indian IT sector, technostress, digital work, work-family conflict, post pandemic

1. Introduction

India's IT and IT-enabled services (ITeS) sector, employing several million workers and contributing substantially to GDP and exports, has long been at the forefront of global outsourcing and digitally mediated work. The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically accelerated this digitisation by forcing an unprecedented experiment with large-scale remote work. A NASSCOM study cited in a recent review reports that at the height of the first lockdown, almost 90% of IT/ITeS employees in India were working from home, enabled by rapid deployment of virtual private networks (VPNs), collaboration tools and cloud infrastructure.

Initial narratives framed this shift as a productivity-preserving “win-win” arrangement, enabling business continuity while shielding employees from infection risks and commuting burdens. Over time, however, both industry bodies and researchers began to document more ambivalent outcomes: while many workers reported improved flexibility and family time, they also experienced intensifying workloads, blurred boundaries between work and home, social isolation, and symptoms of anxiety, depression and burnout.

By 2022-2025, as pandemic restrictions eased, the work landscape did not revert to a pre-COVID baseline. Hybrid models, combining remote work with mandatory in-office days, increasingly became the dominant template in the Indian tech industry. A 2023 NASSCOM-based survey summarised in an Indian management journal notes that around 65% of IT employees preferred hybrid work, while only 15% wished to return to full-time office work. At the same time, major IT firms such as Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Infosys, Wipro and Cognizant introduced return-to-office mandates, with some requiring employees to be on-site three to five days a

week, often justified on grounds of collaboration, culture and productivity.

This institutionalisation of hybrid work signals a shift from “emergency remote working” to a more permanent reconfiguration of digital work environments. Within this new normal, Indian IT professionals often navigate complex psychosocial demands: they work across time zones; manage “always-on” expectations from global clients; negotiate surveillance-enabled performance metrics; and juggle domestic responsibilities in crowded urban homes or joint-family settings. These demands sit within a broader context of limited mental health infrastructure and persistent stigma in India, despite the WHO's call to treat mental health as a basic human right and an essential component of well-being and productive work.

Against this backdrop, the present paper pursues three interrelated aims:

1. **To synthesise theoretical frameworks** relevant to understanding the mental health implications of digital work environments, with a focus on remote and hybrid work.
2. **To review empirical evidence** concerning post-pandemic remote work experiences and mental health outcomes among Indian IT professionals.
3. **To analyse organisational and governance responses**, and outline a multi-level agenda for promoting healthier digital work in India's tech sector.

The paper adopts the stance of an integrative literature review rather than reporting primary empirical findings. It draws on peer-reviewed studies on Indian IT employees, cross-sectoral Indian research on remote work, global literature on telework and technostress, and recent industry and

media reports documenting evolving workplace policies.

2. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Mental health in digital work contexts

The World Health Organization defines mental health as a state of mental well-being enabling individuals to cope with stresses, realise their abilities, learn and work well, and contribute to their communities. Mental health thus encompasses emotional, psychological and social dimensions and is not merely the absence of diagnosed disorder. This holistic view is particularly important in digital work contexts, where subclinical conditions chronic stress, technofatigue, loneliness, and diminished sense of meaning may profoundly affect functioning even in the absence of formal diagnoses.

Within organisational research, mental health outcomes have typically been operationalised through constructs such as perceived stress, burnout, depressive and anxiety symptoms, work engagement, and overall well-being. Remote work arrangements can affect each of these dimensions through changes in job design, social interaction, temporal structure and the material environment of work. Meta-analytic and integrative studies suggest that telecommuting tends to increase perceived autonomy and reduce work-family conflict on average, but with substantial variability depending on extent of telecommuting, support and individual circumstances.

The pandemic context, however, introduced qualitatively different conditions: enforced rather than voluntary remote work, constrained mobility, heightened health and economic uncertainty, and widespread reliance on digital platforms for both work and social interaction. Studies of remote working during COVID-19 highlight challenges such

as social isolation, distracting home environments, family-work conflict and digital monitoring, which in turn affect stress, engagement and well-being. These dimensions remain salient in the post-pandemic period as digital work arrangements settle into new equilibria.

