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NAVIGATING IT TURNOVER: IMPACT OF SUPERVISOR SUPPORT ON ROLE STRESSORS DYNAMICS

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the impact of leadership support on the interplay between role stressors and turnover intentions among IT workers in Bengaluru. The study focuses on five constructs: role stressors, job performance, job satisfaction, supervisor support, and turnover intention. Using a questionnaire, data were collected from 196 IT employees, with 187 valid responses for analysis. Structural equation modeling (SEM) through Smart PLS software assessed the relationships between the constructs. The findings reveal that role stressors significantly contribute to IT workers' intention to leave their organizations. Moreover, the connections between role stressors and both job performance and job satisfaction are influenced by the level of supervisor support. Supervisor support emerges as a crucial moderator in the relationship between role stressors and job satisfaction, highlighting its role in mitigating the negative effects of stress on employees. However, no mediating effect was observed between role stressors and job satisfaction when supervisor assistance was present. Furthermore, the study identifies a negative impact of role stressors on job satisfaction and, subsequently, a negative influence of job satisfaction on turnover intentions. These findings underscore the importance of supportive leadership in enhancing employee performance and job satisfaction, reducing the likelihood of turnover. This paper emphasizes the significance of leadership support as a key factor in shaping the dynamics between role stressors and turnover intentions among IT workers. The results suggest that fostering a supportive supervisory environment can positively influence employee well-being and retention in the IT industry.

Keywords

supervisor support, job performance, job satisfaction,
role stressors, turnover intention

JEL Classification

M10, M12, M19

INTRODUCTION

Studies performed throughout the globe have characterized IT professionals as engaged in a turnover culture (Moore & Burke, 2002). A persistent issue for many Indian businesses is the high turnover rate in the IT sector. Employees often cite job ambiguity and role conflicts as reasons for quitting the IT business (Naidoo, 2018b). IT causes of employee turnover include ambiguity in responsibilities, disagreements among coworkers, a sense of being overwhelmed, stress, and burnout (Huang et al., 2021). Role-related demands, insufficient time to keep up with rapidly changing technology, insufficient resources, and insufficient support all contribute to high stress levels among IT employees (Ghapanchi & Aurum, 2011). It is not surprising that IT jobs are getting more complex and demanding due to the increasing expectations of end users, managers, and government policymakers that IT employees should keep up with the rapid rate of technological advancement (Lindsay et al., 2020). Government authorities realize that the supply-demand gap in IT skills is a significant obstacle to attaining their social objectives (Shropshire & Kadlec, 2012). The lack of qualified IT workers may make it harder for private businesses to compete in domestic and international markets. Given the backdrop



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of understaffing and competing demands, it is crucial to comprehend the many causes of strain that IT workers face in today's organizations (Ahuja et al., 2007).

Stress in the workplace may have negative effects on the mental and physical health of IT workers, which in turn can lead to burnout, discontent in one's position, resignation, and a loss of productivity for the whole IT industry (Ninaus et al., 2021). To be more explicit, the withdrawal behaviors of stressed IT professionals are also expensive to organizations in terms of tardiness, rework, missed workdays, lateness, increased absenteeism, retirement expenses, and healthcare expenditures (Jamal, 1984). IT workers under much stress are more prone to withdrawal behaviors such as cynicism, a lack of organizational commitment, the desire to quit their jobs, and turnover (Moore, 2000). Workplace stress at epidemic proportions threatens the IT sector's ability to compete (De Clercq et al., 2016). However, a better IT work setting can make employees less stressed if they have good supervisor support (Firth et al., 2004). In response to employee concerns, managers might ensure workers have access to the tools they need to do their jobs (Ng & Clercq, 2021).

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

The relationship between role stresses and IT workers quitting has received vast attention. However, leadership support's complex role in this interaction needs more study. Critical literature supports understanding how good leadership support may mitigate job pressures and change IT professionals' desire to quit.

