

Remote Work, Employee Mental Wellbeing, Burnout-Related Responses and Organizational Commitment: An Exploratory Study in Bengaluru

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Abstract

Remote and hybrid work can alter workload, autonomy, social connection and work-home boundaries, but the psychological consequences vary across employees and work contexts. This exploratory cross-sectional study described perceived stress, positive wellbeing, burnout-related responses and organizational-commitment responses among five remote or hybrid employees in Bengaluru, India. A written questionnaire included ten workplace-adapted perceived-stress items, the WHO-Five Well-Being Index (WHO-5), a researcher-selected six-item burnout-related set, and a short six-item organizational-commitment form. Corrected adapted-stress scores were 25, 11, 31, 15 and 22 ($M = 20.80$, $SD = 7.95$). WHO-5 scores were 40, 72, 24, 64 and 48 ($M = 49.60$, $SD = 19.10$). The informal burnout-related arithmetic index averaged 19.60/36 ($SD = 9.96$), while raw commitment scores showed very little variation ($M = 18.20/30$, $SD = 0.45$). Within this five-person sample, higher adapted-stress scores occurred alongside lower WHO-5 wellbeing and higher burnout-related scores. The very small convenience sample, modified stress wording, abbreviated burnout items and short commitment form prevent population inference, diagnosis or psychometric claims. The findings are best interpreted as a transparent pilot description that highlights the importance of workload, recovery, social connection and measurement quality in future remote-work research.

Keywords: Remote Work, Hybrid Work, Employee Wellbeing, Perceived Stress, Burnout, Organizational Commitment, Bengaluru

Introduction

Remote and hybrid work have become established features of contemporary employment, but their effects are not uniformly positive or negative. A major meta-analysis of telecommuting found small, generally favourable effects on autonomy, work-family conflict and several work outcomes, while also emphasizing that outcomes depend on how telework is implemented [1]. Later reviews similarly described remote-work wellbeing as multidimensional, involving affective, social, professional, cognitive and psychosomatic experiences rather than a single overall effect [2].

Work design is especially important when employees work away from a shared workplace. Wang et al. identified work-home interference, ineffective communication, procrastination and loneliness as common remote-work challenges, with social support, autonomy, monitoring and workload shaping the extent of those difficulties [3]. Systematic reviews published after the pandemic continue to show mixed mental-health findings, with working conditions, boundaries, isolation, workload and individual circumstances acting as important moderators [4,5]. Experimental evidence on hybrid work also suggests that flexible arrangements can improve satisfaction and retention without necessarily reducing performance, although findings from large organizations cannot be transferred automatically to every workforce or setting [6]. The Job Demands-Resources model provides a useful framework for understanding this variability. Job demands require sustained effort and can contribute to strain, whereas resources such as autonomy, support and clear role expectations can buffer demands and support engagement [7]. In remote work, location is therefore better treated as a work context than as a single psychological exposure. Two employees who both work from home may experience very different levels of workload, boundary control, support and social connection.

Perceived stress, positive wellbeing, burnout-related experiences and organizational commitment are related but distinct constructs. The Perceived Stress Scale family assesses subjective appraisal of stress [8], while the WHO-5 captures positive wellbeing over the previous two weeks [9]. Organizational commitment is commonly discussed in affective, continuance and normative terms [10]. For telecommuters, psychological isolation may be especially relevant to affective commitment [11], and Indian evidence also suggests that remote-work conditions can relate differently to distinct dimensions of organizational commitment [12].

The present study was developed as a small exploratory MSc Psychology project in Bengaluru. Because the available dataset contains only five participants and uses adapted or abbreviated measures, the purpose is descriptive rather than confirmatory. The study aims were to: (1) describe adapted perceived-stress and WHO-5 wellbeing scores; (2) summarize burnout-related and organizational-commitment responses; and (3) identify visible within-sample patterns while stating clearly the limits of interpretation.

