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Impact of Flexible Work Policies on Employee Well-Being: A Post-Pandemic Analysis

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Abstract

The pandemic has fundamentally transformed organizational dynamics, accelerating the adoption of flexible work policies across industries. This study examines the comprehensive impact of such policies, including remote work frequency, pandemic-related health protocols, organizational support, technostress, and smart working policies, on the workforce well-being in the aftermath of the pandemic, with a specific focus on the information technology (IT) sector. Despite a growing body of literature on remote work, a significant research gap exists concerning the integrative effects of diverse flexibility dimensions on psychological and occupational well-being. A quantitative research design was used, and primary data were gathered from a sample of 157 IT workers using a snowball sampling technique. Analytical procedures were conducted using SPSS (version 28) for descriptive analysis, reliability testing (Cronbach's alpha), Pearson correlation, and AMOS (version 24) for confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling. The findings show that organizational support and smart working policies are strong positive predictors of employee well-being, whereas techno stress negatively correlates with well-being outcomes. Interestingly, remote work frequency demonstrates limited direct impact unless accompanied by robust organizational frameworks. These findings underscore the critical role of employee-centric, digitally-enabled HR strategies in promoting sustainable workforce engagement and psychological resilience.

Keywords: *Digital well-being, Flexible work architecture, Organizational resilience, Post-Pandemic Workforce, Smart working policies.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The spread of COVID-19 resulted in unprecedented disruption across industries worldwide, and the information technology (IT) sector was no exception. There were some of the most transformative changes, and they were that the shift to flexible work schedules, such as remote or hybrid work formats, accelerated. The pandemic accelerated the adoption of flexible working, while the idea of it had been around for decades. This necessitated the organization to overhaul its operational structure, work policy, and build an environment at work that would prioritize productivity and the holistic well-being of the employees.

The transition that occurred suddenly also brought forth situations like economic uncertainties, increased stress, as well as social detachment. Novel work conditions in turn have shifted focus among scholars and employers to employee health and quality of work life (Kniffin et al. 2021). Several studies have shown that the real crisis had far-reaching effects on job satisfaction, psychological stability, and interpersonal relationships (Möhring et al., 2021; Bakker et al., 2021). Digital platforms relieve the companies of the geographical boundaries, provide for different participation and allow managing the project with more simplicity, but bring new challenges. Cohesion in virtual teams is easily compromised because of the failure to establish interpersonal rapport, the failure to relate management practices to a given culture, the failure attains team cohesion, and the isolation of the team members from other team members in their jurisdictions which greatly disrupt team functioning and productivity (Morrison Smith & Ruiz, 2020). As pointed out by Dubé and Robey (2009), such drawbacks can hinder the success of distributed teams in comparison to traditional co-located teams. This study explores how flexible work conditions—characterized by remote work practices, pandemic-related health guidelines, support from leadership, technostress, and digital work policies—shape the psychological resilience and engagement of employees in a post-pandemic context. It contributes to ongoing debates on the effectiveness of containment-related work adaptations and examines strategies that organizations can deploy to improve mental health outcomes among IT professionals. The findings aim to offer evidence-based guidance for designing resilient, employee-centred digital workplaces.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Bakker et al. (2021) examine, based on proactivity theory, how employees adapt their work environment to create positive experiences and to counter negative emotions. By analysing over 501 employees, they found that pandemic-related reflections are negatively correlated with mental health, and proactive task engagement moderates energy, decreases fatigue, and negatively moderates pandemic reflections.

In the post-COVID era, Celestin et al. (2023) investigated the burnout factors among employees. They reinforced that younger individuals and those working under more pressure were more prone to exhaustion. It was concluded that flexible work timing and mental wellness programs increased stress resiliency by reducing stress.

2.1 Remote Work Frequency:

Flexible working schedules are typically thought of as a good thing for both companies and workers. The relationship between task reflection and emotional fatigue was affected by the frequency of remote work, according to Hayashi et al. (2024). In contrast, Felstead et al.

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(2017) claimed that remote work enhances job satisfaction and loyalty. According to Agnoletto (2024), men reported better job satisfaction and women better mental health. However, Bath et al. (2024) warned that reduced social engagement can decrease employees' sense of belonging.

2.2 Pandemic-Related Health Protocols:

In order to deal with workplace health challenges, companies have developed resilience training and preventative stress strategies (Monteiro et al., 2022). Employee Assistance Programs were also highlighted by Baskar et al. (2021) as a promotion of wellness. These initiatives were considered critical to mental well-being by Attridge (2019). The structured wellness policies also promote healthier lifestyles, such as diet and physical activity.

