

Which Dimensions of Occupational Stress Matter? Turnover Intention Among Indian IT Employees

Kirti Sharma¹, Dr. Rupan Dhillon²

¹PhD Research Scholar, Department of Psychology, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, Punjab, India.

²Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, Punjab, India.

Corresponding Author: Kirti Sharma

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52403/ijrr.20260951>

ABSTRACT

Occupational stress is a multidimensional work experience, but limited research has examined which specific stress dimensions are associated with turnover intention among private-sector IT employees in India. This study examined the relationships between 12 dimensions of occupational stress and turnover intention, while also considering gender and age. Data were collected from 650 private-sector IT employees in India (325 men and 325 women), aged 22–55 years, using the Occupational Stress Index and Turnover Intention Scale. Pearson correlations, simultaneous multiple regression, independent-samples *t*-tests, age correlations, and hierarchical multiple regression were conducted. All 12 occupational stress dimensions were positively associated with turnover intention ($r_s = .276-.377$, $p_s < .001$). When the dimensions were considered simultaneously, the model explained 26.3% of the variance in turnover intention. Role Overload ($\beta = .098$, $p = .022$), Under-participation ($\beta = .125$, $p = .003$), and Strenuous Working Conditions ($\beta = .084$, $p = .043$) showed significant unique associations. No significant gender differences were found in any occupational stress dimension or turnover intention. Age was negatively associated with turnover

intention ($r = -.159$, $p < .001$) and remained significant after demographic and occupational stress variables were included in the hierarchical model. The findings support examining occupational stress dimension-by-dimension rather than relying only on an overall stress score and highlight workload and participation-related experiences as relevant correlates of turnover intention among Indian IT employees.

Keywords: occupational stress, turnover intention, information technology, role overload, under-participation, strenuous working conditions, India, Occupational Stress Index

INTRODUCTION

Employee turnover has been a persistent problem for organizations, especially in the information technology (IT) sector. Beyond the immediate disruption to workflow, voluntary employee departures carry substantial financial and strategic costs. These expenses include not only recruitment and training investments, but also the loss of institutional knowledge that can diminish organizational performance. In the IT sector, employee turnover can also result in the loss of knowledge and innovation capacity that organizations may rely on for continued competitiveness (Fontaine, 2010).

When an employee resigns, the organisation may lose specialised technical expertise, familiarity with client relationships and internal networks, knowledge of how business processes actually operate as opposed to how they are documented, and an accumulated sense of institutional history (Sumbal et al., 2018). Such losses are concentrated among precisely the people organisations can least afford to lose: senior contributors whose knowledge is tacit, undocumented, and built over years rather than months (Joe et al., 2013). Research on knowledge retention has shown that organizations may fail to capture critical skills, capabilities, experience, and knowledge before employees depart, creating risks for organizational continuity and performance (Schmitt et al., 2012). Longitudinal research has further demonstrated that employee exits can generate measurable organizational knowledge loss and associated impacts over time (Massingham, 2018). For IT organisations competing on delivery speed and technical depth, retention is therefore not merely a staffing concern but also a knowledge and capability concern.

Turnover intention is defined as an employee's conscious and deliberate willingness to leave an organization (Tett & Meyer, 1993). Research has consistently shown that intentions to leave are associated with subsequent employee turnover (Steel & Ovalle, 1984). This predictive capacity is particularly important in IT environments, where turnover often reflects deliberate mobility rather than involuntary separation, and where the loss of specialized technical expertise carries immediate project and innovation consequences. Consequently, understanding the antecedents of turnover intention in IT employees provides both theoretical insight into the decision to leave and practical leverage for retention intervention.

Occupational stress in Indian IT employees manifests across multiple interconnected dimensions, each arising from distinct aspects of work roles and organizational

conditions. Early research identified heavy workload, inadequate staffing, and role ambiguity as prominent sources of stress among Indian IT professionals, while also showing that intentions to leave were not attributable to stress alone (Dhar & Dhar, 2010). Subsequent research has confirmed the persistence of role-based stressors in Indian IT workplaces. Gahlan and Singh (2014), examining 400 IT professionals in India, documented notably high levels of both role overload and role ambiguity, with these dimensions correlating significantly with job performance outcomes. More recent investigations have expanded the stress construct to include technology-related stressors, with findings linking technostress and work stress to increased burnout and turnover intention among Indian IT employees (Sharma & Tiwari, 2023; Thakur & Saxena, 2025).

Occupational stress refers to the harmful physical and emotional responses that can occur when job requirements do not match workers' capabilities, resources, or needs (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health [NIOSH], 1999). Occupational stress is therefore not a unitary experience and may arise from excessive workload, unclear expectations, incompatible role demands, limited participation in decision-making, strained interpersonal relationships, limited opportunities for growth, or difficult working conditions.

