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Burnout in hybrid work arrangements: unpacking the role of technostress, psychological detachment, and organisational supports

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Abstract

Purpose – Since the lifting of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, the hybrid work arrangement has become widespread globally, yet its impact on employee well-being remains unclear. We argue that the combination of stressful interactions with information and communication technology (ICT) when working remotely and onsite inhibits hybrid workers from psychologically detaching from work, which ultimately has a negative impact on their well-being in the form of burnout. In addition, we consider what organisational supports (i.e. hybrid work location autonomy, workplace social support) are effective in buffering the negative impact of hybrid work technostress.

Design/methodology/approach – Integrating the theoretical perspectives of technostress with the stressor-detachment model, this study develops and empirically tests the pathways which explain how and when the specific technostress experienced by hybrid workers is associated with burnout. We tested our model with survey data collected from 405 full-time hybrid workers.

Findings – Our findings indicate that hybrid workers' impaired psychological detachment mediates the relationship between technostress and burnout, but this effect is evident only in remote work settings. Moreover, greater hybrid work location autonomy buffers the negative effect of technostress on psychological detachment when working remotely but no effect was found for workplace social support.

Originality/value – The downside of hybrid work arrangements on worker well-being has rarely been examined in prior research. Applying the technostress lens to hybrid work enables our study to reveal more nuanced relationships between the demands of ICT and the well-being of hybrid workers, where we find evidence of the distinction between in-office and remote technostress.

Keywords Hybrid work, Well-being, Technostress, Psychological detachment, Burnout, Stressor-detachment model

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1. Introduction

Klara, an account manager for a London based firm, was delighted when her manager offered her a hybrid working option. The arrangement allowed her to work remotely two days per week and attend

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> the office in-person on the remaining three days. Klara felt this flexibility would give her the best of both worlds – social interaction in the office and focused work at home. As long as she had her laptop and access to the Internet, remote work would pose her few difficulties. However, after a few months of hybrid work, Klara was burnt out. Reflecting on her experiences, Klara explained that hybrid work involves a lot of "... planning and a stop-start routine: taking my laptop to and from the office every day, and remembering what important things I've left where ... [i]t's the psychological shift – the change of setting every day – that's so tiring; this constant feeling of never being settled, stressed and my productive home working always being disrupted." (Christian, 2022).

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and advances in information and communication technology (ICT), many organisations have adopted hybrid as the default work arrangement (Haas, 2022). In this paper, we define hybrid work as a work location arrangement characterised by a weekly blend of working both from the employer's office and remotely. For most employees, this means working 2–3 days a week from home or other off-site locations, with the remaining workdays spent in-person in the office. The current mass adoption of hybrid working arrangements post-COVID represents a radical alteration to the nature of work and also fundamentally changes the way people live (Vyas, 2022). Yet, the adoption of hybrid work is taking place despite not much being known about the impact this new work arrangement has on the well-being of employees. The potential well-being benefits of hybrid work are widely touted, such as less stress from the day-to-day demands of the office and reducing the commute to work (Charalampous *et al.*, 2018; Hughes and Donnelly, 2024; McPhail *et al.*, 2023). However, some workers struggle with the challenges presented by hybrid work arrangements (Chu and Chou, 2024). The drawbacks of remote work have received much attention in the literature, informed mostly by studies of fully remote work arrangements, but hybrid is a different work arrangement which has received limited empirical attention, perhaps due to the recency of its widespread adoption. As our opening vignette indicates, some workers struggle with the challenges presented by hybrid work arrangements.

As hybrid working is becoming the new normal in the post-pandemic workplace (Knight *et al.*, 2022), it is important for organisational leaders to recognise the unique well-being challenges posed by hybrid work, and what organisational supports can help prevent deleterious well-being outcomes emerging. Transitioning between a central and remote work location entails both physical and cognitive adjustments in how employees perform their tasks, which can influence their overall well-being (Sardeshmukh *et al.*, 2012). At present, our understanding of why some employees struggle when working in a hybrid manner is limited as prior studies have not considered the heavy reliance hybrid workers have on ICT to perform their job and the problems generated by that reliance. As there is less opportunity for face-to-face discussions, hybrid workers are more reliant on video conferencing, instant messaging and email to stay connected with their colleagues. We argue that stressful interactions with ICT, known as technostress (Ayyagari *et al.*, 2011; Ragu-Nathan *et al.*, 2008; Tarafdar *et al.*, 2010), when working remotely and in the office play a role in preventing hybrid workers from psychologically detaching from work. As advocated in the stressor-detachment model (SDM; Sonnentag and Fritz, 2015), the inability to detach from work leads to well-being issues such as burnout. While some studies have examined technostress in flexible work arrangement like gig work (Umair *et al.*, 2023) and telework (Suh and Lee, 2017), much of our knowledge of work-related technostress is largely based on fully onsite or remote workers, which does not directly translate to hybrid work arrangements. Technostress experiences for hybrid workers are likely to differ from those of fully remote workers. Hybrid work involves switching between home and office setups, which can lead to technostress due to syncing issues, configuration mismatches and the need to manage multiple devices, network settings and login procedures. Such technostresses would not be salient for fully remote workers.

We specifically focus on detachment and burnout as recent research suggests these problems are more prominent for hybrid workers when compared to remote and fully onsite workers (Stasiła-Sieradzka *et al.*, 2023). To develop our arguments, we integrate the SDM (Sonnentag and Fritz, 2015) with technostress theory (Ayyagari *et al.*, 2011; Ragu-Nathan

et al., 2008; Tarafdar *et al.*, 2007). Our study addresses two research questions: (1) Does the inability to psychologically detach from work mediate the relationship between technostress and burnout for hybrid workers and (2) How do hybrid work location autonomy and workplace social support moderate the impact of technostress on psychological detachment in hybrid work contexts?