Method

Design and Participants

A quantitative, cross-sectional and descriptive questionnaire design was used. Data were collected in Bengaluru, India, in September 2026 from five de-identified adult employees coded P-01 to P-05. Three participants reported full-time remote work and two reported hybrid work. The sample included three women and two men; two participants were aged 20-29 years, two were aged 30-39 years and one was aged 40-49 years. Employment sectors included IT/software ($n = 2$), finance/banking ($n = 1$), education/training ($n = 1$) and other corporate work ($n = 1$). The researcher reports that participation was voluntary and consent was obtained.

Measures

Adapted perceived stress. Ten workplace-adapted stress items used a 0-4 response scale. Positively phrased items 4, 5, 7 and 8 were reverse-scored before summation, yielding a descriptive 0-40 index. Because the wording was modified for work and remote-work contexts, these scores are not presented as psychometrically equivalent to the unchanged published PSS-10 [8].

WHO-5 wellbeing. Five WHO-5 items were scored from 0 to 5. The raw score (0-25) was multiplied by four to create the standard 0-100 percentage metric [9].

Burnout-related responses. Six researcher-selected items represented exhaustion (three items), cynicism (two items) and professional efficacy (one item), rated 0-6. For descriptive arithmetic only, the five negatively oriented items were summed and the efficacy item was reverse-scored as 6 minus the response, producing a 0-36 informal index. This abbreviated set is not the complete validated MBI-GS and no clinical or severity cut-offs were applied.

Organizational commitment. Six agreement items were rated from 1 to 5 and summed as raw scores from 6 to 30. Because the items mix dimensions of commitment and the approved scoring structure has not been independently established in the available record, the totals are reported only as raw descriptive sums rather than validated OCQ scores [10].

Procedure and Data Analysis

Questionnaire responses were de-identified before analysis. Means, sample standard deviations, medians and observed ranges were calculated. Participant-level patterns were compared descriptively. With $N = 5$, no null-hypothesis significance testing, regression modelling, prevalence estimation, diagnostic classification or population inference was attempted. Exploratory associations are discussed only as patterns within the observed records.

Results

The demographic profile is summarized in Table 1. The sample is intentionally described at aggregate level to reduce re-identification risk in a five-person dataset.

Characteristic	Category	N	Percent
Gender	Female	3	60%
Gender	Male	2	40%
Age	20-29	2	40%
Age	30-39	2	40%
Age	40-49	1	20%
Work arrangement	Full-time remote	3	60%
Work arrangement	Hybrid	2	40%
Sector	IT / Software	2	40%
Sector	Finance / Banking	1	20%
Sector	Education / Training	1	20%
Sector	Other corporate	1	20%

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Participants (N = 5)

Corrected participant-level scores are shown in Table 2. Adapted perceived-stress values ranged from 11 to 31, while WHO-5 wellbeing ranged from 24 to 72. The two participants with the lowest adapted-stress

values (P-02 and P-04) also had the highest WHO-5 scores. Conversely, P-03 had the highest adapted-stress score and the lowest WHO-5 score. These observations are descriptive and do not establish a population relationship or causal effect.

ID	Work setup	Adapted stress (0-40)	WHO-5 (0-100)	Informal burnout (0-36)	Raw commitment (6-30)
P-01	Full-time remote	25	40	26	19
P-02	Hybrid	11	72	7	18
P-03	Full-time remote	31	24	32	18
P-04	Hybrid	15	64	13	18
P-05	Full-time remote	22	48	20	18

Table 2: Corrected Participant-Level Descriptive Scores

Summary statistics are presented in Table 3. Adapted perceived stress averaged 20.80 (SD = 7.95), WHO-5 wellbeing averaged 49.60 (SD = 19.10), and the informal burnout-related arithmetic index averaged 19.60 (SD = 9.96). Raw commitment scores ranged only from 18 to 19, indicating severe restriction of range and limiting interpretation of relationships involving commitment.