The multidimensional nature of occupational stress is particularly relevant to IT employees, whose work involves varied demands and organizational conditions. Previous Indian studies using the Occupational Stress Index (OSI) have documented occupational stress among IT employees and have shown that specific dimensions may vary across demographic and work-related circumstances. Prathyusha et al. (2016), for example, reported high occupational stress among IT professionals in Hyderabad. Sundaresh and Hemalatha (2012) found differences in occupational stress according to working hours and age among IT team leaders in Bangalore, while

gender differences were not significant. Sumangala and D'Souza (2012) similarly reported demographic differences in selected OSI dimensions among IT employees. These findings support examining occupational stress at the dimension level rather than relying only on an overall stress score.

The relationship between occupational stress and turnover intention can be understood through several complementary theoretical perspectives. Conservation of Resources (COR) theory proposes that individuals are motivated to obtain, retain, protect, and build valued resources and that psychological strain emerges when resources are threatened or lost (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll et al., 2018). Occupational stressors can therefore be understood as conditions that require employees to expend psychological, cognitive, social, or physical resources. When demands are sustained and resource replenishment is insufficient, withdrawal may become one possible response to anticipated or experienced resource loss.

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model differentiates between job demands and job resources. Job demands refer to aspects of one's work that require sustained effort and are associated with physiological or psychological costs, while job resources refer to aspects which support goal attainment, reduce demands, and promote motivation (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, 2017). Based on this model, occupational stress can arise from both demanding aspects of one's work such as high workload and limited resources like autonomy, social support, participation and influence. These different sources of occupational stress place different kinds of demands on employees or reflect different resource deficits and therefore may have different relationships with turnover intention.

Role-related theories help explain how stress develops from both informal and formal work roles. Role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload all present distinct challenges, arising when expectations are unclear, demands clash or workload exceeds capacity. Across organizational sectors, these role

stressors are related to turnover intention, though not always through the same mechanisms. For example, Fathima and Umarani's (2022) research on Indian construction engineers found a positive significant relationship between role conflict and intention to leave but role ambiguity and role overload were indirectly linked to turnover intention through emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction. These findings support examining role-related stressors alongside broader occupational stress dimensions rather than treating occupational stress as a single undifferentiated construct.

The Indian IT context makes this distinction particularly relevant. Earlier research identified workload, staffing constraints, deadlines, and role ambiguity as sources of stress among IT employees, while noting that intentions to leave were not attributable to stress alone (Dhar & Dhar, 2010). More recent studies have linked role stressors and technostress with turnover intention while also examining the roles of supervisor support, work exhaustion, and personal resources (Velaga & Pinapati, 2023; Sharma et al., 2025).

Although this evidence establishes a relationship between occupational stress and turnover-related outcomes, limited research has examined which dimensions of the Srivastava-Singh OSI are uniquely associated with turnover intention among private-sector IT employees in India. Existing studies have often focused on stress prevalence, demographic differences, overall job stress, or selected role stressors rather than examining all 12 dimensions together. Examining the dimensions simultaneously is important because they are interrelated and may overlap in their associations with turnover intention. A significant bivariate association does not necessarily indicate a unique association after the shared variance among stress dimensions is considered. The present study therefore examines the 12 dimensions of occupational stress in relation to turnover intention among 650 private-sector IT employees in India, with gender

and age included as contextual variables.

Objectives

1. To examine the relationship between the 12 dimensions of occupational stress and turnover intention among private-sector IT employees in India.
2. To examine whether the 12 dimensions of occupational stress significantly predict turnover intention when considered simultaneously.
3. To examine gender differences in the dimensions of occupational stress and turnover intention among private-sector IT employees in India.
4. To examine the relationship between employees' age, occupational stress dimensions, and turnover intention.

Hypotheses

H1: The dimensions of occupational stress will be positively associated with turnover intention among private-sector IT employees in India.

H2: The dimensions of occupational stress will significantly predict turnover intention when considered simultaneously.

H3: There will be significant gender differences in occupational stress dimensions and turnover intention among private-sector IT employees in India.

H4: Age will be significantly associated with occupational stress dimensions and turnover intention among private-sector IT employees in India.

MATERIALS & METHODS

Research Design and Participants

The present research used a quantitative, cross-sectional design. Data on dimensions of organizational stress, turnover intention, and demographic characteristics were collected from each participant at a single point in time.

Participants were recruited through purposive sampling. Inclusion criteria were: (a) current employment in a private IT organization in India, (b) age between 22 and 55 years, and (c) a minimum of one year of

continuous employment with the current organization.