Our study makes three contributions to scholarly knowledge. First, addressing recent calls to consider the demands of ICT on specific job designs (Zinke *et al.*, 2024), this study will advance our understanding by theorising and empirically testing how burnout emerges in hybrid job arrangements. Second, we extend the SDM by investigating how workers' ability to psychologically detach from work varies depending on their stressful interaction with ICT, and not just on the additional amount of work attributed to ICT. Third, our study will also reveal what organisational supports are effective in attenuating the effects of technostress among hybrid workers. From a practical point of view, our study will inform workers and organisations about how to better manage the dark side of hybrid work arrangements, enabling them to understand how to ameliorate technostress unique to hybrid workers.

2. Literature review

2.1 Hybrid work

Hybrid work is a weekly flexible arrangement that allows employees to combine working in the physical office (onsite) with remote working from a non-employer location such as home, co-working hub or a café (Sampat *et al.*, 2022). Recent opinion surveys suggest that the majority of white-collar workers prefer a hybrid work arrangement (Gartner, 2023; McCarthy, 2022) with employers now accepting this new work arrangement (CIPD, 2023). Yet, the surge in interest in flexible work arrangements has created a problem for researchers; there are numerous conceptualisations and definitions which are often misused and threaten to dilute our understanding of specific work arrangements (Lamovšek and Černe, 2023). To help ensure we make a meaningful contribution to the field, we differentiate hybrid work from other flexible work arrangements.

Our conceptualisation of hybrid work differs from other work arrangements – such as telework, virtual work, work from home or remote work – which may not necessarily involve the weekly combination of in-office with remote work. Telework, for example, is a more flexible work arrangement where workers have the freedom to work completely from a remote location, or work sometimes from a central office (Lamovšek and Černe, 2023; Meier *et al.*, 2024). Thus, telework as defined in the literature may not involve the weekly combination of onsite and remote work.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to an exponential increase in research on remote working, but little of this has considered hybrid working specifically (McPhail *et al.*, 2023; Shao *et al.*, 2021). Some of the hybrid working studies that have been conducted suggest the flexible work model can be beneficial for employee well-being but may also generate new challenges. Studies focusing on hybrid workers both before and after the pandemic report positive associations with job satisfaction (Chatterjee *et al.*, 2022) and reduced stress (Mann *et al.*, 2000), but also note that the extent of hybrid working is linked to negative outcomes such as loneliness (Knight *et al.*, 2022; Toscano *et al.*, 2025), burnout (Vander Elst *et al.*, 2017) and work disengagement (Toscano *et al.*, 2025). However, the relevance of earlier findings to today's widespread adoption of the hybrid arrangement is constrained by the overreliance on samples from fully remote rather than hybrid work arrangements (Beckel and Fisher, 2022). For example, in the Van Zoonen and Sivunen (2022) study relating remote work practices to isolation and psychological distress, the majority of workers sampled (77%) worked remotely five days per week. Empirical studies of full-time employees who spend 2–3 days per week working remotely are rare.

What hybrid and remote workers have in common is a reliance on ICT to perform their work duties. Indeed, the lockdown measures mandated during the COVID-19 pandemic

accelerated the organisational adoption of technology-enabled remote work. Recent studies suggest this digital reliance leads to an inability to switch off from work as the laptop or smartphone is always close by (Knight *et al.*, 2022). Yet, one scoping review of the post-pandemic literature revealed that such associations are data-driven and anecdotal rather than theory-driven (McPhail *et al.*, 2023). The difficulties in detaching from work may be more pronounced for hybrid workers due to the constant switching and blurring between the office and home domains. To provide the theoretical arguments linking ICT use to psychological detachment and well-being for hybrid workers, we now turn to the SDM.

2.2 Stressor-detachment model

It is well established in the organisational psychology literature and related fields that employees who face stressful work situations tend to suffer well-being problems such as burnout (Sonnentag and Fritz, 2015), fatigue (Sonnentag and Bayer, 2005) and depression (Kiuchi *et al.*, 2023). Proposed by Sonnentag *et al*. (2010), the SDM seeks to explain how work-related stressors lead to compromised well-being by way of psychological detachment (henceforth referred to as detachment). In the organisational context, detachment refers to mentally distancing oneself from work-related thoughts during non-work time such as evenings, weekends and vacations (Sonnentag and Kruel, 2006). The SDM advocates that work-related stressors hamper detachment during non-work time. This stems from work-related stressors increasing negative activation, a state from which it becomes more difficult to detach from work-related thoughts. In turn, the inability to detach from work impedes recovery and adversely affects well-being (Sonnentag and Bayer, 2005; Sonnentag and Fritz, 2015).