2.2 The Job Demands-Resources model

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model provides a useful lens for understanding how digital work environments shape mental health. Job demands are aspects of work that require sustained effort and are associated with physiological or psychological costs, such as workload, emotional demands, role conflict or technostress. Job resources are aspects that help achieve work goals, reduce demands or stimulate growth, such as autonomy, social support and opportunities for learning.

Remote and hybrid work can simultaneously increase resources (e.g., autonomy over scheduling, elimination of commuting, greater flexibility) and demands (e.g., continuous connectivity expectations, virtual overload, work-home interference). Wang and colleagues' work design study during COVID-19 showed that social support and job autonomy were associated with lower loneliness and better well-being among remote workers, whereas high workload and monitoring were linked to greater work-home interference and stress.

For Indian IT professionals, JD-R dynamics are intensified by sectoral features tight deadlines, project-based billing, rapid technology change and by socio-cultural expectations of long hours and "availability" to global clients. Digital work environments structure how these demands and resources are distributed: for instance, constant access to messaging platforms can enhance collaboration but also increase interruptions and

perceived pressure to respond immediately, eroding recovery time.

2.3 Boundary theory and work-family interfaces

Boundary theory examines how individuals create, maintain and negotiate boundaries between work and non-work roles. Under remote work, these boundaries often become porous in spatial, temporal and psychological terms. Classic boundary research has shown that blurred boundaries can increase role conflict but may also offer integration benefits depending on preferences and control.

During and after the pandemic, many Indian IT professionals have worked from small urban apartments or joint-family homes where physical and temporal separation of work from family life is difficult. A multi-sector Indian analysis of remote work notes that space constraints, constant interruptions and overlapping domestic responsibilities often undermine productivity and strain relationships, even as employees value additional family time. Gendered expectations are particularly salient: women in India continue to shoulder disproportionate unpaid care responsibilities estimated at 4.5 hours per day even pre-pandemic leading to a “double burden” when combined with full-time remote or hybrid professional work.

Boundary theory thus helps explain why post-pandemic remote work may produce divergent mental health trajectories: those with greater control over space and time, and supportive family structures, can experience enhanced work-life balance; others may experience chronic role overload and stress.

2.4 Technostress and digital strain

Technostress refers to stress experienced due to the use of information and communication technologies

(ICTs). Foundational work identifies several “technostress creators”: techno-overload (pressure to work faster/longer), techno-invasion (constant connectivity invading personal life), techno-complexity (feeling inadequate in dealing with technology), techno-insecurity (fear of job loss due to new technologies) and techno-uncertainty (continuous ICT change).

Technostress has been linked to anxiety, fatigue, sleep problems, reduced job satisfaction and lower performance in various sectors. An Indian study of IT employees working from home during COVID-19 found that techno-insecurity fear of job loss linked to new ICT skills was the most salient stressor, followed by techno-overload, techno-complexity and techno-invasion. This configuration underscores a context where rapid technological change, competitive labour markets and global outsourcing intersect to create acute concerns about obsolescence and employability.

Post-pandemic digital work environments in Indian IT therefore entail not only classic job demands but also technology-specific demands that may intensify or interact with other stressors, particularly under remote and hybrid arrangements.

3. Post-Pandemic Digital Work in the Indian IT Sector

3.1 From emergency remote work to hybrid normal

Before 2020, remote work in India was relatively limited, concentrated mainly among freelancers, start-ups and a subset of IT firms experimenting with flexible work arrangements. The first COVID-19 lockdown precipitated a rapid, large-scale shift: NASSCOM data cited in multiple reports indicate that around 90% of IT/ITeS employees transitioned to work from home, supported by large

investments in secure connectivity and collaboration platforms.

As infection risks receded, firms reassessed their workforce strategies. A joint BCG-NASSCOM “Future of Work” report emphasised hybrid work as the emerging norm in India’s tech industry, highlighting four key dimensions: flexible work models, reconfigured workplaces, digital collaboration capabilities and people-centric leadership. By 2022, major Indian IT firms had adopted hybrid policies, allowing employees to split time between home and office; by 2023-2024, several moved to tighten these models, associating variable pay or promotion prospects with office attendance.