Information regarding participants' age, gender, educational background, total work experience, and job level was collected. 157 responses were excluded based on the study's data screening criteria, resulting in a final sample of 650 participants (325 men and 325 women) with a mean age of 35.41 years.

Measures

Occupational Stress

Occupational stress was measured using the **Occupational Stress Index (OSI)** developed by Srivastava and Singh (1981, 1984). OSI consists of 46 items representing 12 occupational stress dimensions: Role Overload, Role Ambiguity, Role Conflict, Unreasonable Group and Political Pressure, Responsibility for Persons, Under-participation, Powerlessness, Poor Peer Relations, Intrinsic Impoverishment, Low Status, Strenuous Working Conditions, and Unprofitability.

Each dimension contained between two to six items. Items were scored and reverse-coded where required according to the established OSI scoring procedure, and a composite score for each dimension was calculated. Higher scores represent greater occupational stress within the respective dimension. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess internal consistency in the present sample. Results ranged from $\alpha = .552$ to $.813$ across the 12 OSI subscales.

Turnover Intention

Turnover intention was assessed using the 15-item Turnover Intention Scale (TIS-15) developed by Roodt (2004). The scale assesses an employee's intention or inclination to leave their current organization. Responses to the 15 items were combined to obtain a composite turnover intention score, with higher scores representing greater turnover intention. The internal consistency of the scale in the present sample was assessed using Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.87$).

Statistical Analysis

Data were analyzed using R. Descriptive statistics were first calculated for the 12 occupational stress dimensions and turnover intention. Internal consistency of the variables under study was examined using Cronbach's alpha. Normality of the data was assessed using skewness and kurtosis statistics and found to be within commonly accepted ranges (skewness < 3; kurtosis < 10; Kline, 2016).

Pearson product-moment correlations were used to examine the relationships between the occupational stress dimensions and turnover intention, followed by a simultaneous multiple regression with turnover intention as the dependent variable and all 12 occupational stress dimensions entered simultaneously as predictors.

Independent-samples *t*-tests were used to examine gender differences in each occupational stress dimension and turnover intention. Pearson correlations were used to

examine associations between age and each occupational stress dimension and turnover intention. For the multiple age-related correlations, *p*-values were adjusted using the Holm procedure to account for multiple comparisons.

Finally, a hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to examine whether the occupational stress dimensions explained additional variance in turnover intention beyond age and gender. Age and gender were entered in Step 1, followed by the 12 occupational stress dimensions in Step 2.

RESULT

Descriptive Statistics and Reliability

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics and internal consistency coefficients for the study variables. Mean scores for the occupational stress dimensions ranged from 6.09 for Unprofitability to 18.87 for Role Overload. The mean turnover intention score was 45.08 (*SD* = 9.44).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Reliability of Occupational Stress Dimensions and Turnover Intention

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Cronbach's <i>α</i>
Role Overload	18.87	4.43	.813
Role Ambiguity	11.59	3.06	.725
Role Conflict	14.40	3.60	.753
Unreasonable Group & Political Pressure	11.59	3.07	.730
Responsibility for Persons	8.77	2.40	.660
Under-participation	11.62	3.07	.744
Powerlessness	8.76	2.38	.670
Poor Peer Relations	11.46	2.97	.723
Intrinsic Impoverishment	11.74	2.94	.713
Low Status	8.86	2.36	.662
Strenuous Working Conditions	12.30	2.90	.704
Unprofitability	6.09	1.67	.552
Turnover Intention	45.08	9.44	.872

Internal consistency was acceptable for most occupational stress dimensions, although Responsibility for Persons, Powerlessness, and Low Status produced coefficients slightly below .70. Unprofitability showed the lowest coefficient ($\alpha = .552$), which should be interpreted in light of the fact that this dimension contains only two items. The turnover intention scale demonstrated high internal consistency.

Correlations Between Occupational Stress Dimensions and Turnover Intention

All 12 occupational stress dimensions were positively and significantly associated with turnover intention ($p < .001$). The correlations ranged from $r = .276$ for Powerlessness to $r = .377$ for Under-participation.

Table 2: Pearson's Product Moment Correlations Between Occupational Stress Dimensions and Turnover Intention

Occupational stress dimension	<i>r</i> with TI
Role Overload	.361***
Role Ambiguity	.300***
Role Conflict	.362***
Unreasonable Group & Political Pressure	.354***
Responsibility for Persons	.311***
Under-participation	.377***
Powerlessness	.276***
Poor Peer Relations	.346***
Intrinsic Impoverishment	.342***
Low Status	.345***
Strenuous Working Conditions	.341***
Unprofitability	.293***

**Note. TI = Turnover Intention. $p < .001$.

These results support H1. Employees reporting higher levels of each occupational stress dimension also tended to report greater turnover intention. However, the occupational stress dimensions were themselves moderately intercorrelated, with correlations generally ranging from approximately .26 to .47. Therefore, bivariate associations were followed by a simultaneous regression analysis.