The SDM is a useful theoretical lens for the current study as it provides a parsimonious and structured mechanism to explain how detachment associates work stressors with well-being. Recognising that the associations between the model's core constructs may differ between individuals and situations, the extended SDM (Sonnentag and Fritz, 2015) advocates that certain factors can buffer the effects of job stressors on detachment, and also detachment on well-being challenges such as burnout (see Figure 1). For example, workers experiencing threat emotions in the morning are less likely to detach after work, but this negative relationship is moderated by perceptions of job control (Michel *et al.*, 2016). Similarly, in one of the few studies integrating ICT demands with the SDM, feeling pressurised to respond to

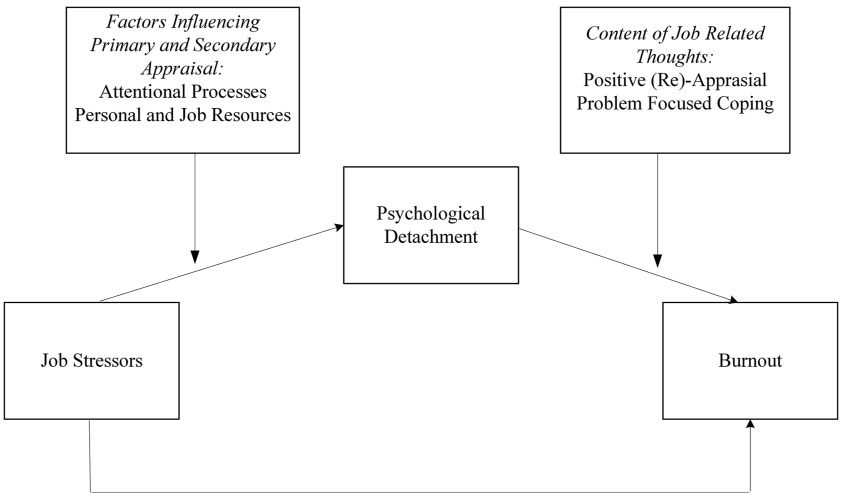

Figure 1. The extended stressor-detachment model. Adapted from Sonnentag and Fritz (2015)

work-related ICT messages enhances the effect of ICT workload on emotional exhaustion through the detachment process (Zinke *et al.*, 2024). Following this theoretical perspective, we investigate the buffering role of two organisational factors and argue that hybrid work location autonomy and workplace social support mitigate the effects of hybrid working technostress on detachment. We select these specific organisational supports because at a theoretical level, relevant literature (e.g. Derks *et al.*, 2014; Schulz *et al.*, 2019; Sonnentag and Fritz, 2015) suggests similar supports interact with job stressors to affect detachment. Additionally, at a practical level, it is possible for organisations to allocate resources to directly enhance the provision of these supports to hybrid workers.

Few studies have considered the role of ICT within the SDM (Mäntymäki *et al.*, 2022). Those SDM studies which have incorporated ICT conceptualise work-related ICT use as a stressor, typically measured as the amount of time spent using various digital applications (Eichberger *et al.*, 2021; Park *et al.*, 2011), or the additional workload attributed to ICT (Zinke *et al.*, 2024). This conceptualisation is somewhat flawed, as it assumes that increased ICT use directly correlates with higher stress levels. However, this is not necessarily the case. For instance, interacting with a user-friendly ICT system for an hour may cause minimal stress, whereas just five minutes with a poorly designed system can be highly stressful. What truly matters is not the duration of ICT use, but the nature of the interaction and the stress it induces. To gain a more nuanced understanding of how ICT use contributes to stress among hybrid workers, we now turn to insights from the technostress literature.

2.3 Technostress

Technostress is defined as the stress experienced when people engage with ICT (Ayyagari *et al.*, 2011; Stich *et al.*, 2017). An ICT system crashing mid-task is one example of technostress, an event which has been shown to generate significant biological stress in the user (Riedl, 2013).

Recent studies confirm that technostress is a salient factor in the lives of employees with flexible work location arrangements. For fully remote workers, perceptions of techno-overload and techno-invasion have been found to enhance work-to-family stress (Becker and Lanzl, 2023) and adversely affect perceived performance (Banerjee and Gupta, 2024). However, the magnitude of the technostress experienced is influenced by segmentation preferences (i.e. low or strong separations between work and family lives) (Becker and Lanzl, 2023). In a similar vein, ICT-induced work stress is associated with decreased satisfaction with telework and lower perceived job performance (Camacho and Barrios, 2022). While the emerging literature highlights the negative effects of technostress in flexible work arrangements, there is also evidence to suggest these effects can be offset to some degree (Suh and Lee, 2017).

To enhance our understanding of the effects of technostress on hybrid workers, we focus on two pertinent technostressors which have not been examined in prior studies of flexible work arrangements. These are the *ICT complexity* and *ICT unreliability* experienced while working remotely and in the office. *ICT complexity* is defined as the degree to which ICT systems require significant time and effort to learn and use effectively (Ayyagari *et al.*, 2011). To enable their workforce to operate in a hybrid manner, many organisations have invested in new ICT systems, such as virtual desktop infrastructures and collaborative workspaces. The upskilling required to use the functionality and understand the jargon brought about by such new ICT can be stressful for many employees. Switching between home and office setups can require different configurations or use of additional or different tools, increasing cognitive load. Additionally, to safeguard sensitive organisational data as employees move between locations, many ICT systems incorporate extra layers of cybersecurity. While essential, these measures can make systems more cumbersome to use, potentially increasing stress for hybrid workers. *ICT unreliability*, defined as the degree to which features and capabilities provided by the technology are dependable (Ayyagari *et al.*, 2011), poses a significant challenge for hybrid

workers. Remote networks and devices are often less stable or secure than office setups. As hybrid workers rely heavily on digital tools for communication and collaboration, any failure of these systems can be a significant stressor. As an example in the context of hybrid work, an employee may become frustrated with poor Wi-Fi connection when working remotely.