In the course of the last half-century, there have been approximately 1,500 publications written on the topic of voluntary turnover (Holtom et al., 2008). Since 1980, around 100 studies have examined IT staff voluntary turnover, emphasizing its relevance in the industry (Ghapanchi & Aurum, 2011; Joseph et al., 2007). When employees decide to quit their jobs voluntarily, it is considered a voluntary turnover. In contrast, employee departures are imposed by the company (such as via layoffs, forced resignations, or dismissal). Although some employee turnover is necessary, human capital theory argues that it has a net negative effect on productivity (Basnyat & Clarence Lao, 2020). Employees' invested human capital in their organization is diminished when they voluntarily leave. Second, when employees leave, the company loses out on the profit it would have made from retaining their services. Third, excessive turnover may cause problems in the organization's operations, such as when managers shift staff from duties such as upkeep and safety to providing products or services (Cooper-Thomas & Poutasi, 2011). Studies often examine voluntary turnover intention rather than actual voluntary turnover for apparent

reasons. The possibility that an employee would quit a company voluntarily is known as the person's "voluntary turnover intention" (Nzukumu & Bussin, 2011). Intention to voluntarily leave is the most prevalent dependent variable for actual turnover. The study of voluntary (avoidable, or commonly referred to as dysfunctional) turnover has advanced theoretically over the years. However, stress, difficulty in working relationships, and discontent with one's employment continue to get attention (Yousaf et al., 2018).

Job satisfaction has been the subject of substantial research in the human resources literature due to the obvious advantages for employees' personal lives and the efficiency of organizations. The value-perception model is a well-known framework for understanding what makes a job satisfying to the individual (Judge & Klinger, 2008). Employees' perceptions of their own worth and the consequences of their work are expressed in the value-percept model of job satisfaction (Bentley et al., 2019). Employees get dissatisfied when there is a disconnect between what is promised and what is delivered on the job (Ouakouak et al., 2020). Meanwhile, the concept of work happiness is multifaceted (Pieters et al., 2022). According to Chambers Mack et al. (2019), job satisfaction is a pleasant or good mental state from evaluating one's job or work situations. This description focuses on the cognitive (evaluative) and affective (emotional) sides, but other ways of thinking also include the behavioral side. Judge and Klinger (2008) reviewed and found that job happiness is linked to several things people do at work. These

include showing up to work, leaving the job, deciding to quit, psychological withdrawal, prosocial and organizational responsibility, deviant behavior at work, and job success. There is also a strong link between staff well-being and job happiness (Judge & Klinger, 2008). However, even though the research says that organizations should care about job happiness and the well-being of their employees, that does not mean that they always do.

Most people take jobs because they offer critical psychological perks like standing, ego satisfaction, and self-esteem (Chang et al., 2012; Cho & Huang, 2012; Jiang et al., 2012). Naturally inspiring job traits are task identity, task importance, skill range, liberty, and feedback (McKnight et al., 2009; Payne et al., 1976). However, positions may be expensive if staff cannot complete them satisfactorily. According to the role stress theory, long-term stress from employees' roles may lead to physical problems, including headaches and exhaustion (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Rising expectations and limited resources are examples of workers' role pressures (Sheridan et al., 2019). There are three main types of role stressors yet interconnected ideas: roles that are too many, too vague, or too at odds with one another. When individuals have more responsibilities than they have time to handle, they suffer from role overload. In this situation, the job requires skills and drive beyond what the person has or is interested in pursuing (Beehr & O'Driscoll, 1990). The lack of clarity about a person's responsibilities may lead to role ambiguity. In this scenario, the worker needs more authority and expertise to carry out the task (Gupta et al., 2022). When fulfilling one duty makes it hard to fulfill another, this is called role conflict. This points to demands and hopes that are at odds with one another. Local IT workers may be experiencing role stresses due to their jobs. More light may be shed on IT turnover (Qasim et al., 2014) by examining how various pressures in a position affect productivity.

Research into whether employees feel supported at work is becoming an increasingly significant sub-field of human resource management (Cummins, 1990; Jyoti & Bhau, 2016; Karasek et al., 1982). Previous studies have shown that employees respect their co-supervisor's assistance more than their peers or the company (Kottke & Sharafinski, 1988). The level of supervisor support is measured

by how much workers believe their managers care about them (De Clercq et al., 2021). The experience of being cared for, together with the provision of constructive social contact and resources, supports the position's requirements (Yammarino et al., 2008). Relational elements, such as supervisor support, have recently been the focus of research on employee turnover (Lindsay et al., 2020). Employee turnover may be predicted using factors such as perceived supervisor support and the connection quality between the leader and the group members (Stinson & Johnson, 1975). According to Jyoti and Bhau (2016), a negative correlation was shown between perceived supervisor support and employee turnover. In addition, workers who feel they have more substantial social support have greater access to the emotional and psychological resources necessary to deal with the stresses brought on by their roles (Maertz et al., 2007). This paper hypothesizes that when managers show they care for their IT workers, it will positively affect employee well-being in the face of role pressures (Yin et al., 2023).

