

# **Impact of Techno Stressor on Work-Life Balance and Employee Performance Public Sector in Indonesia: The Role of Mediating Emotional Exhaustion**

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**ABSTRAK:** *There are still differences in the debate over the effects of information technology on employee performance, not to mention its impact on employees' personal lives. This study aims to analyse the effects of technostressors on employee performance and work-life balance with emotional Exhaustion as a mediator. This survey was conducted on 155 employees at the Central Bureau of Statistics of East Kalimantan Province using online data collection techniques. This study uses SEM-PLS analysis. The results of this study indicate that technostress does not affect work-life balance and employee performance. However, the results are significant after being mediated by emotional Exhaustion. This study also shows that supervisor support does not moderate the relationship between technostress and emotional Exhaustion. This research contributes so that practitioners pay attention to the use of technology in the workplace wisely so that it does not cause emotional Exhaustion that is felt by employees so that, in the end, employees' performance and work-life remain balanced.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Technostressor, work-life balance, emotional Exhaustion, job performance, JD-R*

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Date of Submission: 12-11-2022

Date of Acceptance: 26-11-2022

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

During a pandemic, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is increasingly penetrating all sectors of life. It has become an important part of personal time and time for work (Diaz et al., 2012). ICT is becoming more critical, as many employees are expected to work from home (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020; Wang et al., 2021) using technology. Most of the work is moved to the virtual realm, and through ICT, employees and companies can stay connected (Kniffin et al., 2021).

ICT provides a sizable resource base, such as information systems, communication software, and social networks, which can be accessed anywhere and anytime (Day et al., 2012). Companies (e.g., kaizala, Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, WhatsApp) and that technology can increase flexibility, productivity, and high efficiency in the workplace (Ayyagari et al., 2011; Cousin & Robey, 2015), and this is a positive effect of the pandemic covid-19 (Nagel, 2020).

However, using IT has negative effects; among the phenomena of great concern is technostress, which is the stress people feel when using IT in the workplace. (Tarafdar et al., 2019). For example, invasive technologies such as communication software, such as email, calls and text messages, can make employees stay connected to work (Tarafdar et al., 2007) and demand to be responsive (Barber & Santuzzi, 2015). This fosters an always-on mentality (Atanasoff & Venable, 2017). ICT causes the boundaries between work and individual life to continue to blur, making reconciliation between work and family (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2019). This situation challenges individuals and organisations (McCloskey, 2018) because organisations that do not pay attention to work-life balance cause turnover and loss of talent.

Techno-stressors are the main stressors in the modern workplace (Tarafdar et al., 2019). This is associated with lower satisfaction, job performance, and higher levels of work stress (Ayyagari et al., 2011; Tarafdar et al., 2011; Carlson et al., 2017). Work tension that often arises is emotional Exhaustion. Emotional Exhaustion is the depletion of mental and emotional energy at work caused by repeated IT-mediated interruptions of information.

However, this is a big challenge for managing employee performance in a constantly changing global situation (Rodrigues & Carlos Pinho, 2012). Changes in the external environment, such as COVID-19, have forced people to adopt the technology. Using technology at work has challenges (Prabhakaran & Mishr, 2012), and the pressures associated with adopting new technologies form negative psychological associations between individuals and new technologies. This can cause technology overload and anxiety (Samrotun, 2018), and employee performance can decrease.

However, other studies show that ICT can significantly affect employee performance. Research shows a

positive relationship between them (Tarafdar et al., 2010; Hung et al., 2011; Tarafdar et al., 2015). The same results were revealed by previous research that ICT can ensure better work management and is associated with increased employee welfare (ter Hoeven and van Zoonen 2015). Farida Saleem (2021) revealed in her research that technostress significantly affects employee performance (Saleem et al., 2021).

Most techno-stressor literature focuses on the impact of technostress in the work area (Ayyagari et al., 2011; Tarafdar et al., 2019). Research is still needed on technostressors outside the work area, such as work-life balance (Harris et al., 2015; Ma et al., 2021), especially in work-life balance. Work-life balance is essential to how one combines their work and life roles (Kalliath & Brough, 2008; Casper et al., 2018). Where achieving work-life balance is an important goal and ideal situation for employees (Haar et al., 2014; Casper et al., 2018).

Based on the description mentioned, there are still inconsistencies in the results of previous studies related to the impact of technostress on performance, such as in the research of Saleem (2021) and Yang et al. (2017). In addition, the results of the identification of researchers have yet to be any research that examines the impact of techno stressors on work-life and employee performance within a single research framework. Therefore, to fill this gap, this research will model techno stressors, employee performance, and work-life balance in one research framework.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW Technostress and Work-life balance**

Work-life balance is "an individual's subjective judgment of suitability between work and activities outside work and life more generally" (Brough et al., 2014, p. 2728). The research results of Brough et al. (2014) show that the diversity of demands and resources influences work-life balance at work (e.g., variations in workload or other job demands, variations in support received at work). According to the theory, the influence of work demands and resources on work-life balance is that dealing with job demands reduces one's resource supply (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), which leads to negative outcomes at home (Brummelhuis, 2012). Technostress is a form of work demand, and excessive work demands hurt work-life balance (Jichang Ma, 2021).