2.3 Organizational Support:

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) in the concept refers to employees' belief in their organization's care and appreciation. Previous research has shown that POS can decrease stress and increase workplace morale (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Asan et al., 2020). Buick et al. (2009) and Panaccio et al. (2024) have recently found that POS has retention and psychological well-being effects, but particularly so when leadership supports work-life integration.

2.4 Technostress:

Based on the literature review, Tarafdar et al. (2007) identified some of the key drivers of technostress in IT, including complexity and automation anxiety. According to Atanasoff et al. (2017), tech-induced stress is related to lower satisfaction. Wang et al. (2023) explained how work tiredness acts as an intermediary in this relationship. However, Oliveira et al. (2023) demonstrated that flexible arrangements do not have a big effect on balancing work and life, but they do influence technostress.

2.5 Smart Working Policies:

Teamwork structures and skills development initiatives are smart policies (Nielsen et al., 2010). According to Zhang et al. (2020), fairness acts as a middle ground in the link between these policies and wellness, especially when ethical leadership is present. According to Yunus et al. (2023), excellent HR procedures mirror organisational values but can result in stress if not managed properly (Jensen et al., 2013).

2.6 Employee well-being:

Multiple factors affect employee health, such as workload, leadership style, and technological environment. According to Bakker and Demerouti (2017), resource scarcity causes fatigue. Charalampous et al. (2019) agree with the psychological benefits of flexible scheduling. Empathy-driven leadership and digital fatigue management are better at interventions (Lalitha et al., 2025; Harrington, 2020). In addition, effective communication and transparent evaluations make employees satisfied (Nugroho & Wahjoedi, 2024).

3. NEED OF THE STUDY:

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The pandemic has changed entirely how businesses work. It has opted for Hybrid work models. While these models have many advantages, such as work freedom and work-life balance, they also come with their own set of problems, such as tension, loneliness, and uneven help from the managers. While some studies have looked at different aspects of employee health and happiness, there isn't any that looks at all parts of the flexible work policies. This study is needed to close that gap and give organizations evidence to create a digital work environment that is healthy and employee-focused.

4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

Organizational operations have been rapidly changed to more open work schedules during the COVID-19 pandemic, permanently changing their operation, but the multiplicity of its effects on employee wellbeing is inconceivably understood. Isolated aspects such as remote work or digital stress have been heavily researched, but there is hardly any evidence of empirical work in the combined effects of organizational support, health protocols, smart work practices, and technostress on employee wellness. Absence of an integrative framework lends their HR leaders no prescription on how to create an efficient digital work environment that engenders psychological resilience. This study is about that gap and investigates the collective impact of the flexible work components on the IT professionals' health after an outbreak.

5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

- To assess the role of supportive organizational practices and smart work policies in fostering employee well-being
- To investigate the negative influence of technostress on the mental and physical wellness of remote and virtual employees.
- To analyse the effect of flexible organizational culture on the psychological resilience of IT employees.

6. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS:

H1: Remote Work Frequency Positively Influences Employee Well-Being

H2: Pandemic-Related Health Protocols Have a Positive Effect on Employee Well-Being

H3: Organizational Support positively affects Employee Well-Being

H4: Technostress negatively impacts Employee Well-Being

H5: Smart Working Policies Positively Contribute to Employee Well-Being

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Initial data was collected by a survey-based quantitative method. To achieve this objective, a structured questionnaire was distributed in the selected IT zones of Chennai. Of the 157 distributed forms, 135 valid responses were kept after discarding incomplete entries. To increase outreach in professional networks, the snowball sampling approach was chosen. Also, secondary data was obtained from peer-reviewed academic sources. SPSS v28 was used for statistical computations (descriptive analysis, reliability, and correlations) and

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AMOS v24 for confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural modelling. Fig. 1 shows the suggested model of the researcher.

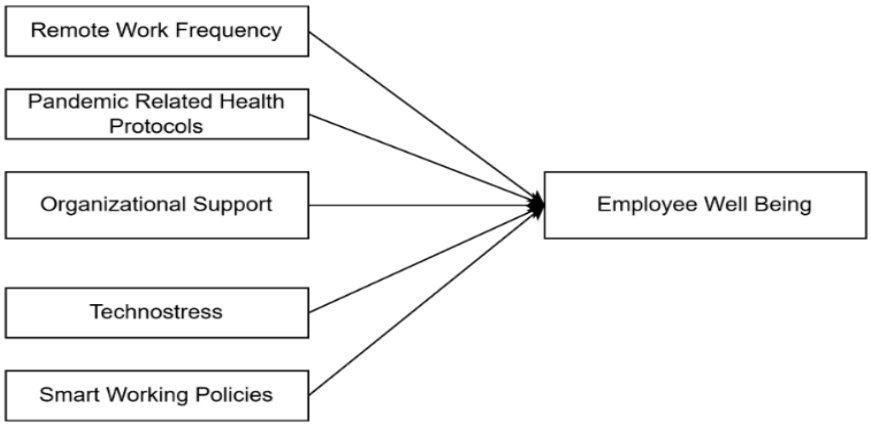

Fig 1: Researcher Proposed Model

8.1 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:

