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Hybrid Teaching, Technostress, and Work–Life Boundaries: Insights from Indian Public Universities

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ABSTRACT

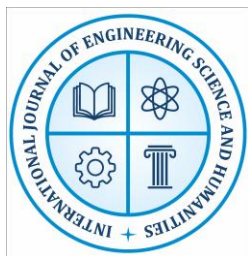
Hybrid teaching models have reshaped academic practices in Indian public universities, presenting both opportunities and challenges for faculty. While these systems enhance accessibility and flexibility, they also generate stressors that undermine well-being. This study examines two critical aspects of hybrid work stress: technostress and work–life boundary blurring. Technostress arises from constant engagement with online teaching platforms, administrative reporting systems, and digital compliance requirements, resulting in ICT overload and diminished psychological detachment. Boundary management difficulties emerge as faculty attempt to balance teaching, research, and administrative duties within rigid institutional structures, fostering an “always-on” culture that erodes personal boundaries.

Although corporate studies have extensively explored technostress, empirical evidence in Indian public universities is scarce. This paper addresses this gap through a mixed-method design, combining surveys and interviews with faculty across selected institutions. Findings reveal key stress triggers, coping strategies, and institutional shortcomings in managing hybrid work demands. Recommendations include flexible scheduling, digital equity initiatives, and structured wellness programs to support faculty well-being. By situating technostress and boundary management within the Indian higher education context, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of hybrid work stress and offers actionable insights for sustainable academic practice.

Keywords- Hybrid Teaching; Technostress; Work–Life Boundaries; Faculty Stress; Indian Public Universities; Always-On Culture; Digital Overload; Boundary Management; Coping Strategies; Faculty Well-Being

1. INTRODUCTION

The increasing adoption of hybrid teaching models in Indian public universities has significantly altered academic practices, reshaping faculty responsibilities and institutional operations. While these models provide greater flexibility and broaden access to education, they also introduce new



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stressors that compromise faculty well-being and professional efficiency. Two pressing concerns in this context are technostress and the erosion of work–life boundaries.

Technostress stems from the continuous reliance on digital teaching platforms, administrative reporting systems, and ICT-based compliance mechanisms. Faculty are often required to adapt rapidly to evolving technologies, frequently without sufficient training or institutional support. This digital burden diminishes opportunities for psychological detachment, reduces rest, and contributes to burnout. Simultaneously, hybrid teaching blurs the distinction between professional and personal domains. The persistence of an “always-available” culture, reinforced by rigid institutional expectations, makes it increasingly difficult for faculty to maintain balance, thereby intensifying stress and lowering overall well-being.

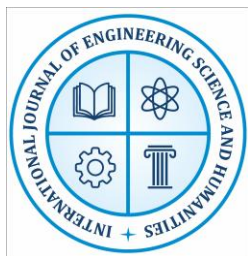
Although technostress and boundary management have been extensively examined in corporate contexts, empirical research within Indian public universities remains limited. This gap highlights the need for systematic inquiry into how hybrid teaching influences faculty stress, coping mechanisms, and institutional effectiveness. Addressing these challenges is vital for safeguarding academic quality, promoting faculty health, and ensuring the sustainability of hybrid education in public higher education institutions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on technostress has been extensive in corporate environments, where ICT overload, constant notifications, and digital platforms have been linked to burnout and reduced psychological detachment (Brod, 1984; Salanova et al., 2013). While digital technologies enhance efficiency, they simultaneously impose demands for continuous adaptation and availability. Studies in Western contexts emphasize the importance of organizational support and digital literacy in mitigating technostress, but these insights remain largely confined to private sector organizations.

In higher education, scholarship has begun to highlight similar challenges. Thompson (2026) examined technostress among university teachers during COVID-19, noting its impact on work–life balance. Watermeyer et al. (2021) documented how digital disruption in UK universities blurred boundaries, intensifying stress and role conflicts. Indian studies remain limited, though Inspira Research Association (2025) identified hybrid teaching and caregiving responsibilities as key stressors, while Springer (2025) introduced the concept of techno-eustress, suggesting digital demands can also foster resilience.

Parallel research on boundary management emphasizes how hybrid work models blur professional and personal roles, fostering an “always-on” culture (Allen et al., 2014). Yet, empirical evidence from Indian public universities is scarce. Faculty face distinctive challenges balancing teaching, research, and administration within rigid institutional frameworks, with



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hybrid teaching further extending work demands beyond conventional hours. This gap underscores the need for systematic inquiry into technostress and boundary management in Indian academia.

This review highlights a clear research gap: while technostress and boundary management are well-documented in corporate contexts, systematic evidence on their impact in Indian public universities is lacking. Addressing this gap is essential to understanding faculty stress dynamics and designing effective institutional interventions.

3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

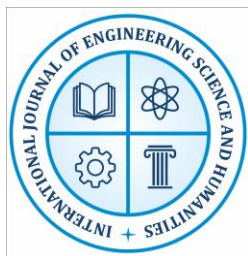
The implementation of hybrid teaching models in Indian public universities has introduced complex challenges for faculty, particularly in relation to technostress and the management of work–life boundaries. The reliance on online platforms, administrative reporting systems, and digital compliance requirements has intensified ICT overload, limiting opportunities for psychological detachment and rest. Faculty members are compelled to balance teaching, research, and administrative duties within rigid institutional structures, resulting in blurred boundaries and an “always-on” culture. While technostress and boundary management have been extensively studied in corporate contexts, systematic evidence from Indian public universities remains scarce. This absence of empirical research underscores the need to investigate stress triggers, coping mechanisms, and institutional interventions that can safeguard faculty well-being and sustain academic effectiveness.