Hypothesis 1: Techno stressor has a negative effect on work-life balance.

### **Technostress and employee performance**

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, technology became so massive that it affected every aspect of employee attitudes and behaviour at work. Demands to use technology can interfere with employee performance. Organisations that demand the use of technology can generate a technostress generation (La Torre et al., 2019). Research on technostress shows that technology causes psychological stress that harms employees and organisations (Tarafdar et al., 2010; Ayyagari et al., 2011; Tarafdar et al., 2015). The results of previous research show that for college instructors, the integration of ICT in teaching impacts excessive workload, role ambiguity, changes in work patterns, increased knowledge and skills, and demands for higher performance and productivity. (Tarafdar et al. 2010; Jena 2015).

Technology requires employees to work faster to achieve organisational goals (Samrotun, 2018). Increased work speed can cause time pressure on employees. They feel overwhelmed (McFedries, 2003), so they lose concentration at work and work quickly. Therefore, technology stress can impact productivity (Tarafdar et al., 2007). Previous studies have found that technostress causes fatigue and ultimately reduces productivity/performance (Lee et al., 2016).

Hypothesis 2: Techno stressor has a negative effect on employee performance

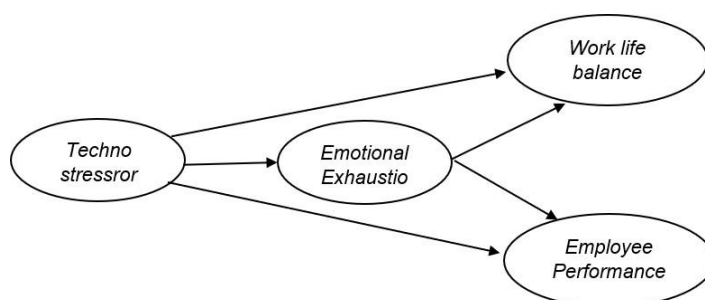
### **The mediating role of emotional exhaustion**

Theory of Job Demands Resources (JD-R), The process of declining health can be caused by job demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Techno stressors are a form of work demands; they induce health disorder processes (Demerouti et al., 2001). The key indicator of health problems is emotional Exhaustion (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Emotional Exhaustion is characterised by "feelings of emotional overload and exhaustion" (Maslach et al., 2001) in the workplace. It reflects the employee's resource status (i.e., resource shortage or resource loss is more significant than resource gain).

In turn, emotional Exhaustion affects work-life balance. As the work-life balance literature shows, resource depletion decreases employee work-life balance because affected individuals lack the resources to cope with their non-work demands (Ten Brummelhuis L 2012; Brough et al., 2014; Haar et al., 2019). The JD-R theory also states that work tension has a negative impact on employee performance. Work stress, which is in the form of emotional exhaustion, damages performance because it weakens the ability to focus. Employees who are exhausted or feel anxious at work are more likely to make mistakes, which has a negative impact on performance (Bakker et al., 2008).

**Hypothesis 3: Emotional Exhaustion mediates the effects of technostress and work-life balance**  
**Hypothesis 4: Emotional Exhaustion mediates the influence of technostress and employee performance**

**Figure 1. Conceptual Framework**



*Source: Analysis Results, 2022*

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Method

This research was carried out at Statistics Indonesia for East Kalimantan Province, where it has adopted the technology for its routine work. This research was conducted at one point in time (cross-sectional survey). Data collection was carried out online by distributing questionnaires via Google form to employees in the Statistic Indonesia environment in East Kalimantan Province. The questionnaire was designed using the Indonesian language, which was translated from the English questionnaire. The sample selection in this study used a purposive sampling technique. To analyse the relationship between variables using PLS-SEM using smart-PLS 3.3.9.

#### Measurement

The variables in this study were measured using a Likert scale of 1-6, where 1 = strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree. Technostress is measured by 5 question items developed by Tarafdar et al. (2007). Emotional Exhaustion is measured using 5 item questions developed by Lu et al., 2016. Work-life balance is measured by 4 item questions developed by Brough et al. (2014) and Chan et al. (2016). Job performance is measured by 9-item questions from Yousef (2000).

### IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### Data analysis

The stages of PLS-SEM analysis in this study follow the stages described by Hair et al. (2014). The first evaluates the measurement model to evaluate the reliability and validity of a construct. The tests carried out are internal consistency reliability, indicator reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. The first step is to evaluate consistency reliability by looking at composite reliability measures (Table 1). Composite reliability value in the range of 0.814-0.928; this value meets the requirements. Next, evaluate the value of Convergent Validity. Convergent validity is measured using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). AVE value in the range of 0.522-0.743; this value meets the requirements. The final stage for evaluating the measurement model is evaluating discriminant validity. Measure discriminant validity, which can be seen from the cross-loading of each indicator.

**Table 1: Evaluation of Measurement Model**

Variables and Indicators	Loadings	Composite Reliability	AVE	Cross Loading
TechnostressTS1 TS2	0.910 0.740	0.814	0.689	Yes
Emotional ExhaustionEE1 EE2EE3 EE4	0.819 0.860 0.848 0.864	0.928	0.719	Yes

EE5	0.849			
Work-life balance WLB1 WLB2 WLB3 WLB4	0.870 0.838 0.866 0.874	0.921	0.743	Yes
Employee Performance EP1 EP2 EP3 EP4 EP5	0.604 0.638 0.787 0.793 0.768	0.844	0.522	Yes

Source: Calculated by SmartPLS, 2022

**Hypothesis testing**

Hypothesis testing in this study was carried out on a structural or inner model, showing a direct or indirect relationship between exogenous and endogenous latent variables. Hypothesis testing is based on the significant value of the path coefficient after resampling or bootstrapping 5,000 times (Hair et al., 2014). The statistical test was the t-test with a 95% confidence or a 5% significance level. The hypothesis is accepted if the t-count value is more than the t-table value for the two-tailed test, which is 1.96. Based on Table 2, hypothesis testing in research can be explained as follows:

**Table 2. Bootstrapping Results**

Path Coefficients						
Variable	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	t values	p Value	5% Significance Level
Technostress -> Work-Life Balance	-0,022	-0,022	0,065	0,346	0,729	Not Significant
Technostressor -> Employee Performance	-0,027	-0,034	0,104	0,265	0,791	Not Significant
Specific Indirect Effects						
Variable	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	t values	p Value	5% Significance Level
Technostress-> Emotional Exhaustion -> Employee Performance	-0,118	-0,124	0,036	3,243	0,001	Negative and Signifikan
Techno stressor -> Emotional Exhaustion -> Work-Life Balance	-0,244	-0,247	0,050	4,907	0,000	Negative and Significant

Source: Calculate by SmartPLS, 2022

1. The effect of Technostressor on Work-Life Balance has a negative path coefficient value of -0.022 and a t-count value of 0.346, which shows that the relationship between the two variables is not significant at the 5% significance level because it has a t-count value of less than 1.96. This shows that technostress has no significant effect on the work-life balance, so H1 is rejected.
2. The relationship between Technostressor and Employee Performance has a negative path coefficient value of -0.027 and a t-value of 0.265 (less than 1.96). This shows that the technostress has no significant effect on the performance, so H2 is rejected.
3. The indirect effect of a Technostressor on Work-life balance through Emotional Exhaustion as a mediator has a negative patch coefficient value of -0.224 with a t count of 4.907 which means it is significant because it is worth more than t table 1.96. According to Hair et al. (2014), if the indirect effect between exogenous and endogenous variables involves a significant mediator variable, then there is a mediating effect. This shows that emotional exhaustion is a mediator in the influence of technostressors on the work-life balance, so H3 is

accepted.

4. The indirect effect of a Technostressor on Employee Performance through emotional Exhaustion as a mediator has a negative path coefficient value of -0.118 with a t count of 3.243, which is significant because it is worth more than t table 1.96. According to Hair et al. (2014), if the indirect effect between exogenous and endogenous variables involves a significant mediator variable, then there is a mediating effect. This shows that emotional Exhaustion acts as a mediator in the influence of technostressors on employee performance so that H4 is accepted

## **V. Discussion**

Based on the analysis results in this study, it was found that although it showed a negative relationship, technostress did not significantly affect the work-life balance. This shows that the use of IT in work has no significant effect on decreasing work-life balance. The analysis results of the average value of the techno stressor variable tend to be high, and work-life balance also tends to be high so that the technostress due to the use of IT does not affect Statistic Indonesia employees in East Kalimantan Province.

These results differ from research by Ma (2021), which states that technostressors have a negative and significant effect on work-life balance. In this study, even though the demands for using IT are high, employees use it to facilitate work so that it can help employees complete their work more quickly. The time that can be efficient due to IT impacts employees' time for their personal and family lives.

Based on the analysis results in this study, it was found that technostress did not significantly affect employee performance. This shows that the stress caused by the use of IT in work does not affect decreasing employee performance. The results of the mean analysis of the technostress variable tend to be high, and the average value of employee performance tends to be very high so that the technostress from IT does not cause a decrease in the performance of Statistic Indonesia employees in the Province of East Kalimantan.