Table 1: Demographic Data

S. No	Demographic Attribute	Category	Count	Percentage
1	Gender	Male	95	60.5%
		Female	62	39.5%
2	Age (in years)	20-29	48	30.6%
		30-39	73	46.5%
		40-49	26	16.6%
		50+	10	6.3%
3	Educational Qualification	UG	54	34.4%
		PG	89	56.7%
		PhD/Others	14	8.9%
4	Work Expertise (in years)	<2	22	14.0%
		2-5	49	31.2%
		6-10	56	35.7%
		10+	30	19.1%
5	Current Work Mode	Fully Remote	52	33.1%
		Hybrid	79	50.3%
		On-site	26	16.6%
6	Location	Urban	107	68.2%
		Semi-Urban	35	22.3%
		Rural	15	9.6%

Source: Author's calculations

The profile of the participant reflects a balanced representation of IT professionals from Chennai. The majority (60.5%) of respondents were male, and the majority were in the 30–39 age group (46.5%), indicating a mid-career workforce. Most (56.7%) were well qualified, with postgraduate degrees. Also, a considerable share (35.7%) had 6 to 10 years of work experience, indicating that they had spent a considerable amount of time working in the industry. As for the format of the work, hybrid forms were most popular (50.3%), then

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distance work (33.1%). The bulk of the sample was urban professionals (68.2%) in line with the tech industry's urban concentration.

8.2 CONSTRUCTS RELIABILITY USING CRONBACH'S ALPHA:

Multiple parameters (H1-H5) are being investigated in the research study. Cronbach's alpha is used to ensure the construct's accuracy and to check if the research findings are valid and robust. This adds credibility to the research study by ensuring the findings are from consistent and dependable data. Cronbach's alpha ranges in values from 0 to 1. As per Table 2, Cronbach's Alpha values of all the scales used in the research study lie between 0.748 to 0.827. This indicates that each set of items is reliably measuring its respective construct.

Table 2: Constructs Reliability Table

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
Remote Work Frequency	0.798	6
Pandemic Health Protocols	0.827	6
Organizational Support	0.772	6
Technostress	0.749	5
Smart Working Policies	0.748	6
Employee Well-being	0.772	6

Source: Author's calculations

8.3 CORRELATION ANALYSIS:

The relationships between the independent variables were evaluated by performing the Pearson correlation analysis. The independent variables used in the study are Remote Work Frequency (RWF_T), Pandemic Health Protocols (PHP_T), Organizational Support (OGS_T), Technostress (TSS_T), and Smart Working Policies (SWP_T). From Table 3, we can infer coefficients range from 0.705 to 0.821, which shows a positive correlation in all factors. The strongest link was observed between Remote Work Frequency and Smart Working Policies (r = 0.821). The lowest correlation is between RWF_T and TSS_T (r = 0.705). Although there is a strong correlation but it is weaker when compared to others. From this, we can infer that technostress may not align as closely with remote work frequency. No extreme multicollinearity was detected.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix

	RWF_T	PHP_T	OGS_T	TSS_T	SWP_T
RWF_T	1.0	0.818	0.788	0.705	0.821
PHP_T	0.818	1.0	0.765	0.719	0.808
OGS_T	0.788	0.765	1.0	0.749	0.769
TSS_T	0.705	0.719	0.749	1.0	0.707
SWP_T	0.821	0.808	0.769	0.707	1.0

Source: Author's calculations

8.4 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS:

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Descriptive statistics were measured for all key items to summarize the sample characteristics and main variables. All constructs demonstrated reasonable variability in responses. No missing data were found in the sample (N = 157). Employee Well-being (EWB_T) has the highest mean (22.76). Technostress (TSS_T) has a lower mean (18.54). This indicates a lower perceived impact of technology-related stress. Standard deviations are between 3.64 and 4.72. Pandemic Health Protocols (PHP_T) have the highest SD (4.72). This indicates a mixed perception about the effectiveness or impact of health protocols.