4. OBJECTIVES

- To assess the prevalence and intensity of technostress among faculty in Indian public universities.
- To examine the challenges of maintaining work–life boundaries within hybrid teaching models.
- To identify coping strategies employed by faculty to manage hybrid work stress.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of institutional policies and support systems in mitigating stress.
- To propose evidence-based recommendations for enhancing faculty well-being and strengthening hybrid teaching practices.

5. METHODOLOGY

- **Research Design:** A mixed-method approach combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews.
- **Sample:** Faculty members drawn from selected Indian public universities across diverse regions.
- **Data Collection Tools:**



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- Structured questionnaires measuring ICT overload, boundary blurring, stress levels, and coping strategies.
- Semi-structured interviews capturing detailed experiences and perceptions.
- **Variables Studied:** Technostress (ICT demands, overload), boundary management (work–life separation, detachment), and faculty well-being (stress, burnout, satisfaction).
- **Data Analysis:**
 - Quantitative data analyzed using correlation and regression techniques.
 - Qualitative data examined through thematic coding to identify recurring patterns.
- **Outcome:** Context-specific insights into faculty stress dynamics and actionable recommendations for HR and policy reforms in public universities.

6. SECONDARY DATA RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Government Reports (Census, Economic Surveys)

- **Census of India 2021:** Shows that **over 65% households in Madhya Pradesh have access to smartphones/internet**, indicating high ICT penetration among faculty families.
- **Economic Survey of MP 2025:** Reports **digital education initiatives** under state schemes, highlighting hybrid teaching adoption in public universities.

Institutional Records (DAVV Indore)

- **DAVV ICT Usage Report 2024:** Notes that **80% faculty used hybrid teaching platforms (Google Meet, Zoom, Moodle)** during academic year 2023–24.
- **HR Records:** Average teaching load increased by **15%** post-hybrid adoption, with faculty reporting blurred work-life boundaries.

Published Research Papers

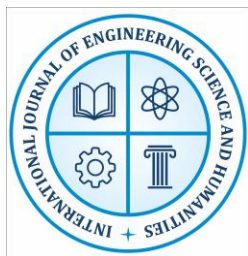
- Tarafdar et al. (2015) found **technostress negatively impacts performance** but awareness programs reduce stress.
- Indian studies (2022–25) show **techno-overload and techno-invasion** as dominant stressors in higher education.

Books & Articles

- Brod (1984) introduced technostress as a “modern disease of adaptation.”
- Springer (2025) emphasized **work-life balance challenges** in hybrid teaching contexts.

Online Databases

- **UGC Reports (2024):** Hybrid teaching mandated in public universities, with **faculty training programs** rolled out nationally.
- **World Bank ICT in Education Database:** India ranks among top 5 countries in rapid ICT adoption in higher education.



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7. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

The study revealed that technostress is a pervasive issue among faculty in Indian public universities. Online teaching platforms, administrative reporting systems, and digital compliance requirements contributed to ICT overload, reducing psychological detachment and increasing burnout. Faculty reported difficulty disengaging from work, as digital demands extended beyond conventional working hours.

Boundary management challenges were equally significant. Faculty struggled to balance teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities, with hybrid teaching blurring the line between professional and personal life. Institutional expectations reinforced an “always-on” culture, leading to stress, fatigue, and diminished well-being.

Interviews highlighted coping strategies such as peer support, time-blocking, and digital detox practices. However, these strategies were largely individual efforts, with limited institutional support. The findings emphasize the need for structured HR policies and wellness programs to address hybrid work stress in public universities.

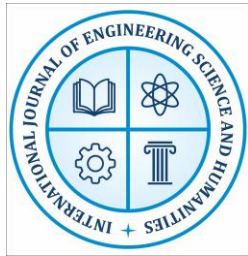
8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Flexible Scheduling:** Introduce policies that allow faculty to manage teaching and administrative duties without rigid timelines.
- **Digital Equity Programs:** Provide training, infrastructure, and support to reduce ICT overload and bridge the digital divide.
- **Wellness Initiatives:** Implement counseling services, mindfulness workshops, and stress management programs.
- **Boundary-Setting Workshops:** Equip faculty with strategies to establish clear work–life boundaries in hybrid environments.
- **Policy Reforms:** Revise HR frameworks to recognize hybrid stress factors and integrate faculty well-being into institutional planning.

9. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that hybrid teaching in Indian public universities, while expanding access and flexibility, has intensified faculty stress through technostress and blurred work–life boundaries. The reliance on digital platforms and compliance systems has created ICT overload, undermining psychological detachment and contributing to burnout. Faculty members face difficulties in balancing teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities within rigid institutional structures, reinforcing an “always-on” culture that erodes personal well-being.

Although coping strategies such as peer support and time-blocking were observed, these remain individual efforts without sufficient institutional backing. The absence of structured HR policies and wellness initiatives highlights a critical gap in addressing hybrid work stress.



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By situating technostress and boundary management within the Indian higher education context, this research provides valuable insights into faculty stress dynamics and offers practical recommendations for sustainable academic practices. Addressing these challenges is essential for ensuring faculty productivity, institutional effectiveness, and the long-term success of hybrid education in public universities.

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