We conceptualise remote technostress as the combination of ICT complexity and unreliability experienced by the hybrid worker when working remotely. Similarly, in-office technostress represents the combination of ICT complexity and unreliability experienced by the hybrid worker when working from the central office. While remote and in-office technostress share similarities, we treat them as separate constructs in this study. We do so as studies of general stress (Saxbe and Repetti, 2010) and technostress (Wang *et al.*, 2008) emphasise how a person's surroundings can affect perceptions of stress, even though the stressor is the same. For example, when working remotely, workers often face unreliable Internet connection, limited tech support and blurred boundaries between work and personal life, amplifying stress. In the office environment, workers may face more work-related ICT interruptions, time pressures and have less flexibility in customising tools or workflows, making it harder to adapt to or mitigate the stress resulting from ICT complexity and unreliability. Even where the ICT tools may be similar when working in-office and remotely, the context alters how technostress is perceived. To the best of our knowledge, no study has directly compared technostress experienced in-office and when working remotely.

3. Research model and hypotheses

As evident in the SDM literature, there are many job stressors relevant to hybrid workers. In this study, we focus on technostress as one type of job stressor pertinent to hybrid workers. Integrating the technostress perspective (Ayyagari *et al.*, 2011) with the SDM (Sonnentag and Fritz, 2015), our research model (Figure 2) conceptualises remote and in-office technostress as key job stressors for hybrid workers which predict burnout directly and by way of detachment.

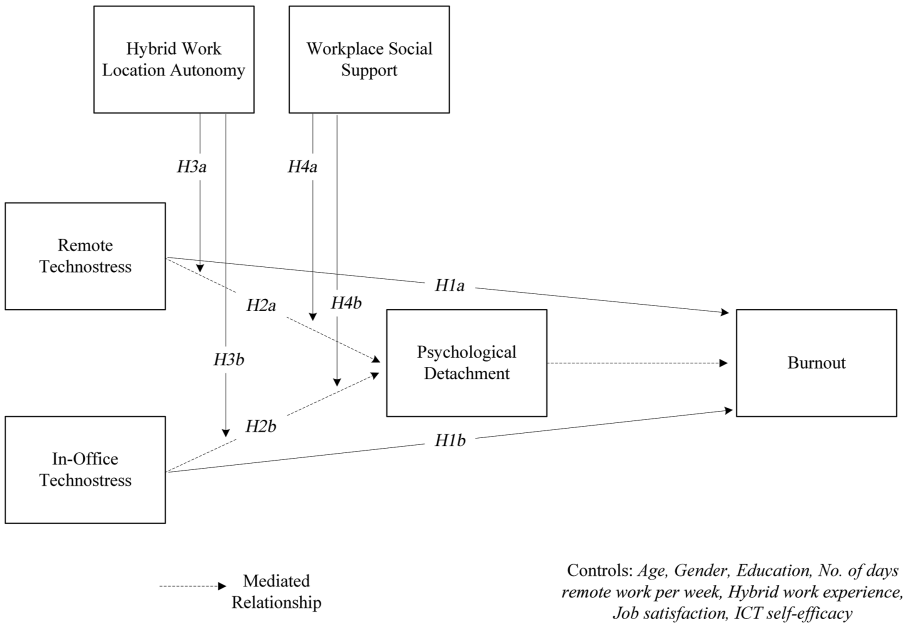

Figure 2. The research model. Authors' own work

The model further suggests that the relationship between hybrid working technostress and detachment is moderated by the flexibility afforded to work outside of the traditional office environment (i.e. hybrid work location autonomy) and social support received from work colleagues. We now argue our direct, mediation and moderation hypotheses.

3.1 Hybrid work technostress and burnout

The nature of hybrid work necessitates a heavy reliance on ICT for the employee. When this technology does not perform as expected, hybrid workers are left feeling frustrated (Trapp, 2024). As evidenced in many empirical studies, workers' perceptions of stressful interactions with ICT are linked to psychological reactions including burnout (Califf *et al.*, 2020; Pfaffinger *et al.*, 2022; Tarafdar *et al.*, 2011). Due to their dual workplace arrangements (i.e. onsite and remote), we argue that hybrid workers will experience technostressors differently than other ICT dependent workers. For example, a hybrid worker may have more leeway to setup their work devices to their preference when operating offsite (e.g. using speakers instead of earphones), but feel restricted when a similar set-up cannot be accommodated onsite (e.g. having to use earphones instead of speakers). Similarly, centralised ICT support may solve a hybrid worker's technical problems fairly quickly when onsite due to ease of accessibility. The onsite support sets certain expectations for the worker who may be left frustrated when a similar level of support cannot be provided on days they work remotely. Burnout is defined as a state of prolonged physical and psychological exhaustion (Kristensen *et al.*, 2005). Building on prior empirical evidence linking technostress to burnout, we argue that the technostress hybrid workers experience when working remotely and in-office directly enhances burnout. Accordingly, we hypothesise:

H1a. Remote technostress is positively related to burnout.

H1b. In-office technostress is positively related to burnout.

3.2 The mediating role of psychological detachment

The basic SDM (Sonnentag *et al.*, 2010) assumes a mediating role of detachment in the relationship between job stressors and well-being. Job stressors deplete personal resources which manifests as increased strain and reduced well-being. A meta-analysis of 86 SDM publications confirmed that job stressors tend to be negatively correlated with detachment, which in turn positively correlates with lower exhaustion and higher well-being (Wendsche and Lohmann-Haislah, 2017). In the present study, we argue that technostress experienced by hybrid workers is a specific instance of job stress which follows the pathway to well-being advocated by the SDM (i.e. the effect of hybrid work technostress on burnout is mediated by detachment). Supporting our mediation argument, recent studies suggest lack of detachment explains why ICT issues such as ICT workload and telepressure (i.e. the stress of being responsive to people at work through message-based ICT) are associated with lower well-being outcomes (Barber *et al.*, 2019; Pfaffinger *et al.*, 2022; Zinke *et al.*, 2024). Therefore, we expect the following:

H2a. The positive relationship between remote technostress and burnout is mediated by psychological detachment.