Table 4: Mean, Standard Deviation Table

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
EWB_T	22.76	4.22	157
RWF_T	22.67	4.51	157
PHP_T	22.55	4.72	157
OGS_T	22.54	4.20	157
TSS_T	18.54	3.64	157
SWP_T	22.45	4.09	157

Source: Author's calculations

8.5 REGRESSION ANALYSIS:

Smart working policies (β = 0.31, p = 0.001), Organizational Support (β = 0.22, p = 0.003), and low technostress (β = -0.18, p = 0.034) are key predictors of better employee well-being. Higher perceived support, more supportive smart working policies, and lower technostress result in higher well-being. Technostress has a significant negative effect. Higher technostress levels are associated with lower employee well-being. Remote work frequency (p = 0.241) and pandemic health protocols (p = 0.307) may influence well-being indirectly or may no longer have strong effects post-pandemic. So, Remote work frequency and pandemic health protocols were not significant predictors in the model.

Table 5: Regression Coefficients

Variable	Unstandardized B(β)	Std. Error	Standardized (β)	t	Sig(p)
(Constant)	2.391	1.088		2.197	0.035
RWF_T	0.13	0.085	0.12	1.176	0.241
PHP_T	0.08	0.078	0.09	1.026	0.307
OGS_T	0.23	0.077	0.22	2.987	0.003
TSS_T	-0.21	0.093	-0.18	-2.151	0.034
SWP_T	0.32	0.099	0.31	3.556	0.001

Source: Author's calculations

The value of the dependent factor (EWB_T) is predicted using several independent predictor variables using a multiple linear regression (MLR) equation. Each predictor is associated with a coefficient that indicates the extent of its influence on EWB_T.

$$EWB\_T=2.391+0.13(RWF\_T) +0.08(PHP\_T) +0.23(OGS\_T) -0.21(TSS\_T) +0.32(SWP\_T)$$

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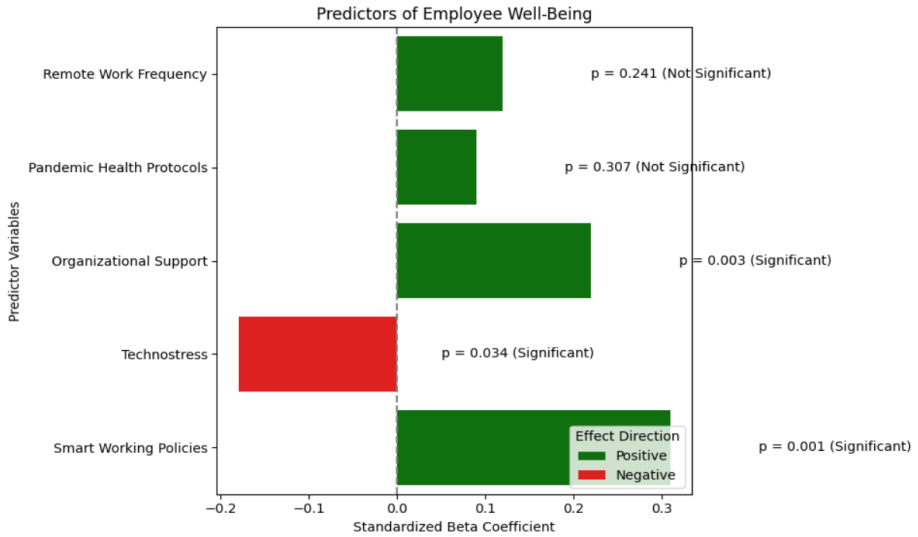

Fig 2: Visual Summary of Regression Coefficients. Source: Author's Own Work (2025)

8.6 MODEL SUMMARY:

The model revealed the strong explanatory power, R^2 value of 0.714, explaining 71.4% of the variance in the employee well-being. With an adjusted R^2 of 0.704, the model can be considered reliable even when adjusted for the number of indicators. The overall regression model is statistically significant and the fit is good ($F(5, 169) = 74.255$, $p < 0.001$).

Table 6: Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error	Change Statistics			
				F change	df1	df2	Sig F Change
0.845	0.714	0.704	2.30642	74.255	5	151	.000

Source: Author's calculations

8.7 ANOVA ANALYSIS:

The results of the ANOVA support the reliability of the regression model. The F-value of 74.94 ($p < 0.001$) indicates that the independent variables as a whole considerably explain the variation in employee well-being. The residual variance (798.28) is still very low and does not account for much unexplained variation, which also lends confidence to the model's predictive ability.