Evidence shows that job stresses significantly affect IT professionals' propensity to resign, stressing the need for sophisticated mitigation research. Leadership support is crucial to this connection, but a full understanding is lacking. A methodologically robust structural equation modeling analysis may allow a deeper understanding of how leadership support intricately affects role stressors and the intention to quit in the ever-changing IT sector. This study intends to inform organizational initiatives to improve workplace support and retain competent IT workers. Moreover, it examines how job role demands affect IT professionals' job satisfaction. The paper also analyzes how supportive managers impact productivity and intention to quit.

A conceptual model of role stressors, supervisor support, work satisfaction, and turnover intention in IT is shown in Figure 1. This model was derived from the HR, organizational psychology, and psychology literature (Joseph et al., 2007).

The study hypotheses are as follows:

H1: Role stressors negatively influence job satisfaction among IT professionals.

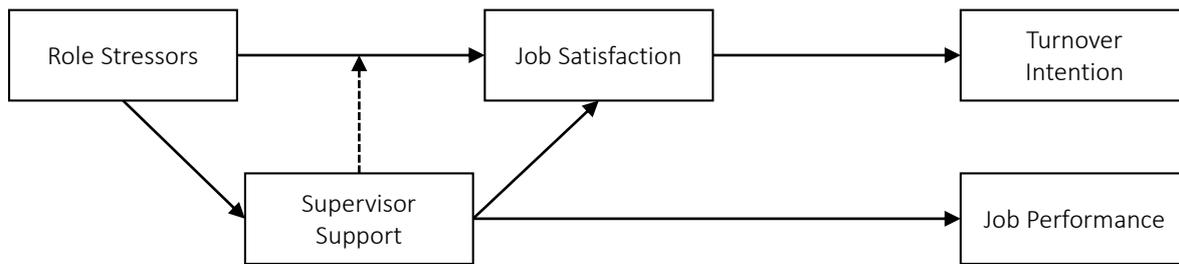


Figure 1. Research model

- H2: *Job satisfaction negatively influences turnover intention among IT professionals.*
- H3: *Supervisor support moderates the relationship between role stressors and job satisfaction.*
- H4: *Supervisor support mediates the relationship between role stressors and job satisfaction.*
- H5: *Supervisor support mediates the relationship between role stressors and job performance.*
- H6: *Supervisor support positively influences job performance among IT professionals.*

2. METHODOLOGY

A quantitative survey was conducted to gather real-world evidence for use in testing hypotheses. Much research on turnover used the same methodology (Ghapanchi & Aurum, 2011). The participants in this analysis were IT professionals living and working in the Bengaluru area. Questionnaires were distributed randomly among 426 IT professionals; 196 completed the questionnaire. Out of 196 responses, nine were invalid. So finally, 187 responses were finalized for the statistical analysis. The data collection period is 4 months (from March to June, 2023).

The questionnaire contained the purpose of the study and maintained transparency to foster trust between researchers and participants with ethical compliance. The participants were well informed about the study, voluntarily agreed to participate, and had the means to seek further information or clarification if needed. A small group of IT experts and two HRD practitioners checked the survey's

face and content validity. Twenty graduate IT students agreed to complete a pilot survey before the main survey to check its face validity. This pilot study aimed to ensure that participants grasped the concepts being tested and that the entire range of the scale was used. The pre-test and pilot only resulted in modest adjustments to the questionnaire instructions and the layout of the survey form. The completed survey has two primary parts.

Measures of constructs were adopted from those used in earlier research. Items for job satisfaction (Pond & Geyer, 1991) had four indicators with four different types of measurement: from 1 ('Very dissatisfied') to 5 ('Very satisfied'); 1 ('Don't like it at all') to 5 ('Like it very much'); from 1 ('Definitely would not take this job') to 5 ('Would take this job without hesitation'); and from 1 ('Far from ideal') to 5 ('Close to ideal'). On the remaining questions, a 5-point Likert scale was used to determine the level of agreement or disagreement with the statement, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The three indicators for the turnover intention construct were adopted from Allen and Meyer (1990). The three metrics of the job performance construct were drawn from Welbourne et al. (1998). The items used to evaluate the supervisor support were taken from Steelman et al. (2004). The two concepts that made up role stressors were role conflict and role ambiguity (Firth et al., 2004).