A 2025 synthesis on remote work policies in India notes that a 2023 NASSCOM report found 65% of IT employees preferred hybrid work, while 15% favoured full-time office work; hybrid models were framed as a compromise between flexibility and collaboration. At the same time, the same paper documents organisational resistance rooted in presence-based management cultures and concerns over innovation and control.

Recent signals from large employers reinforce this ambivalence. Cognizant’s 2024 internal memo, reported by Reuters, expects India-based employees to work from office at least three days per week, aligning with return-to-office mandates introduced earlier by TCS, Infosys and Wipro. Yet extreme weather events in Bengaluru in 2025 prompted many of these firms to temporarily revert to full work-from-home for safety and business continuity, illustrating how remote work has become a standard resilience tool rather than an ad-hoc exception.

3.2 Structural and cultural specificities

The mental health implications of digital work in Indian IT cannot be understood without situating

them in the country’s infrastructural and cultural context. Indian metropolitan areas such as Bengaluru, Mumbai and Delhi are characterised by long commuting times often 90-120 minutes each way due to congestion and inadequate public transport. Remote work thus eliminates a major source of daily stress and frees up considerable time, potentially benefiting physical and psychological well-being.

At the same time, many employees live in small apartments or joint households averaging 600-800 square feet in major cities, frequently shared with extended family members. This limits the possibility of quiet, dedicated workspaces and amplifies distractions and conflicts when multiple adults or children share the same space for work and study. The digital divide further complicates matters: reliable high-speed internet and stable power supply remain uneven, especially in smaller cities and rural areas, constraining effective remote work and adding to frustration and stress.

Organisational cultures in Indian IT have historically valorised long hours, on-call availability and “stretch” commitments, shaped partly by client expectations and competitive pressures. During the remote-only phase, evidence suggests that many IT employees worked longer than usual hours, with blurred boundaries and a perceived obligation to be “always online.” In the post-pandemic hybrid era, such expectations have not vanished; they have instead been reconfigured within digitally mediated monitoring systems and performance management architectures.

Finally, gender norms structure how benefits and burdens of remote work are distributed. As noted earlier, women in India perform substantially more unpaid care work than men, and qualitative accounts from IT employees indicate that remote work often

intensifies this load rather than easing it, particularly in the absence of supportive organisational policies and equitable domestic arrangements.

4. Empirical Evidence on Mental Health Among Indian IT Remote Workers

4.1 Stress, anxiety, depression and burnout

Several studies have examined mental health outcomes among Indian IT employees during and after the pandemic. A study on IT employees' mental wellness during COVID-19 found significant levels of anxiety, depression and sleep disturbance associated with work-from-home conditions, including increased workload, fear of job loss and social isolation. Factor-analytic results indicated that variables such as lack of restful sleep, feelings of isolation and inadequate organisational support loaded strongly on mental distress factors.

A PLOS-indexed study on remote working and occupational stress among Indian IT employees reported that remote work arrangements were associated with moderate to high occupational stress, particularly in relation to workload, role ambiguity and work-life imbalance, even though some participants appreciated flexibility and time savings from reduced commuting. The authors argued that remote work's impact on stress is complex and contingent on organisational support and work design, aligning with JD-R predictions.

More recent research focusing specifically on post-pandemic conditions suggests that stress and burnout persist as salient concerns. A 2025 paper examining remote work policies and employee health across sectors in India drawing extensively on IT sector data notes that mental health challenges commonly reported by remote workers include digital fatigue, loneliness, and conflict arising from blurred work-family boundaries. While many

employees endorse remote work for its flexibility, they simultaneously report emotional exhaustion and difficulty disconnecting from work.

Studies outside India offer convergent evidence. Large-scale analyses have found that remote work during the pandemic had substantial mental health tolls, particularly when associated with high workload, low autonomy and inadequate social support. Longitudinal and cross-sectional studies also link work-from-home arrangements to stress via mediating mechanisms such as workaholism and work-family conflict. These global findings complement Indian evidence and underscore that mental health impacts are not inherent to remote work, but depend on how it is designed and governed.

4.2 Technostress and digital overload in Indian IT

Satpathy and colleagues' study of 334 Indian IT employees working from home during COVID-19 remains one of the most detailed examinations of technostress in this context. Using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, they identified techno-insecurity (fear of job loss due to new ICT skills or automation) as the highest-weighted stressor, followed by techno-overload (excessive assignments, time pressure and working beyond office hours), techno-complexity (difficulty understanding and keeping up with new technologies) and techno-invasion (perceived invasion of personal life by work technologies).