The results of this study differ from the findings of a study conducted by Tarafdar et al. (2007), which stated that technology stress could negatively impact work productivity. However, this study's results align with Saleem's research (2021), which shows that technostress is eustress and empirically establishes a significant positive impact of technostress on employee performance. This performance improvement is carried out by employees who use a proactive approach to accept and utilise technology at work. Technology brings ease of work that saves effort and time. So that technostress is not used as a factor of distress (Tarafdar et al., 2019).

Use IT at Statistic Indonesia East Kalimantan Province, for example, using applications for data collection, processing, web entry, virtual meetings, and administrative management. Especially for using IT for data collection, processing, and administrative management, usually starts with officer training. This might cause high techno stressors that do not negatively affect employee performance, as mentioned in Saleem (2021), which states that training moderates the relationship between technostressors and employee performance. Training is the transfer of knowledge and skills to develop abilities. This allows employees to solve work-related problems (Athar & Shah, 2015) and increases confidence in doing work (Caldwell et al., 2009; Aziz, 2015). This training instils employees' time management and work management skills (Aziz, 2015) and reduces employee stress levels in achieving performance targets.

The analysis results show that technostress has no direct effect on work-life balance. However, after including the mediating variable emotional Exhaustion, the indirect relationship between the two variables becomes negative and significant. This shows that excessive technostress will cause Emotional Exhaustion and fatigue due to excessive demands for using IT can disrupt employee work-life balance. This study's results align with the research of Ma (2021), which shows that emotional Exhaustion has a mediating effect on technostress relationships and work-life balance. The theory of Job Demand Resources (JD-R) explains the process of decreasing health, which highlights how the effects of techno stressors as job demands induce health problems (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

The key indicator of health problems is emotional Exhaustion (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Emotional Exhaustion is characterised by "feelings of emotional overload and exhaustion" (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001) in the workplace. It reflects the employee's resource status (i.e., resource shortage or resource loss is more significant than resource gain). In turn, emotional Exhaustion affects work-life balance. As the work-life literature suggests, resource depletion decreases employee work-life balance because affected individuals lack the resources to cope with their non-work demands (Haar, Suñe, Russo, & Ollier-Malaterre, 2018). For example, emotionally exhausted employees may not have the energy or patience to help their children with homework at night or engage in community activities.

The mediating effect of emotional Exhaustion on the relationship between technostressors and employee performance results of the analysis of this study indicate that emotional Exhaustion has a mediating effect on the relationship between technostress and employee performance. This study's results align with previous research, which found that techno stressors cause fatigue and ultimately lead to decreased productivity/performance (Lee



et al., 2016). In line with the JD-R theory, continuous and long-term work demands can have a positive effect on emotional Exhaustion, and this emotional Exhaustion has a negative effect on employee performance. So this mechanism, it can be stated that emotional Exhaustion mediates the relationship between technostress and employee performance. The rhythm of work at the Central Statistics Agency for East Kalimantan Province demands fast completion of work; this is due to meet the needs of fast and precise data users. The use of IT can help the process of getting work done faster, but if it lasts for a long time, it can become a stressor and, in turn, will cause emotional Exhaustion in employees, and in the end, it can affect employee performance.

## VI. CONCLUSION, LIMITATION, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

### Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion that has been carried out regarding the Impact of Technostressors on Work-Life Balance and Employee Performance, several conclusions can be drawn as follows:

1. Technostressor has a negative but not significant effect on the work-life balance. ICT can be maximised to complete employee work more quickly so that employees' personal and family lives are not disturbed.
2. Technostressor has a negative but not significant effect on performance. This shows that the stress caused by the use of IT in work does not affect decreasing employee performance. Employees who take a proactive approach to accepting and utilising technology at work can improve their performance.
3. Emotional exhaustion is a mediator in the influence of technostressors on the work-life balance. This shows that excessive technostress will cause emotional Exhaustion and fatigue due to excessive demands for using IT can disrupt employee work-life balance.
4. Emotional exhaustion is a mediator in the influence of technostressors on employee performance. Technostressors who are continuously at work and last for a long time can positively affect emotional Exhaustion, and employees who feel this emotional exhaustion decrease their performance.

### Limitation

The limitation of this study is that the sample was taken by purposive sampling, so it cannot be generalised. In addition, this survey was conducted online and self-reported by respondents, so there is a possibility of bias; despite efforts to reduce common method bias, there is a possibility of exaggeration of the relationship.

### Future Research

For future research, we suggest several things. First, future research uses a larger sample size and probability sampling techniques in different sectors. Second, to get an overview of the long-term effects on technostressors, future research can be conducted using a longitudinal survey. Third, future research can add moderating effects of job resources, such as self-efficacy and supervisor support, within the JD-R framework.

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