H2b. The positive relationship between in-office technostress and burnout is mediated by psychological detachment.

3.3 The moderating role of hybrid work location autonomy and workplace social support

An extensive body of literature has established a direct relationship between work-related stressors and lack of psychological detachment from work (Wendsche and Lohmann-Haislah,

2017; Xie *et al.*, 2024; Zinke *et al.*, 2024). However, as advocated by the extended SDM (Sonnentag and Fritz, 2015), this relationship is not uniform across individuals, as various boundary conditions may moderate its strength and direction. Here we argue that two organisational supports pertinent to hybrid workers dampen the effect of technostress on detachment. Hybrid work location autonomy means an employee has the ability to be the primary decision-maker of when (i.e. what days of the week) they work outside of the traditional office environment. Emanating from the mandated work-from-home experiences during the pandemic, many employees now want/expect the autonomy to determine the specific days they work in-office and remotely (McCarthy, 2022). A meta-analysis of the work autonomy literature confirms the benefits to workers: greater job satisfaction, commitment and motivation, and low levels of stress, physical sickness and absenteeism (Spector, 1986). Work autonomy can also be characterised as a personal resource which enhances the capacity of workers to cope with job demands (Clausen *et al.*, 2022) because it increases an employee's sense of control (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). Autonomy is particularly important when workers are reliant on ICT to perform their job (Suh and Lee, 2017). In practical terms, if a hybrid worker has the autonomy to match ICT work tasks with the appropriate work location, potential technostressors can be averted. For example, a task requiring high network bandwidth (e.g. uploading large files) may best be performed using the main office network, while a home office may be more suited to a task requiring quietness (e.g. recording a video). Therefore, we expect the following:

H3a. The negative relationship between remote technostress and psychological detachment is moderated by hybrid work location autonomy, such that the relationship is weaker for those who perceive hybrid work location autonomy to be higher.

H3b. The negative relationship between in-office technostress and psychological detachment is moderated by hybrid work location autonomy, such that the relationship is weaker for those who perceive hybrid work location autonomy to be higher.

The extended SDM proposes that the negative effects of job stressors on detachment are moderated by resources perceived to help ameliorate those stressors (Sonnentag and Fritz, 2015). Workplace social support is potentially one such resource and is defined as the degree to which individuals perceive their well-being and contributions are supported and appreciated by workplace sources (Eisenberger *et al.*, 2002). Social support is recognised as a critical job resource that positively supports role demands (Kossek *et al.*, 2011). This is important for hybrid workers as emerging research shows that working away from the main office is associated with social isolation (Knight *et al.*, 2022; Mann and Holdsworth, 2003) and lower team connectedness (Shi *et al.*, 2024). Workers are more likely to detach from job stressors when they are confident they can rely on the support of work colleagues when needed (Sonnentag and Fritz, 2015). An example of workplace social support is a co-worker expressing concern or providing assistance to a worker facing a stressful work situation, with the intention of enhancing the worker's well-being. In the context of hybrid work, this could materialise as assistance in overcoming a problem with the functionality of a collaborative virtual workspace. Accordingly, we hypothesise:

H4a. The negative relationship between remote technostress and psychological detachment is moderated by workplace social support, such that the relationship is weaker for those who perceive workplace social support to be higher.

H4b. The negative relationship between in-office technostress and psychological detachment is moderated by workplace social support, such that the relationship is weaker for those who perceive workplace social support to be higher.

4. Methods

4.1 Participants and procedures

Participants were recruited from the Prolific crowdsourcing platform and completed an online survey during July and August 2024. Prolific is designed for academic research and has been independently found to provide higher quality data than other online panels used for behavioural research (Peer *et al.*, 2022). The pool of respondents was pre-screened to specifically target full-time hybrid workers, who relied on ICT for at least 50% of their job, and spoke English as their primary language. The survey also included an initial filter question where participants had to confirm they were hybrid workers as defined in this study (i.e. their typical workweek is blend of working both from the employer's office and remotely), and then select how many days per week they typically worked remotely and in-office. Participants were informed of any potential risks of participation and had to provide consent to participate in the study. The study received ethical clearance from the authors' institutional research board.

Of the total 494 initial responses, 71 were incomplete, resulting in unusable data that was discarded. Another 14 responses were discarded as they incorrectly answered attention check questions included in the survey. A further 4 responses were removed as they displayed evidence of straight lining. After this data cleaning process, the sample consisted of 405 participants. We used the G-power sampling size information (Faul *et al.*, 2009) to determine if the sample size of 405 is adequate. Since our model has four predictors, using G-power with an effect size of 0.05, alpha of 0.05 and a power of 0.95, the minimum sample size needed was 377. Thus, we can conclude that the sample size of 405 surpasses this minimum requirement, ensuring sufficient statistical power and confidence in the reliability of our findings. Of the sample of 405 hybrid workers, the majority were women ($n = 211$, 52%), were between 21 and 63 years old ($M = 38$, $SD = 10$), live in the United Kingdom ($n = 215$, 53%) or United States ($n = 120$, 30%), and most likely worked in the computing/IT ($n = 126$, 31%) or education sectors ($n = 97$, 24%). Most of these participants had completed a bachelor's degree education ($n = 243$, 60%), and worked an average of 3 days remotely and 2 days onsite per week.