Simultaneous Regression of Occupational Stress Dimensions on Turnover Intention

A simultaneous multiple regression was conducted with turnover intention as the dependent variable and all 12 occupational stress dimensions entered simultaneously. The model was statistically significant, $F(12, 637) = 18.96, p < .001$, and explained 26.3% of the variance in turnover intention ($R^2 = .263$; adjusted $R^2 = .249$).

Three occupational stress dimensions showed statistically significant unique associations with turnover intention. Role Overload was positively associated with turnover intention ($\beta = .098, p = .022$), as was Under-participation ($\beta = .125, p = .003$). Strenuous Working Conditions also showed a significant positive unique association ($\beta = .084, p = .043$). The remaining dimensions did not reach the conventional .05 significance level when all 12 dimensions were considered simultaneously.

These findings provide support for H2 at the overall model level. The results do not

indicate that the remaining dimensions are unrelated to turnover intention; rather, their unique associations were not statistically distinguishable from zero after accounting for overlap among the 12 occupational stress dimensions.

Gender Differences

Independent-samples *t*-tests indicated no statistically significant gender differences in any of the 12 occupational stress dimensions or turnover intention.

Women reported a mean turnover intention score of 44.78 ($SD = 9.18$), compared with 45.38 ($SD = 9.69$) among men. The smallest *p* value among the 12 occupational stress dimensions was .106 for Unprofitability, which was also nonsignificant. Therefore, H3 was not supported.

Age and Occupational Stress

Age was negatively associated with turnover intention ($r = -.159, p < .001$). This indicates that older employees in the sample tended to report somewhat lower turnover intention. Age also remained significantly associated with turnover intention after accounting for gender and the 12 occupational stress dimensions ($\beta = -.099, p = .004$) in the regression model.

Overall, the findings provide partial support for H4. Age was significantly associated with turnover intention, but age was not consistently associated with the occupational

stress dimensions after adjustment for multiple comparisons.

Hierarchical Multiple Regression

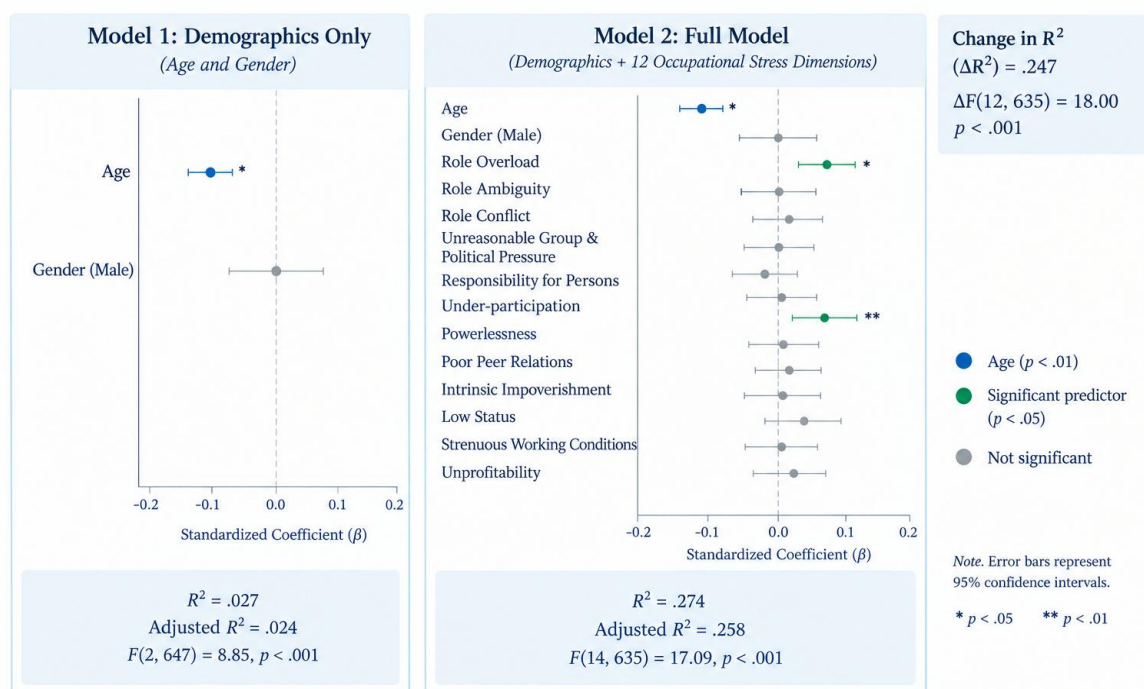
A hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to examine whether the occupational stress dimensions explained additional variance in turnover intention beyond age and gender.