3. RESULTS

For this study, SmartPLS 4 is used to do both confirmatory factor analysis and PLS-SEM. The reliability test, discriminant validity test, and convergent validity test are essential tests that were done in this study. Information about the respondent's background can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. Sample description

Category	Feature	Number	Percent
Gender	Male	120	64.2
	Female	67	35.8
Age	Less than 20 years	12	6.5
	20-25 years	57	30.5
	25-30 years	72	38.5
	More than 30 years	46	24.5
Marital Status	Married	81	43.3
	Not married	106	56.7
Education	Undergraduate	72	38.5
	Postgraduate	97	51.9
	Ph.D./ M.Phil.	18	9.6

Note: N = 187.

Smart PLS is a method for incorporating a collection of ideas or constructs represented by various measure variables into an integrated model and estimating a sequence of dependent connections among them (Henseler et al., 2015). For structural equation modeling (SEM) and path modeling, statisticians often turn to SmartPLS. It is favored by academics above AMOS, LISREL, and EQS, among others, for several reasons (Hair et al., 2019). Because of its intuitive design, SmartPLS may be used by researchers with varied degrees of familiarity with statistical methods. SmartPLS is an SEM program that can handle non-normally distributed data since it does not assume multivariate normality (Hair et al., 2014). PLS works well with non-normal data, models with latent variables, and small sample numbers. Because of this, PLS is beneficial for studies that use either constructs defined by indicators (reflective) or constructs formed by in-

dicators (formative) in their measurement models (Hair et al., 2019). The bootstrapping method yields accurate estimates of standard errors, confidence intervals, and statistical significance tests, even with small sample sizes (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Research in fields like marketing, commerce, and the social sciences, where an emphasis is placed on predicting and explaining variation, favors using Smart PLS to construct predictive models (Henseler et al., 2015). Models with several latent constructs and many observable indicators are no problem for Smart PLS. It allows for in-depth research using the partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) approach.

Table 2 shows that the average variance extracted (AVE) is greater than 0.5; it is acceptable. Cronbach's alpha evaluates the reliability of observed indicator variable intercorrelations; this method is utilized to determine the dependability of internal consistency. It is assumed that the internal consistency reliability, as assessed by Cronbach's alpha, should be larger than 0.7 for all latent variables (Hair et al., 2014). According to Table 2, most latent variables have a Cronbach's alpha higher than 0.7. Cronbach's alpha is sensitive to the number of scale items and is found to underestimate internal consistency reliability; therefore, in addition to Cronbach's alpha, a composite reliability score of = or > 0.5 is employed to confirm internal consistency reliability. Outer loadings of each indicator are also greater than 0.708, which is acceptable except for JP1 (0.577). Although the AVE is greater than 0.628 for job performance, the study can consider the indicator JP1.

Table 2. Validity and reliability measure of reflective variables

Construct	Indicator	Factorial loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Supervisor Support	SS1	0.838	0.837	0.891	0.672
	SS2	0.832			
	SS3	0.801			
	SS4	0.806			
Job Satisfaction	JS1	0.836	0.838	0.892	0.673
	JS2	0.860			
	JS3	0.775			
	JS4	0.808			
Turnover Intention	TI1	0.884	0.837	0.899	0.748
	TI2	0.898			
	TI3	0.811			
Job Performance	JP1	0.577	0.803	0.829	0.628
	JP2	0.971			
	JP3	0.780			

Table 3. Discriminant validity

Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) - List	JP	JS	SS	TI
JP				
JS	0.129			
SS	0.112	0.855		
TI	0.434	0.181	0.069	
SS x Role Stressors	0.025	0.301	0.265	0.110

Note: JP = job performance; JS = job satisfaction; SS = supervisor support; TI = turnover intention.

The degree to which a measure does not correlate with another construct from which it is meant to discriminate is known as its discriminant validity. Essentially, one needs to show that there is no connection at all between several variables (Henseler et al., 2015). As Hair et al. (2019) suggested, the HTMT ratio criterion is used to establish discriminant validity. The threshold for the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio is 0.90 (Hair et al., 2014), and all the constructs are within the standard limit prescribed. Constructs that satisfied discriminant validity are presented in Table 3.