The study found that employees often had to work beyond office hours, juggle multiple assignments and continually upgrade skills to avoid being replaced by more technologically proficient colleagues. These conditions produced anxiety, frustration and a sense of being constantly under threat, with implications for job commitment and psychological well-being.

Other Indian work corroborates the salience of technostress. A pre-pandemic conference paper on technostress among Indian remote workers already highlighted issues such as compulsive technology use, expectation of real-time responsiveness, and multitasking across multiple apps, linking these to reduced job satisfaction and increased exhaustion. Post-pandemic studies across sectors, including banking and services, report that technostress is positively associated with work exhaustion and that work-family conflict mediates this relationship in remote workers.

For IT professionals, whose work is intrinsically enmeshed with software tools, coding environments and digital platforms, technostress is not an ancillary phenomenon but central to their everyday experience, particularly when remote work removes informal peer support and increases reliance on asynchronous digital communication.

4.3 Loneliness, isolation and social connection

Social isolation and loneliness are recurrent themes in research on remote work during and after the pandemic. A LinkedIn Workforce Confidence survey reported in the Indian press in 2020 found that three in five Indian professionals felt lonely while working remotely, and many cited stress around the “three Rs” remote work, return to work and risk of exposure as drivers of psychological strain.

In a study focused on mental health and employee needs in selected Indian IT organisations, Meenambigai and Saranya Devi found that approximately 35% of respondents reported feeling lonely and lost, and 47% felt disconnected from the “real world” while working from home, indicating significant emotional and social disconnection. More than half of the respondents reported that their supervisors had made no specific efforts to address

mental health concerns, underscoring an organisational support gap.

International work aligns with these findings. Jaiswal and Arun’s qualitative study of Indian employees across sectors, including technology-enabled services, identified isolation as a core dimension of work-from-home experiences, alongside role improvisation, stress and creativity. Wang and colleagues’ mixed-methods research similarly found that job autonomy could reduce loneliness, but lack of social support and high monitoring increased feelings of isolation and stress among remote workers.

Post-pandemic, loneliness may persist even in hybrid regimes: employees commuting a few days per week may find that colleagues attend on different days, or that office time is dominated by virtual meetings rather than in-person collaboration. Industry commentary from NASSCOM and others has pointed to “virtual meeting fatigue” and the erosion of informal interactions as contributors to subtle but pervasive mental strain among Indian knowledge workers.

4.4 Work-family conflict, gendered experiences and life-stage variation

Work-family interface issues occupy a central place in Indian remote work research. The WFH study cited earlier reported that around two-thirds of IT employees experienced significantly increased workloads while working from home; many also reported difficulties maintaining a stress-free family life and adequate energy for everyday tasks. Qualitative responses highlighted struggles to balance domestic responsibilities with extended work hours, and the sense that work “followed them” into every corner of the home.

The 2025 synthesis on remote work in India emphasises that while remote work has improved work-life balance for some employees by eliminating commutes and enabling more family time it has also created intense work-family conflict in crowded households and reinforced gendered expectations of care. The paper notes that women often experience a “double burden” as they juggle professional duties with increased domestic work, and that unequal caregiving responsibilities undermine their productivity and career progression in remote or hybrid arrangements.

Cross-national studies show that work-from-home can affect mental health through mediating variables such as workaholism, work-family conflict and diminished recovery time, with evidence that these relationships are stronger for employees with caregiving responsibilities and limited control over scheduling. In the Indian IT context, early-career employees living in shared housing, mid-career employees with young children, and women managing intergenerational caregiving are particularly vulnerable profiles; though detailed intersectional Indian data remain sparse, qualitative accounts and sectoral reports point in this direction.