4.2 Measures

As detailed in Appendix 2, all survey items are taken from validated scales and measured using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Each item began with the prompt "*When working remotely . . .*" when participants were required to assess experiences of remote technostress, and the prompt "*When working in the office . . .*" when experiences of in-office technostress were required. Remote technostress and in-office technostress are second-order constructs comprising of ICT complexity and ICT unreliability experienced when working remotely and in-office respectively. For controls, we included age, gender, education, number of remote working days per week and job satisfaction. We also include ICT self-efficacy as a control as prior research suggests an individual's expertise in using ICT explains variances in technostress experiences (Tarafdar *et al.*, 2015).

4.3 Data analysis

To test the research model, we conducted structural equation modelling (SEM) using the partial least squares (PLS) method and Smart-PLS 4.1 (Ringle *et al.*, 2024). PLS, a second-generation regression technique, integrates confirmatory factor analysis with linear regression, allowing for simultaneous execution of measurement and structural models. This approach enables researchers to estimate intricate models encompassing numerous constructs, indicator variables and structural paths without assuming specific data distributions (Hair *et al.*, 2011). Aligning with the goals of the present study, PLS is an appropriate method to use when the study's objectives involve assessing the validity of a research model and examining hypothesised relationships within that model (Hair *et al.*, 2017). In SEM analyses, it is advisable to adopt a two-stage approach, initially scrutinising the

measurement model followed by the examination of the structural model (Henseler *et al.*, 2015). The measurement model is presented in Appendix 1 and the structural model below. In addition, we conducted an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) in SPSS to confirm the distinction between remote and in-office technostress. As shown in the rotated component matrix in Appendix 3, all remote technostress items loaded onto one factor, while all in-office technostress items loaded onto a different factor.

4.3.1 Assessing the structural model. The hypotheses were tested using a bootstrapping procedure with the number of subsamples set to 5,000 (Hair *et al.*, 2017). Table 1 provides a summary of the hypotheses testing results. The results show that remote technostress ($\beta = 0.14$, $t = 2.33$, $p < 0.05$) and in-office technostress ($\beta = 0.15$, $t = 2.09$, $p < 0.05$) are both significant direct predictors of burnout. Therefore, H1a and H1b are supported. H2a suggests that the positive relationship between remote technostress and burnout are mediated by detachment. This mediated effect is supported ($\beta = 0.05$, $t = 2.74$, $p < 0.05$). However, H2b is not supported as the indirect relationship between in-office technostress and burnout through detachment is not significant ($\beta = -0.01$, $t = 0.47$, $p > 0.05$). Supporting H3a, the negative relationship between remote technostress and psychological detachment is moderated by hybrid work location autonomy ($\beta = 0.09$, $t = 1.99$, $p < 0.05$). As depicted in Figure 3, greater hybrid work location autonomy dampens the negative effect of remote technostress on detachment. Hybrid work location autonomy has no significant interaction on the relationship between in-office technostress and detachment ($\beta = -0.10$, $t = 1.94$, $p > 0.05$) thus H3b is not supported. H4a and H4b suggest that workplace social support would buffer the negative relationship between both remote and in-office technostress and detachment. Both hypotheses are not significant and are rejected (H4a: $\beta = -0.07$, $t = 1.05$, $p > 0.05$; H4b: $\beta = 0.08$, $t = 1.23$, $p > 0.05$).

Overall, in terms of R^2 values, the model explains 25% of the variance in burnout and 10% of the variance in detachment. Falk and Miller (1992) suggested that R^2 values should be 10%

Table 1. Confirmation of hypotheses

H#	Path	β	t-value	*p*-value	95% CI lower	95% CI upper	Supported
H1a	Remote Technostress → Burnout	0.14	2.33	0.02	0.02	0.25	Yes
H1b	In-Office Technostress → Burnout	0.15	2.09	0.04	0.01	0.28	Yes
H2a	Remote Technostress → Psychological Detachment → Burnout	0.05	2.74	0.01	0.02	0.08	Yes
H2b	In-Office Technostress → Psychological Detachment → Burnout	−0.01	0.47	0.63	−0.04	0.01	No
H3a	Moderating Effect of Hybrid Work Location Autonomy on the relationship between Remote Technostress → Psychological Detachment	0.09	1.99	0.047	0.01	0.17	Yes
H3b	Moderating Effect of Hybrid Work Location Autonomy on the relationship between In-Office Technostress → Psychological Detachment	−0.10	1.94	0.56	−0.20	0.01	No
H4a	Moderating Effect of Workplace Social Support on the relationship between Remote Technostress → Psychological Detachment	−0.07	1.05	0.29	−0.22	0.06	No
H4b	Moderating Effect of Workplace Social Support on the relationship between In-Office Technostress → Psychological Detachment	0.08	1.23	0.22	−0.05	0.22	No