From Table 4, R² represents the amount of variability in the dependent variable that can be aggregated by all the independent variables together. This study considers R-square adjusted as it does not inflate the value based on the number of independent variables. The independent variables can explain 1.1% of the variability of job performance, 53.3 % of job satisfaction, 19.2% of the variability is explained by supervisor support, and turnover intention is explained by 1.9% by the independent variables.

As stressors are a formative construct, the study should check the validity by checking the significance of outer loadings and weights. The paper did not assess the reliability because the correlation-based measures are not meaningful when assessing the formative model (Hair et al., 2019). Table

5 shows that role ambiguity and conflict validity are significant ($P \leq 0.05$).

Convergent validity in the context of assessing formative measurement models is the extent to which one reflectively assessed variable of a concept coincides with another (Hair et al., 2019). In collinearity statistics, the VIF values for all the indicators are reliable as they are less than 3.0. The outer loadings and outer weights are also significant. So, the validity and reliability of the formative construct is significant (Table 6).

Table 7 demonstrates the predicted connections between the variables. Out of the six assertions, four are supported, while the other two are rejected. The link between role stressors and job performance and the association between role stressors and job satisfaction is influenced by supervisor support. Supervisor support functions as a moderator (0.035) between role stressors and job satisfaction. There is no mediation effect caused by supervisor assistance in the connection between role stressors and work satisfaction. In a similar vein, role stressors have a negative effect on work satisfaction. Consequently, job satisfaction reduces the likelihood of wanting to quit one's job.

Figure 2 indicates the outer loadings and average variance extracted values from Smart PLS software.

Table 4. R square

Construct	R-square	R-square adjusted
JP	0.016	0.011
JS	0.541	0.533
SS	0.197	0.192
TI	0.024	0.019

Note: JP = job performance; JS = job satisfaction; SS = supervisor support; TI = turnover intention.

Table 5. Validity measure of a formative construct

Construct	Items	Outer loadings (p-value)	Outer weights (p-value)
Stressors	Role ambiguity	0.000	0.000
	Role conflict	0.000	0.000

Table 6. Collinearity statistics (VIF)

Construct Items	VIF
Job Performance JP1	1.633
JP2	1.798
JP3	1.787
Job Satisfaction JS1	2.064
JS2	2.085
JS3	1.676
JS4	1.890
Role Stressors Role Ambiguity	1.520
Role Conflict	1.520
Supervisor Support SS1	2.297
SS2	2.253
SS3	1.764
SS4	1.794
Turnover Intention TI1	1.928
TI2	2.035
TI3	1.917

Table 7. Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Structural relationship	P value	Supported
H1	Role Stressors → JS	0.030	Supported
H2	JS → TI	0.023	Supported
H3	SS x Role Stressors → JS	0.035	Supported
H4	Role Stressors → SS → JS	0.372	Not Supported
H5	Role Stressors → SS → JP	0.000	Supported
H6	SS → JP	0.356	Not supported

Note: JP = job performance; JS = job satisfaction; SS = supervisor support; TI = turnover intention.