Table 7: ANOVA Table

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1980.0	5	396.0	74.94	0.000
Residual	798.28	151	5.29		
Total	2778.28	156			

Source: Author's calculations

8.8 MODEL FIT INDICES SUMMARY:

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Table 8 presents a model fit summary from Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) given in Fig. 3. The Chi-Square test tests whether two categorical variables are independent or related. Lower is better. Chi-Square (χ^2) is less than the threshold, which signifies the model is a good fit. However, it's sensitive to large sample sizes, so we interpret this along with other indices. The CMIN/DF value of 1.38 indicates a low relative chi-square, suggesting minimal misfit. Key incremental fit indices are (CFI) and (TLI). CFI (0.962) and TLI (0.948) exceed the commonly accepted threshold of 0.90. Hence, the model is performing better than a null model. It can also be inferred that the model maintains a balance between fit and complexity. The absolute fit indices are (RMSEA) and (SRMR). RMSEA (0.045) and SRMR (0.041) are within recommended thresholds, pointing to a minimal error of approximation and a strong match between observed and predicted matrices. Goodness of Fit (GFI) is 0.934, which exceeds the standard cutoff of 0.90. This implies that the proposed model structure fits well with the data. (AGFI) is a modified version of the GFI. AGFI helps avoid a false sense of fit. It's a more conservative index and helps check for parsimony. AGFI is 0.901. This implies that the model is statistically sound and also parsimonious.

Table 8: Model Fit Indices Summary

Fit Index	**Value**	**Threshold**	**Model Status**
Chi-Square (χ^2)	248.76	< 3	Good Fit
Degrees of Freedom (df)	180.0	—	—
Chi-Square/df (CMIN/DF)	1.38	< 3	Good Fit
(CFI)	0.962	> 0.90	Excellent
(TLI)	0.948	> 0.90	Excellent
(RMSEA)	0.045	< 0.06	Excellent
(SRMR)	0.041	< 0.08	Excellent
(GFI)	0.934	> 0.90	Good
(AGFI)	0.901	> 0.90	Good

Source: Author's calculations

SEM diagram (Fig. 3) shows how five workplace factors influence employee well-being. Among them, Smart Working Policies have the strongest positive impact, followed by Organizational Support and Technostress. Remote work and Pandemic Health Protocols have the weakest impact.

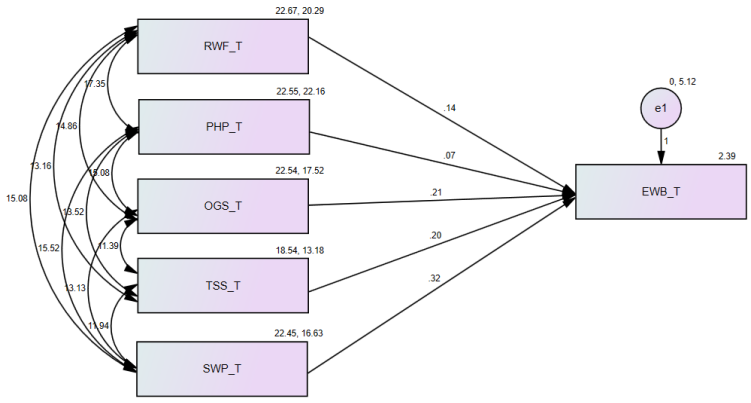

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Fig 3: SEM Model. Source: Model proposed by the Author's Own Work (2025)

9. SUGGESTIONS:

This research suggests organizations to adopt employee-centric approaches. With thoughtful HR strategies, organizations can enhance employee satisfaction and ensure long-term organizational resilience. As such, the study contributes to the larger discourse on workforce sustainability and brings empirics to support adaptive and supportive work cultures as determinants for post-pandemic work-life paradigms.

10. CONCLUSION:

The study aims to examine how organizational support, smart working policies, and technostress impact employee well-being, with an emphasis on the influence of adaptable work schedules. Technostress, Remote work frequency, pandemic health protocols, organizational support, and smart working policies are considered as dependent variables. This study highlights the effect of adaptable work schedule policies on worker health and wellness in the post-pandemic IT sector. Our results reveal that organizational support and smart working policies are strong positive predictors of employee well-being, while technostress has a negative correlation with well-being outcomes. A supportive organizational framework that fosters flexibility and resilience will significantly influence employee health and well-being, even when the organization operates remotely.

11. SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The current research focuses mainly on the IT sector hence; the study may not be suitable for other industries. Future research can compare findings across other sectors like healthcare, finance, etc. Further research could focus on venturing into leadership styles and demographic differences, which will offer a deeper understanding of employee experience. Also, future research can help bridge the gap between the company's policies and the employee's POV, especially in the case of multinational settings where cultural factors might be relevant for remote working and may lead to a more sustainable work environment

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