In Step 1, age and gender together explained 2.7% of the variance in turnover intention, $R^2 = .027$, adjusted $R^2 = .024$, $F(2, 647) = 8.85$, $p < .001$. In Step 2, the 12 occupational stress dimensions were added, increasing the

explained variance to 27.4%, $R^2 = .274$, adjusted $R^2 = .258$. The addition of the occupational stress dimensions explained an additional 24.7% of the variance, $\Delta R^2 = .247$, $\Delta F(12, 635) = 18.00$, $p < .001$.

In the final model, age remained negatively associated with turnover intention ($\beta = -.099$, $p = .004$), while gender remained nonsignificant ($p = .343$). Role Overload ($\beta = .100$, $p = .019$) and Under-participation ($\beta = .125$, $p = .003$) remained significant, whereas Strenuous Working Conditions was no longer statistically significant ($\beta = .078$, $p = .057$).

Figure 1. Hierarchical Regression Results for Turnover Intention



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals. β = standardized regression coefficient. $p < .05$; $p < .01$.

DISCUSSION

The present study examined occupational stress as a multidimensional construct and investigated its association with turnover intention among 650 private-sector IT employees in India. Four main findings emerged. First, all 12 occupational stress dimensions were positively associated with turnover intention at the bivariate level. Second, the 12 dimensions collectively explained 26.3% of the variance in turnover

intention, with Role Overload, Under-participation, and Strenuous Working Conditions showing significant unique associations. Third, no gender differences were found in occupational stress dimensions or turnover intention. Fourth, age was negatively associated with turnover intention, while its associations with the occupational stress dimensions were limited after adjustment for multiple comparisons.

The bivariate correlations are consistent with earlier Indian IT research. Dhar and Dhar (2010) interviewed 26 IT professionals in depth and traced their distress to heavy workloads, thin staffing, and uncertainty about what their roles required; those same pressures surfaced when participants discussed leaving. Gahlan and Singh (2014) documented elevated role overload and ambiguity in a larger Indian IT sample. Sri Sai and Pinapati (2023) confirmed the stress-to-exit link among Bengaluru IT employees, and Thakur and Saxena (2025) reproduced it with 419 Indian IT professionals using technology-specific stressors. What this study adds is the observation that the 12 dimensions overlap substantially, with intercorrelations between roughly .26 and .47, and that this overlap conceals which stressors carry independent weight.

To understand which of these 12 dimensions predict turnover uniquely, after accounting for all the other stress dimensions a simultaneous regression model was run. The results showed that only three dimensions, i.e. Under-participation, Role Overload and Strenuous Working Conditions showed significant unique associations when considered together. The model explained 26.3% of the variance in turnover intention. This pattern suggests that the dimensions of occupational stress do not have equivalent unique associations with turnover intention when their overlap is taken into account. However, when age and gender were subsequently added in the hierarchical model, Role Overload and Under-participation remained significant, whereas Strenuous Working Conditions fell just short of conventional significance ($p = .057$).

Under-participation emerged as the strongest unique predictor of turnover intention. This dimension indexes how far employees are consulted about decisions that shape their own work: scope, sequencing, deadlines, how the role itself is defined. This finding makes theoretical sense through the lens of the JDR model. In this framework, participation represents a critical job resource: it embodies autonomy, voice, and

perceived control over one's work. When employees lack meaningful involvement in decisions, they are stripped of a fundamental psychological resource. They become passive recipients of demands rather than active agents in shaping their work.

The strength of this effect suggests something important for Indian IT organizations: workload reduction alone won't solve turnover. If employees have little say in how work is organized, how deadlines are set, or how their roles evolve, reducing workload alone may not fully address turnover intention. This aligns with foundational work on decision latitude and occupational health. Karasek's (1979) demand-control model shows that employees with control over their work, even when demands are high, experience better outcomes than employees without control facing lower demands. In other words, autonomy may matter more than comfort. More recent research has shown that resources buffer the harmful effects of demands, particularly when demands are high (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). The practical implication is clear: organizations seeking to retain IT talent should prioritize creating structures where employees genuinely participate in decisions affecting their work.