5. Discussion: Digital Work Characteristics and Mental Health in Indian IT

Synthesising the above evidence, several patterns emerge regarding how post-pandemic digital work environments in Indian IT shape mental health:

1. **Ambivalent overall impact:** Remote and hybrid work confer clear benefits time saved from commuting, greater flexibility, and at times improved work-life balance yet they also generate significant psychosocial costs in the form of technostress, boundary erosion, isolation and extended work hours.
2. **Digital intensification of existing demands:** Pandemic-era remote work did not create many of the stressors faced by IT professionals; rather, it intensified them. Tight deadlines, global time zones, rapid technological change and competitive performance cultures were already present. Under remote conditions, these translated into expectations of constant connectivity, heavy reliance on self-discipline, and reduced informal peer support, contributing to heightened stress and exhaustion.
3. **Centrality of technostress and job insecurity:** Indian technostress research underscores techno-insecurity and techno-overload as key stressors for IT employees, reflecting fears of skill obsolescence and job loss in a rapidly evolving sector. Remote work amplifies these concerns as employees must constantly adapt to new tools and practices without the buffer of immediate in-person assistance.
4. **Boundary challenges in socio-culturally dense environments:** Boundary theory suggests that boundary permeability becomes problematic when individuals lack control over transitions and have conflicting role demands. For many Indian IT professionals, particularly those living in small or multi-generational households, remote work has increased interference between work and family roles and undermined recovery time, with implications for stress, relationship quality and overall well-being.
5. **Heterogeneous and unequal experiences:** Mental health outcomes vary considerably by gender, caregiving status, housing conditions, digital infrastructure and organisational culture. Women and early-career workers

report particularly high stress related to work-family conflict and job insecurity; employees in Tier-II/III cities may struggle with infrastructure issues; and those in organisations with strong support systems fare better than those in high-pressure, low-support environments.

6. **Emerging organisational recognition:** Recent policy shifts such as Infosys's automated warnings to employees who work more than 9 hours and 15 minutes, framed explicitly as a measure to prevent burnout and promote healthy work-life balance suggest growing organisational recognition of the mental health risks associated with digitally extended workdays. However, such initiatives coexist with tighter hybrid attendance mandates, reflecting tension between control and care.

In essence, digital work environments in Indian IT function as both job resources (enhancing flexibility, autonomy, and in some cases meaningfulness) and job demands (through technostress, surveillance, boundary erosion and social disconnection). The net mental health impact depends on how organisations design and govern remote/hybrid work, and on broader social and infrastructural conditions.

6. Implications for Organisational Practice and Governance

6.1 Organisational and managerial interventions

At the organisational level, several strategies emerge from the literature and practice:

1. **Work design for sustainable digital work**

Implementing remote-friendly work design principles clear role expectations, manageable workloads, and autonomy over scheduling

can mitigate stress and enhance engagement. Wang et al.'s findings suggest that social support, autonomy and reduced monitoring intensity are associated with better mental health outcomes for remote workers. Indian IT firms can apply these insights by revisiting key performance indicators (KPIs), reducing reliance on "online presence" metrics and encouraging outcome-based evaluation.

2. **Technostress management and training**

Given high levels of techno-insecurity and techno-overload, structured training and upskilling programmes, transparent communication about technology transitions, and mentoring systems can reduce anxiety and perceived threat. Technostress research indicates that awareness, supportive leadership and user-centred ICT design reduce negative impacts on well-being and performance.

3. **Boundary-supportive policies and "right to disconnect" norms**

Organisations can formalise expectations around working hours, response times and meeting schedules, especially in remote and hybrid contexts. Policies limiting after-hours emails or late-night meetings, documented time-zone-sensitive scheduling norms, and mandatory "meeting-free" blocks can protect recovery time. Infosys's monitoring of excessive remote hours framed as a safeguard rather than a productivity push is an example of how digital tracking can be repurposed for well-being.

4. **Mental health support and destigmatisation**

Indian studies on IT employees highlight the need for accessible counselling, employee

assistance programmes (EAPs), and safe spaces to discuss mental health without fear of stigma or reprisal. Organisations can partner with mental health professionals, provide confidential tele-counselling, and integrate mental health literacy into leadership development. Given stigma, visible endorsement from senior leaders and peer champions is crucial.

5. Gender-sensitive and life-stage-sensitive interventions

Given documented gender disparities and the double burden on women, firms should adopt policies such as flexible scheduling around caregiving, additional support for parents of young children, and proactive monitoring of women's career progression under hybrid regimes. Life-stage-sensitive measures, such as onboarding support and mentoring for remote-joined graduates, can also buffer loneliness and uncertainty among early-career professionals.