Measure	N	Mean	Sample SD	Median	Observed range
Adapted perceived stress (0-40)	5	20.80	7.95	22	11-31
WHO-5 wellbeing (0-100)	5	49.60	19.10	48	24-72
Informal burnout index (0-36)	5	19.60	9.96	20	7-32
Raw commitment score (6-30)	5	18.20	0.45	18	18-19

Table 3: Descriptive Summary Statistics

Discussion

The five observed records show a coherent descriptive pattern in which higher adapted-stress scores occur alongside lower positive wellbeing and higher burnout-related scores. This direction is consistent with the broader remote-work literature, which identifies workload, work-home interference, social isolation and communication difficulties as potential challenges to employee wellbeing [3-5]. However, the current dataset is far too small to estimate the magnitude or reliability of those relationships.

The pattern should also be interpreted through work design rather than location alone. Remote work can provide autonomy and flexibility, but these potential resources may be offset by high workload, unclear boundaries or weak social support [1,3,7]. The present questionnaire does not measure all of those mechanisms directly. Consequently, a higher stress score among a remote employee cannot be attributed solely to working from home, and the study cannot establish that remote work caused any psychological outcome.

WHO-5 scores varied considerably across the five respondents. This variation is useful descriptively because it demonstrates that employees sharing a remote or hybrid work context can report substantially different levels of positive wellbeing. It is consistent with systematic reviews showing that telework-health relationships depend on individual and organizational conditions rather than following one universal pattern [2,4,5].

The burnout-related results should be interpreted with particular caution. The six-item set is not the full validated MBI-GS, and the arithmetic index was created only to summarize the supplied responses. It therefore cannot support standardized burnout categories, clinical labels or claims of prevalence. Nevertheless, the item pattern may be useful for pilot work by identifying exhaustion and cynicism as domains worth measuring with a fully validated instrument in a larger study.

Organizational commitment showed almost no variation, with four respondents scoring 18 and one scoring 19 on the raw six-item sum. This restriction of range prevents meaningful conclusions about its association with stress or wellbeing. It also illustrates an important measurement lesson: commitment is multidimensional [10], and remote-work research may need to distinguish emotional attachment, perceived costs of leaving and felt obligation. Prior telework studies have found that isolation can relate differently to commitment dimensions [11], while Indian evidence has likewise reported distinct patterns across affective, continuance and normative commitment [12].

The findings have limited practical implications because they are not population estimates. At most, they suggest areas for organizational attention in future research and workplace assessment: manageable workload, boundary clarity, social connection, supervisor support and opportunities for recovery. Large-scale evidence indicates that well-designed hybrid arrangements can improve satisfaction and retention without necessarily reducing performance [6], reinforcing the importance of work design rather than simple remote-versus-office labels.

Limitations and Future Research

The principal limitation is the five-person convenience sample. Sampling error is therefore extreme, subgroup comparisons are not meaningful, and inferential statistics would create a false impression of precision. The design is cross-sectional and based on self-report, so temporal ordering and causality cannot be established. The adapted stress wording is not identical to the published PSS-10, the burnout set is abbreviated and nonvalidated, and the commitment form combines different dimensions. Original recruitment, consent and instrument-version records should be retained securely and made available for

institutional or editorial verification if required. Future work should use a substantially larger sample, validated instruments, clearly documented ethics and consent procedures, and direct measures of workload, autonomy, social support, boundary management and isolation. A longitudinal or repeated-measures design would further improve the ability to examine change over time.

Conclusion

This exploratory five-participant study provides a transparent description of stress, positive wellbeing, burnout-related responses and organizational-commitment items among remote and hybrid employees in Bengaluru. Higher adapted-stress scores occurred alongside lower WHO-5 wellbeing and higher burnout-related scores within the observed cases, while commitment responses showed too little variation for meaningful association analysis. Because of the very small sample and modified measures, the findings should not be generalized or treated as evidence that remote work causes mental-health outcomes. The study is best viewed as pilot evidence supporting a larger, methodologically stronger investigation of how work design and employee resources shape wellbeing and commitment in remote and hybrid work settings.

Acknowledgement

The authors thank the participants who contributed their responses to the academic project. The manuscript was developed from an M.Sc. Psychology dissertation conducted through the Centre for Distance and Online Education, JAIN (Deemed-to-be University), Bengaluru.

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