Role Overload also remained significant after controlling for the other 11 dimensions. Role overload represents sustained excessive demands. Unlike role ambiguity or conflict, which may be resolved through clarification or negotiation, overload directly depletes time and cognitive capacity. Similarly, Kunte et al. (2017) reported a relationship between role overload and turnover intention among Indian banking employees. This association can also be understood through the effort-recovery framework: sustained demands increase the need for recovery and contribute to fatigue and poorer well-being (Sonnentag & Zijlstra, 2006), processes that may in turn make continued employment less sustainable. In IT specifically, project deadlines, client demands, scope creep, and technical complexity create continuous

overload. Unlike manufacturing or service roles, IT work involves ongoing cognitive demands and problem-solving under time pressure. The constant pressure to deliver faster with fewer resources leaves little room for recovery.

Strenuous working conditions showed marginal significance in the full model ($p = .057$ when age and gender were included), suggesting this dimension's effect is somewhat less robust or may interact with demographic factors. The coefficient remained positive but did not reach statistical significance, suggesting that its unique association is less robust than those of the other two dimensions. Thus, its unique association was less robust than those of role overload and under-participation in the hierarchical model.

Reading the nine non-significant dimensions as unimportant would be a mistake, and organisations should resist that inference. Role ambiguity, role conflict, poor peer relations, low status, intrinsic impoverishment, powerlessness, responsibility for persons, unreasonable group and political pressure, and unprofitability all correlated substantially with turnover intention on their own. Their multivariate disappearance indicates that their associations with turnover intention did not remain statistically significant after the overlap among the stress dimensions was taken into account. Role theory has long treated ambiguity and conflict as distinct role stressors rather than interchangeable markers of strain (Kahn et al., 1964; Rizzo et al., 1970). The distinction is not merely academic. The pattern also has an efficiency implication: because the stress dimensions are correlated, the findings should not be interpreted as evidence that the non-significant dimensions are irrelevant to employees' experiences of occupational stress.

Age was negatively associated with turnover intention, indicating that older employees in the present sample reported lower intentions to leave their jobs. The association was small in magnitude ($r = -.159$, $p < .001$) but

remained significant after controlling for occupational stress dimensions and gender in the hierarchical regression. Older employees may differ from younger employees in organizational tenure, career stage, accumulated organizational investment, alternative opportunities, or expectations regarding employment. These possible explanations should be tested directly in future research rather than inferred from the current cross-sectional data.

No significant gender differences were found across any of the 12 occupational stress dimensions or turnover intention. This is consistent with the Bangalore IT study by Sundaresh and Hemalatha (2012), which also did not find significant male-female differences in occupational stress among IT team leaders.

The present findings should nevertheless be interpreted narrowly. The analyses tested mean-level differences between men and women; they did not test whether gender moderates the relationship between occupational stress and turnover intention. Thus, the absence of mean differences does not demonstrate that the stress-turnover relationship is similar across gender groups. Roughly 73.7% of the variance in turnover intention remained unexplained by the 12 occupational stress dimensions in the simultaneous regression model. Turnover research has consistently found occupational stress to be one contributor among several, with organisational commitment, supervisor support, perceived fairness, and career prospects predicting departure alongside or beyond stress (Griffeth et al., 2000; Tett & Meyer, 1993). The Indian IT evidence adds a culturally specific element that may receive less attention in conventional turnover models. Lacity et al. (2008) identified social norms, including family pressure to remain in a particular city, as a principal determinant of turnover intention among Indian IS professionals, operating alongside job and organisational satisfaction. Emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction may account for additional variance, given their mediating roles in other Indian occupational samples

(Fathima & Umarani, 2022; Sharma et al., 2025). Retention is also driven by what is present rather than what is absent. Employees with meaningful technical work, credible advancement, and competent supervision stay under substantial stress, and employees without those things leave from comparatively comfortable positions. Reducing occupational stress may support retention, but it is unlikely to be sufficient on its own.

CONCLUSION

Implications

From a theoretical perspective, the study demonstrates the value of moving beyond a global occupational stress score. Treating occupational stress as a single construct may obscure the distinction between employees who experience excessive demands and those who experience insufficient participation or difficult working conditions. These findings also suggest that addressing turnover intention may require organizational and job-design approaches rather than relying solely on individual stress-management interventions. This is consistent with the JD-R perspective, which emphasizes the importance of job resources alongside job demands. Some of these approaches could be:

- 1) **Build genuine participation into decisions that affect work.** Under-participation showed the strongest unique statistical association in the simultaneous model. Concrete mechanisms could potentially include involvement in scoping and estimation before commitments are made, representation in policy decisions that reshape roles, forums where concerns receive documented responses rather than acknowledgement, and transparency about how decisions were reached.
- 2) **Address role overload through workload and recovery practices.** Role overload held its effect after eleven other stressors were controlled. Addressing it could involve estimating timelines against historical completion data rather than

optimistic projection, staffing to actual load, reconsidering additional work when capacity is exhausted and protecting recovery periods after intensive delivery. Recovery research indicates that sustained demands increase the need for recovery and may contribute to fatigue and poorer well-being (Sonnetag & Zijlstra, 2006).