6. Re-imagining hybrid workplaces

Industry surveys suggest that hybrid work is now the preferred model for many IT employees, but its effectiveness depends on intentional design: aligning in-office days for teams, structuring office time around collaborative work rather than screen-based tasks, and creating psychologically safe physical spaces. Without such design, hybrid work risks combining the worst of both worlds commuting burdens and digital overload.

6.2 Industry self-regulation and public policy

At a broader governance level, industry bodies and the state have important roles to play:

1. Industry guidelines and benchmarks

NASSCOM has begun articulating future-of-work frameworks emphasising flexible work models and employee well-being, but these could be further concretised into voluntary codes of practice on digital work, mental health support and technostress mitigation, with published benchmarks and case studies.

2. Integration into labour and occupational health regulation

India's labour codes and occupational health and safety norms have historically focused on physical workplaces; there is limited explicit guidance on psychosocial risks or remote work conditions. The WHO's World Mental Health Report calls on governments to integrate mental health into occupational health systems and to address psychosocial risks at work as public health concerns. Indian policymakers could adapt these recommendations, for example by issuing guidelines on maximum screen time, support for hybrid work ergonomics, and protection against unreasonable digital surveillance.

3. Public investment in digital and urban infrastructure

Many of the stressors associated with remote work poor internet connectivity, power instability, cramped housing and dangerous commutes during extreme weather are infrastructural rather than organisational problems. Investments in broadband infrastructure, urban transport and climate-resilient city planning will indirectly support healthier digital work environments for IT workers.

4. Promotion of mental health literacy and services

Given large treatment gaps in Indian mental health care, government partnerships with industry leveraging the Mental Healthcare Act 2017's emphasis on rights and non-discrimination could expand access to affordable counselling, digital mental health tools and community-based services for working populations, including those in the IT sector.

7. Future Research Directions

Despite growing literature, significant gaps remain in understanding mental health and digital work among Indian IT professionals:

- **Longitudinal studies** tracking mental health trajectories across the transition from fully remote to hybrid regimes are rare; such studies would clarify whether technostress, loneliness and burnout persist, worsen or ameliorate over time.
- **Intersectional analyses** examining how gender, age, caste, class, disability status and geography interact to shape digital work experiences are needed, particularly given evidence of unequal burdens for women and employees in resource-constrained environments.
- **Comparative organisational research** could explore how different leadership styles, HR practices and digital governance policies mediate mental health impacts in the same sector.
- **Intervention evaluations** for example, trials of meeting-load reductions, right-to-disconnect norms, technostress-management

programmes or targeted mental health interventions would provide evidence on what works in practice in Indian IT contexts.

- **Macro-level studies** linking industry-wide data (attrition rates, sick leave, insurance claims) to remote/hybrid policy shifts could illuminate the broader economic and public health implications of digital work design.

8. Conclusion

Post-pandemic digital work environments have become deeply entrenched in India's IT sector, reshaping not only where work is done but how it is experienced. Remote and hybrid work arrangements have delivered clear advantages particularly in reducing commuting stress, enabling flexibility and supporting business continuity during crises such as pandemics and extreme weather. At the same time, empirical evidence from Indian and international studies shows that these arrangements have generated new or intensified mental health challenges, including technostress, social isolation, work-family conflict and persistent anxiety about job security and performance.

For Indian IT professionals, who occupy a pivotal position in the country's digital economy, mental health in digital work environments is shaped by a confluence of sectoral, organisational, infrastructural and socio-cultural factors. The JD-R model, boundary theory and technostress frameworks together illuminate how digital work characteristics can operate both as resources and demands; the balance between them determines whether remote work becomes a pathway to flourishing or a vector of distress.

As hybrid work solidifies into the default mode of operation, the central question is no longer whether remote work is good or bad for mental health, but

under what conditions it supports sustainable well-being and under what conditions it harms it. Addressing this question requires intentional work design, robust organisational support systems, gender- and life-stage-sensitive policies, and proactive governance at industry and state levels. Embedded in a broader movement to transform mental health for all, efforts to design healthier digital work environments in Indian IT can serve as a test case and potentially a model for other sectors navigating the post-pandemic future of work.

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