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## The Impact of Digital Stress on Journalists: Challenges and Facing Them in the Digital Media Era

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### Info Article

Received: 12 June 2025

Revised: 15 Sept 2025

Accepted: 2 Oct 2025

Online Version: 30 Oct 2025

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### Abstract

The rapid advancement of information and communication technologies in the Society 5.0 era has significantly transformed the operations of journalists, introducing both opportunities and challenges. One major challenge is digital stress, which arises from constant connectivity and excessive use of digital tools. This study examines the impact of organizational innovation, work climate, journalist ability, and performance on digital stress experienced by journalists. A quantitative research approach was employed, using a structured questionnaire to collect data from journalists in Jambi, Indonesia. The survey measured variables such as digital stress, work climate, organizational innovation, journalist skills, and performance, with the data analysed using SPSS software. The findings indicate that organizational innovation and work climate significantly influence digital stress, with a supportive organizational environment and a positive work climate acting as mitigating factors. However, journalist ability and performance were found to have no significant effect on digital stress. The regression model explained 54.3% of the variance in digital stress, emphasizing the importance of organizational factors in reducing stress. The study underscores the need for media organizations to foster an adaptive, balanced digital work environment by implementing mental health strategies, promoting digital resilience training, and setting clear work-life boundaries. These actions are crucial for improving the well-being and performance of journalists in an increasingly digitalized media landscape.

Keywords: Digital Media; Digital Stress; Journalists; Organizational Innovation

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## INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of technology has made all services in virtual and digital online form normal and very accessible anywhere and by anyone. So, to overcome this problem, the era of society 5.0 is advancing rapidly as a form of innovation growth for new progress. Society 5.0 is referred to as a form of society centred on human individuals (human) that can balance economic progress by solving social problems through a system by integrating virtual and physical spaces (Lestari, 2023). Information technology is not something that is difficult to obtain today, because it has entered all lines of people's lives. Information technology continues to innovate and transform and is increasingly sophisticated, with its sophistication can provide many conveniences for people's lives (Hendarsyah,

2019). Society 5.0 describes that every activity carried out by humans is highly dependent on technology. Technology has become a basic necessity in the joints of human life, all integrated with smartphones (Bahrin, 2016).

The Ministry of Industry socialized that its ministry has designed Making Indonesia 4.0, which is an integrated road map to implement a number of strategies in entering the industrial era 4.0. At the socialization, Minister of Industry Airlangga Hartarto said that we have entered industry 4.0 since 2011, it is marked by increasing connectivity, interaction and boundaries between humans, machines and other resources that are increasingly converging through information and communication technology (Ministry of Industry 2018). As for the talk related to industry 4.0, the world was surprised by a statement from Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at the World Economic Forum (WEF) meeting in Davos, Switzerland on January 23, 2019. Where in his statement he has a vision of Society 5.0 or Society 5.0. He said that society 5.0 will be connected by data to boost future growth (Roby 2019; Haryanti 2019).

Society 5.0 is a human-centered society concept based on the use of technology, where this concept was first developed by Japan (Kanda, 2021). Keidanren issued a declaration "Towards the Realization of the New Economy and Society – Economic and Community Reform" which then established society 5.0 as a new vision to carry out sustainable development and a more responsible life of society (Keidanren, 2016). Therefore, the use of digital media-based technology is often carried out today, the use of digital media with the development of information technology and social media, millennial children and the next generation become the Digital Native generation, namely the generation born when the internet has become an integral part of them (Supratman, 2018). Through the use of social media for three hours and 14 minutes every day, it can have adverse impacts such as stress, depression, hallucinations, and inhibited communication (Subowo, 2021).

In the 20th century, the rapid development of digital technologies has changed the way people work and interact. Although the development of this technology brings various conveniences, the impact on the mental well-being of employees is also becoming more and more real. Currently, we can no longer deny that the use of digital technology in the workplace can have a bad impact on the work stress level of employees (Maharani, 2023).

The internet, mobile devices, and digital applications have a dominant role in many aspects of human life, including in the world of work. This technology enables business processes, communication, and human interaction to be faster, more efficient, and connected. However, in addition to helping in increasing the productivity of employees' performance, the increasingly advanced digital era also brings a negative impact on employees due to excessive use of technology. Digital stress is described as stress caused by the use of powerful information and communication technologies and initiated by continuous access to diverse social content (Hefner & Vorderer, 2016). In digital stress, there are several types, such as availability stress which is formed from the expectation of an employee to always be there as explained earlier. In addition to availability stress, Hefner and Vorderer (2016) claim that there are other forms of digital stress, such as approval anxiety, communication overload, and communication overload, and fear of missing out (FoMO).