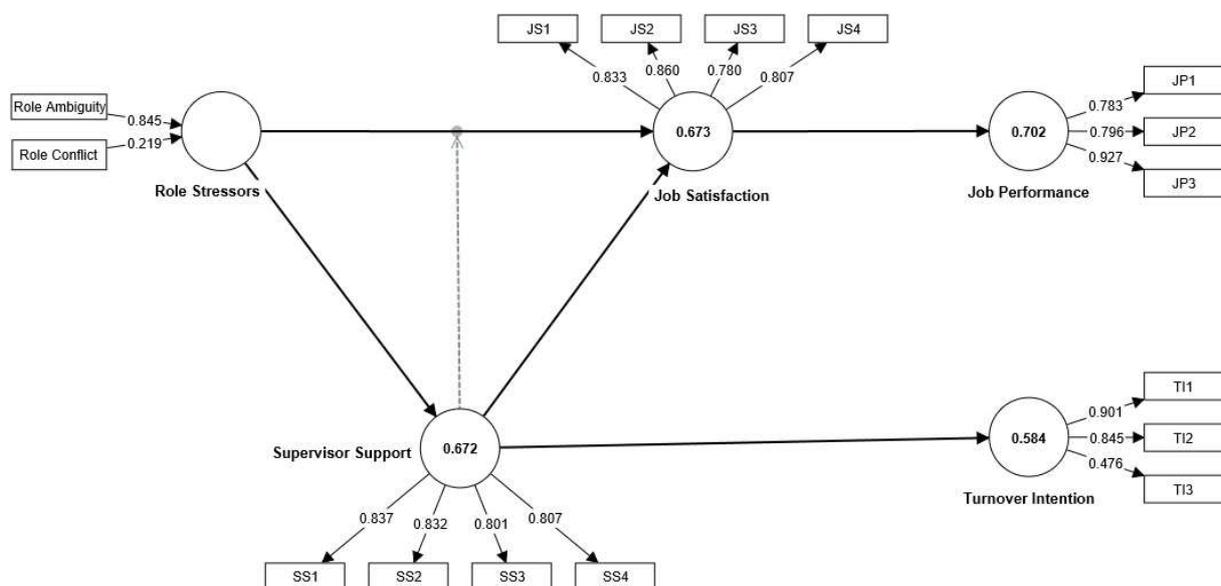


Figure 2. Outer loadings and AVE

4. DISCUSSION

According to Naidoo (2018a), role ambiguity plays a larger role in mediating the association between role stressors and turnover intentions than any of the other stressors studied in this study. However, it is intriguing that IT workers in Bengaluru are more tolerant of role conflict than role ambiguity. There is still much cause for alarm around role ambiguity concerns like insufficient knowledge or a lack of power to get things done. In addition, this study highlights the need to implement ways to provide greater supervisor assistance for IT staff in the workplace. For IT employees, role stressors have been proven to increase the likelihood of quitting their jobs (Lacity et al., 2009). This study analyzed the impact of role stressors on IT workers' job happiness. Previous studies have shown that role ambiguity plays a more significant role in mediating the link between role stressors and intention to leave than any other role stressors studied (Khattak et al., 2011).

Furthermore, this study emphasizes the importance of adopting strategies to deliver more supervisor support for IT personnel in the workplace (Ramadoss & Lape, 2014). The results, however, point to the roles of supervisor support and work satisfaction as mediators in this connection. Employees who perceive higher levels of role conflict and ambiguity will be less satisfied with their jobs and have higher intentions to leave the organization. Even if role stress existed, having a supportive supervisor significantly impacted job satisfaction (Baloyi et al., 2014). The IT employees' good connections with their managers helped them with role stress by lowering the likelihood that they would have to deal with challenges related to their jobs or by increasing the effectiveness of the incentives available (Ninaus et al., 2021). More resilient to the stresses of their jobs are the interpersonal and emotional resources of IT professionals who report high levels of supervisor support and job satisfaction (Dhanpat et al., 2018). In turn, these coping mechanisms result in workers having less of an intent to quit.

CONCLUSION

This study examined how job role demands affect IT professionals' job satisfaction. The research also examined how supportive managers impact productivity, and intention to quit.

Organizations may reduce the likelihood of role stresses by ensuring their employees feel supported by their superiors and content in their work. The influence of management assistance extends beyond mitigating the effects of job stresses on resignation intentions. Managers should also do everything they can to help their staff members advance. Having a supportive supervisor may help employees perform better while dealing with stress in the workplace. Finally, this study shows that the importance of supervisor support in mitigating the effects of role stress, boosting job satisfaction, and enhancing IT workers' performance persists despite the prevalence of innovative job designs based on concepts like self-management, agility, and autonomous work teams.

Because the population from which the sample was selected is generally homogenous, or because it has essential features with the broader community, and because the findings are largely consistent with those of earlier research, it is possible to boost the generalizability of the results of the sample size that was chosen for the study. Coming to the limitations, the study's participants were drawn from a pool of IT employees. Therefore, this analysis has to be replicated with a broader sample of IT professionals. In addition, the opinions of fresher, less experienced IT workers were excluded from this poll. Finally, research on relational resources for job stress was limited to supervisor support. Potentially more helpful are ties to other people. Organizational, employee, management, and family support are potential areas for further research.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Velaga Sri Sai.
 Data curation: Velaga Sri Sai.
 Formal analysis: Anitha Kumari Pinapati.
 Investigation: Velaga Sri Sai.
 Methodology: Anitha Kumari Pinapati.
 Project administration: Anitha Kumari Pinapati.
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 Software: Velaga Sri Sai.
 Supervision: Anitha Kumari Pinapati.
 Validation: Anitha Kumari Pinapati.
 Visualization: Anitha Kumari Pinapati.
 Writing – original draft: Velaga Sri Sai.
 Writing – review & editing: Anitha Kumari Pinapati.

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