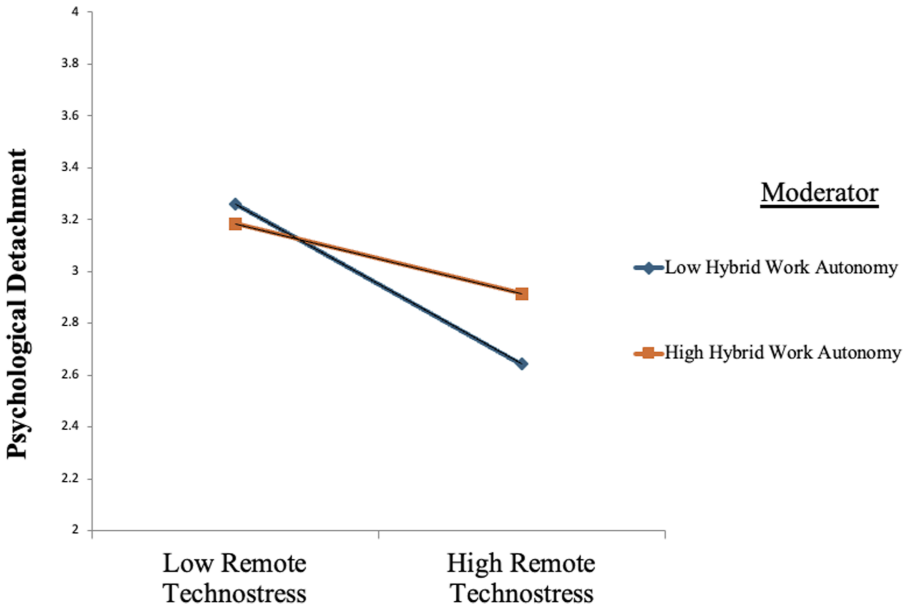

Figure 3. The moderating effect of hybrid work location autonomy on the negative relationship between remote technostress and psychological detachment. Authors' own work

or higher to be considered acceptable. Thus, the variance explained by the model is adequate. These R^2 values suggest technostress plays a relevant but small role in inhibiting hybrid workers detaching from work. Other job stressors evident in the stressor detachment literature, such as workload, work–family boundaries and role ambiguity, may explain more of the variance in psychological detachment for hybrid workers. We also examined $Q^2_{prediction}$ to assess predictive relevance of latent variables in our model. The $Q^2_{prediction}$ values for burnout and detachment were 0.11 and 0.01 respectively, all greater than 0, thus validating the explanatory and predictive capabilities of the model. Of the significant relationships involving control variables, age, education, and job satisfaction are negatively related to burnout, while ICT self-efficacy is negatively related to both in-office and remote technostress.

4.3.2 Supplemental analysis. Using the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2022) in SPSS, we tested for moderated mediational effects, specifically whether the mediating effect of detachment on the relationship between remote technostress and burnout was conditional on the level of hybrid work location autonomy. This moderated mediation model is not supported ($\beta = -0.06$, 95% CI [−0.02, 0.01]). Thus, the mediating effects of detachment are not significantly different for those workers experiencing high or low hybrid work location autonomy.

5. Discussion

As a consequence of the COVID pandemic, the hybrid work arrangement has become widely adopted globally. However, we have a limited understanding of the well-being implications connected with the rapid mass adoption of this relatively new model of work now pervasive in some sectors. Applying the theoretical lens of the SDM (Sonnentag and Bayer, 2005; Sonnentag and Fritz, 2015), our study shows that technostress experienced by hybrid workers when working remotely and in-office is positively related to burnout, but only the relationship between remote technostress and burnout is explained by an inability to psychologically

detach from work. In terms of organisational supports, hybrid work location autonomy dampens the negative relationship between remote technostress and detachment. However, workplace social support does not attenuate the effect of technostress on detachment for hybrid workers. Aligning to our two research questions, we now discuss the implications of these findings below.

5.1 Contribution to research

In addressing our first research question, our study advances previous research in two ways. First, our work extends the literature on flexible work arrangements. Very little theory-driven research exists linking the ICT demands of hybrid work to well-being outcomes. Theory-driven research is important to describe not only *what* is happening but also explain *why* it is happening. This is critical for addressing the deleterious outcomes associated with hybrid work, rather than just observing it. While some prior studies have examined technostress in gig economy work (Cram *et al.*, 2022; Umair *et al.*, 2023) and fully remote work settings (Khedhaouria *et al.*, 2024), these findings may not be directly applicable to the hybrid work arrangement as hybrid represents a different job design. Hybrid workers transition between work locations on a weekly basis which exposes them to unique technostress experiences. As such, our study addresses recent calls to investigate the demands of ICT on specific job designs (Zinke *et al.*, 2024). Even though the hybrid arrangement is different to other work settings where the technostress–well-being relationship has been examined, our findings are consistent with prior reports showing that higher technostress leads to higher worker burnout (Califf *et al.*, 2020; Pfaffinger *et al.*, 2022; Tarafdar *et al.*, 2011). However, our study also finds that technostress is directly associated with an inability to detach from work, but only when hybrid workers operate remotely. Yet, the level of technostress reported by hybrid workers is actually less in remote settings compared to the office. This suggests that in flexible work arrangements, issues beyond technostress, such as the blurring of work and life boundaries, are a particular issue when working remotely, preventing a psychological detachment from work.

Second, our study contributes to organisational stress and technostress literatures. Specifically, our work broadens the SDM by demonstrating that ICT-related stress is not limited to the amount of time workers engage with ICT, or the frequency with which they experienced workload due to ICT, but also manifests through challenging experiences workers have when interacting with ICT. Our study suggests that when working remotely, hybrid workers are less able to detach from work due to the complexity and unreliability of the ICT they use, even if the time they spend using the technology and the workload associated with that use is low. Thus, prior studies which examine ICT stress as an input into the SDM (Derks *et al.*, 2014; Eichberger *et al.*, 2021; Zinke *et al.*, 2024) are incomplete as they equate ICT stress with time and workload, without appreciating that the frustrating experiences workers have when engaging with ICT is a salient stressor. Interestingly, detachment did not mediate the relationship between in-office technostress and burnout. Indeed, in-office technostress was not associated with psychological detachment. These findings indicate that technostress is not static but fluid and context dependent. This represents a contribution to the technostress literature which has here-to-now only intimated the importance of context in perceptions of technostress (Wang *et al.*, 2008). The benefits associated with the commute between the office and home offers one possible explanation for the unsupported relationship between technostress and detachment. The evening time commute provides the employee with the opportunity to disengage from their work role and related frustrations such as in-office technostress. Supporting this explanation, one recent longitudinal study finds that the evening commute from work acts as a crucial recovery experience leading to enhanced subjective vitality in the home domain (Rivkin *et al.*, 2024). We recommend that future research undertake a daily diary study of hybrid workers to determine if and how a commute from work to home helps to alleviate technostress.