3) **Build retention strategy beyond stress reduction.** With nearly three quarters of variance unaccounted for, supervisor quality, career development, organisational justice, and the intrinsic interest of the work itself require attention in their own right. Lacity et al.'s (2008) finding that Indian IT professionals placed importance on the nature of their work also suggests that the type of work assigned to employees may be relevant to retention.

4) **Consider career stage in future retention strategies.** Age was independently associated with turnover intention after accounting for occupational stress. Although the present study did not examine the mechanisms underlying this association, career stage may influence how employees evaluate staying or leaving. Future retention research could therefore examine whether career development, recognition, stability, and advancement opportunities have different relevance at different stages of employees' careers.

Limitations and Future Directions

The cross-sectional design precludes causal inference. Although theory predicts that stress contributes to withdrawal intentions, the reverse is also plausible: employees who intend to leave may disengage and subsequently perceive their work as more stressful. Longitudinal and time-lagged studies would help establish directionality and determine whether the three dimensions identified in the simultaneous regression continue to show unique associations with turnover intention.

All measures were obtained from the same respondents at a single time point, which may have introduced common method variance and inflated the observed associations

(Podsakoff et al., 2003). Supervisor ratings, organisational records, and objective indicators of workload would provide independent sources of evidence.

The use of purposive sampling from private-sector IT organisations limits generalisability. The findings should not be assumed to apply to public-sector IT employees, other industries, or IT workforces outside India without further replication.

Internal consistency varied across the OSI dimensions ($\alpha = .552-.813$). Unprofitability showed low reliability ($\alpha = .552$), so findings involving this dimension, including its non-significant gender comparison, warrant cautious interpretation.

Gender was examined here only through group mean comparisons. Testing it as a moderator would show whether the strength of the stress–turnover relationship differs by gender even when overall levels do not, a possibility the present findings cannot address.

Qualitative research involving both employees who leave and those who remain could provide context that survey data cannot capture. Interviews could examine why employees experiencing similar stress levels make different decisions, and how the family and social considerations identified in earlier Indian IT research interact with workplace stressors.

Declaration by Authors

Acknowledgement: None

Source of Funding: None

Conflict of Interest: No conflicts of interest declared.

Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0

This is an open-access article published under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0).

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>

REFERENCES

1. Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The Job Demands-Resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(3), 309–328.
2. Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2017). Job demands-resources theory: Taking stock and looking forward. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 22(3), 273–285. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ocp0000056>
3. Dhar, R. L., & Dhar, M. (2010). Job stress, coping process and intentions to leave: A study of information technology professionals working in India. *The Social Science Journal*, 47(3), 560–577. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.soscij.2010.01.006>
4. Fathima, M., & Umarani, C. (2022). A study on the impact of role stress on engineer intention to leave in Indian construction firms. *Scientific Reports*, 12, Article 17576. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-022-21730-2>
5. Fontaine, A. (2010). Assessing the risk of acquired information technology knowledge loss. In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Information Systems (ICIS 2010)* (Paper 167). Association for Information Systems. https://aisel.aisnet.org/icis2010_submissions/167
6. Gahlan, V. S., & Singh, K. (2014). The effect of role overload and role ambiguity on job performance of IT professionals in India. *The IUP Journal of Management Research*, 13(3), 37–49.
7. Griffeth, R. W., Hom, P. W., & Gaertner, S. (2000). A meta-analysis of antecedents and correlates of employee turnover: Update, moderator tests, and research implications for the next millennium. *Journal of Management*, 26(3), 463–488. <https://doi.org/10.1177/014920630002600305>
8. Hobfoll, S. E. (1989). Conservation of resources: A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. *American Psychologist*, 44(3), 513–524. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.44.3.513>
9. Hobfoll, S. E., Halbesleben, J., Neveu, J.-P., & Westman, M. (2018). Conservation of resources in the organizational context: The reality of resources and their consequences. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 5, 103–128. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-032117-104640>
10. Joe, C., Yoong, P., & Patel, K. (2013). Knowledge loss when older experts leave knowledge-intensive organisations. *Journal*

- of Knowledge Management, 17(6), 913–927.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JKM-04-2013-0137>
11. Kahn, R. L., Wolfe, D. M., Quinn, R. P., Snoek, J. D., & Rosenthal, R. A. (1964). *Organizational stress: Studies in role conflict and ambiguity*. Wiley.
12. Karasek, R. A. (1979). Job demands, job decision latitude, and mental strain: Implications for job redesign. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24(2), 285–308.
13. Kline, R. B. (2016). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling* (4th ed.). Guilford Press.
14. Kunte, M., Gupta, P., & Bhattacharya, S. (2017). Role overload, role self distance, role stagnation as determinants of job satisfaction and turnover intention in banking sector. *Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine*, 39(5), 590–599.
<https://doi.org/10.4103/0253-7176.217022>
15. Lacity, M. C., Iyer, V. V., & Rudramuniyaiah, P. S. (2008). Turnover intentions of Indian IS professionals. *Information Systems Frontiers*, 10(2), 225–241. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10796-007-9062-3>
16. Massingham, P. R. (2018). Measuring the impact of knowledge loss: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 22(4), 721–758.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JKM-08-2016-0338>
17. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. (1999). *Stress...at work* (DHHS [NIOSH] Publication No. 99-101). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/99-101/>
18. Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J.-Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88(5), 879–903.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879>
19. Prathyusha, B., Durga Prasad, C. S., & Reddy, M. S. (2016). A quantitative erudition of occupational stress in information technology professionals. *International Journal of Computational Engineering & Management*, 19(3), 1–4.
20. Rizzo, J. R., House, R. J., & Lirtzman, S. I. (1970). Role conflict and ambiguity in complex organizations. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 15(2), 150–163.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/2391486>
21. Roodt, G. (2004). *Turnover intentions* [Unpublished document]. University of Johannesburg.
22. Schmitt, A., Borzillo, S., & Probst, G. (2012). Don't let knowledge walk away: Knowledge retention during employee downsizing. *Management Learning*, 43(1), 53–74.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1350507611411630>
23. Sharma, I., & Tiwari, V. (2023). Modeling the impact of techno-stress and burnout on employees' work-life balance and turnover intention: A job demands-resources theory perspective. *Global Business and Organizational Excellence*, 43(1), 121–134.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/joe.22206>
24. Sharma I, Tiwari V, Gupta S, Rana NP (2025). Examining the nexus between technostress and turnover intention: The moderating influence of PsyCap in Indian information management contexts. *Journal of Enterprise Information Management*, 38(2), 450–473.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JEIM-08-2023-0434>
25. Sonnentag, S., & Zijlstra, F. R. H. (2006). Job characteristics and off-job activities as predictors of need for recovery, well-being, and fatigue. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 91(2), 330–350.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.91.2.330>
26. Steel, R. P., & Ovalle, N. K. (1984). A review and meta-analysis of research on the relationship between behavioral intentions and employee turnover. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 69(4), 673–686.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.69.4.673>
27. Srivastava, A. K., & Singh, A. P. (1981). Construction and standardization of an occupational stress index: A pilot study. *Indian Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 8, 133–136.
28. Srivastava, A. K., & Singh, A. P. (1984). *Manual of the Occupational Stress Index*. Manovaigyanik Parikshan Sansthan.
29. Sumangala, C., & D'Souza, L. (2012). Marital status and stress: A study of information technology employees. *Asia Pacific Journal of Research in Business Management*, 2(5), 116–122.
30. Sumbal, M. S., Tsui, Y. H. E., Cheong, R., & See-to, E. W. K. (2018). Critical areas of knowledge loss when employees leave in the oil and gas industry. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 22(7), 1573–1590.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JKM-08-2017-0373>

31. Sundaresh, N., & Hemalatha, K. (2012). Occupational stress among team leaders working in IT companies in Bangalore. *Artha Journal of Social Sciences*, 11(1), 87–99.
32. Thakur, P., & Saxena, C. (2025). From technostress to turnover: Examining stress-related drivers of turnover in the Indian IT industry. In M. Madanchian (Ed.), *Modern trends and future innovation in human resource management* (pp. 105–136). IGI Global Scientific Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-6402-4.ch004>
33. Tett, R. P., & Meyer, J. P. (1993). Job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intention, and turnover: Path analyses based on meta-analytic findings. *Personnel Psychology*, 46(2), 259–293. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.1993.tb00874.x>
34. Velaga Sri Sai, & Pinapati, A. K. (2023). Navigating IT turnover: Impact of supervisor support on role stressors dynamics. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, 21(4), 545–555. [https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(4\).2023.41](https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(4).2023.41)

How to cite this article: Kirti Sharma, Rupan Dhillon. Which dimensions of occupational stress matter? turnover intention among Indian IT employees. *International Journal of Research and Review*. 2026; 13(9): 555-567. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52403/ijrr.20260951>