In addressing our second research question, this study adds to the worker autonomy literature (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Clausen *et al.*, 2022; Spector, 1986). Specifically, we show that

when hybrid workers have greater autonomy to work away from the traditional office environment, the negative effects of remote technostress on detachment is diluted. This is discussed further as a practical implication of our study below. However, our hypothesis that hybrid work location autonomy would moderate the effects of in-office technostress on detachment was not supported. To explain this unsupported relationship, we explored our data further. An ANOVA test revealed that hybrid workers in our sample experience significantly higher technostress when in the office compared to when they work from a remote location (mean of 2.27 vs 2.01, $p < 0.001$). This finding also supports our initial decision to treat in-office and remote technostress as separate constructs. Not only is in-office technostress stronger than its remote version, how it manifests may also be different. For example, central ICT architectures are synonymous with rigidity (Gritt *et al.*, 2024; Rossi *et al.*, 2020). When in the office, workers require greater task variety (Lamovšek *et al.*, 2025) but may have to achieve these tasks using less flexible digital tools. Whether a hybrid worker has the option to work remotely one or four days per week, they may still have to work with rigid ICT systems when in the office. This rigidity may establish a technostress experience that is impervious to work location freedoms. Remote workers tend to have greater flexibility (Lamovšek and Černe, 2023; Meier *et al.*, 2024), and that flexibility may extend to using digital tools in a way they require to achieve work tasks. This may explain why hybrid work location autonomy does offset the effect of technostress on detachment when hybrid workers are remote. It is also possible that these interaction effects vary depending on how technostress is conceptualised. While our study examines ICT complexity and unreliability as antecedents to detachment and burnout, prior studies of remote working suggest overload and invasion are salient stressors in that work arrangement (Banerjee and Gupta, 2024; Becker and Lanzl, 2023). To extend our study, researchers should examine a wide range of technostressors to determine which are most salient for hybrid workers.

Additionally, and contrary to what we expected, workplace social support did not buffer the negative relationship between remote or in-office technostress and detachment for hybrid workers. On reflection, this is possibly due to our research design as we operationalised workplace social support as the social support received from co-workers. When working from home or a remote work hub, people are likely to receive social support from non-work colleagues such as friends and family, which has been found to confer benefits to the recipient (Hu and Subramony, 2022). We suggest a fruitful avenue for future research would be to focus on other forms of workplace support (other than co-worker social support) and extend our research model by including non-workplace social support as a moderating variable. Testing this interaction effect would advance our understanding of the well-being implications of hybrid work by determining the conditions under which social support from co-workers and non-co-workers alleviates technostress.

5.2 Contribution to practice and policy

Our findings underline the importance of psychological detachment from work in explaining the relationship between remote technostress and burnout for hybrid workers. Organisations should review their training and development supports to ensure they are providing employees with the skills and techniques to enhance psychological detachment from work. Furthermore, management training and development programmes should also focus on facilitating employee psychological detachment and ensure managers understand the adverse implications for employee well-being where detachment is low.

To reduce hybrid work's negative impact on well-being, organisations should leverage autonomy in work locations. Allowing employees flexibility to choose tasks for remote or in-office completion helps buffer technostress and supports detachment. Blanket return-to-office mandates undermine these benefits. However, full autonomy is not advisable, as in-person collaboration remains essential for innovation and engagement (Cross and Gray, 2021). To balance this trade-off, managers and hybrid workers should identify ICT-related tasks best suited for onsite work. Attendance for these tasks can be scheduled on specific days for clusters

that benefit from face-to-face interaction. This approach preserves the well-being advantages of hybrid autonomy while ensuring critical collaboration occurs.

5.3 Limitations

This study has several limitations which should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, our data were obtained from a crowdsourcing platform. While we initiated a number of steps to ensure our sample represented the population we wished to study, we do acknowledge there could be nuances about individuals who offer their services on crowdsourcing platforms which may limit generalisability to all hybrid workers. An interesting future study would be to gather data from hybrid workers from a single organisation to determine if similar findings are evident. Second, all the data used to test our research model was self-reported and cross sectional. While constructs related to employees' psychological experiences are best assessed through self-reports, such data can be susceptible to validity issues, such as subjectivity, social desirability and misunderstandings. Future studies would benefit from using multiple sources of data, for example, measuring technostress through computer mouse cursor movements (Hibbeln *et al.*, 2017) and peer assessments to capture well-being outcomes (Herttalampi *et al.*, 2023). Likewise, outcomes like burnout take time to develop, a longitudinal design may better establish the causal pathway linking technostress, detachment, and burnout. Finally, our study examined technostress in isolation but in reality, technostress may interact with other hybrid work stressors to compound well-being problems. Future studies could theorise interacting stressor models (e.g. how technostress moderates the work intensification – detachment relationship) to better capture their combined impact on burnout and detachment, offering a more comprehensive understanding of employee well-being in hybrid work environments.

Supplementary material

The supplementary material for this article can be found online.

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