Digital stress according to Steele, et al (2020) is a condition of stress and anxiety, because through mobile or social media various notifications come in from the use of information and communication technology. In line with Nick, et al., (2022) that digital stress as a source of interpersonal stress that arises in adolescents. So that digital stress is at risk of being felt by teenagers who use digital media and the internet.

Papandrea, et al. (2020) stated that work-related stress can lead to unhealthy behaviours such as excessive alcohol consumption, increased smoking habits, poor eating habits, inactivity, and erratic sleep patterns. These things can certainly interfere with an employee's productivity which has an impact on their performance in work life and daily personal life. Therefore, this article will try to discuss more deeply the impact of technology on employees' mental well-being as well as efforts that can help in overcoming digital stress. Taking action in the form of efforts that can help overcome the mental pressure of employees is necessary to help employees free from all the stress that burdens them.

The negative impact of excessive internet use can give rise to physical and psychological problems, including internet addiction which is the most common (Akin and Iskender, 2011). The current use of digital media and the internet can contribute to the emergence of stress. So, this study aimed to analyse how digital stress among journalists is influenced by organizational innovation, work climate, journalist ability, and journalist performance.

Digital tools such as email, instant messaging, and social media can generate large amounts of data that need to be handled quickly (Ausat et al., 2022). As for the lack of boundaries, where the use of digital technology sometimes does not know a specific time and location (Konca, 2022). This shows that even outside of work hours, employees often feel the need to be contactable to receive and reply to incoming messages and emails. As a result, employees may find it difficult to distinguish between work time and rest time. Then, time pressure, where digital technology has the potential to speed up the process, thereby providing more time pressure to employees (Tarigan et al., 2023).

Although many studies have discussed technostress and its impact on employees, research specifically addressing digital stress among journalists remains limited particularly in the context of how continuous digital engagement affects mental well-being. Additionally, there is a lack of comprehensive empirical studies analysing how organizational innovation, work climate, journalist ability, and performance interact with digital stress in the media industry. The psychosocial impacts on journalists, who must balance fast-paced news production with continuous connectivity, remain underexplored in Indonesian.

The current literature lacks in-depth research on digital stress on psychosomatic, emotional, and disease impacts. Digital stress does not significantly affect negative emotions or physical complaints. However, digital stress appears to exert a more substantial predictive influence on negative emotions. The study emphasizes the increasing digital stress, which is contrary to the positive adaptation to digital working conditions in the observed period (Wrede, 2023).

Therefore, we tried to understand how digital stress evolved during the pandemic and whether digital stress predicted differences in negative emotions and physical complaints in a home office environment.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study adopts a quantitative approach with a survey design, which allows for the collection of data that can be statistically measured. This method was chosen to provide a clear picture of the relationships between the variables under investigation.

### ***Research Design***

This study adopts a quantitative research design aimed at investigating the impact of organizational innovation, work climate, journalist ability, and performance on digital stress experienced by journalists. A non-experimental, cross-sectional survey design was employed to gather data, providing a snapshot of the relationships between the identified variables. This approach was chosen due to its effectiveness in exploring cause-and-effect relationships in social sciences, particularly in examining how external organizational factors contribute to digital stress. The research design allows for the identification of patterns and correlations, offering insights into the degree of influence exerted by these variables on digital stress. Additionally, the use of a structured survey facilitates the objective measurement of perceptions and experiences of digital stress within a defined population.

### ***Research Subject***

The subjects of this study were journalists actively working in Jambi, Indonesia, who were selected through a non-probability sampling technique. This sampling method was chosen due to its practical applicability when it is not feasible to obtain a complete sampling frame. The sample was specifically targeted to include journalists with experience in the daily use of digital tools and media, ensuring that the data collected would accurately reflect the digital stressors relevant to the profession. Inclusion criteria required participants to be employed in journalism and engaged with digital

technologies in their work processes. As such, the sample consists of individuals who are directly affected by the challenges associated with digital media, allowing for a focused examination of the specific impacts of technological engagement on stress levels.

### ***Instruments and Data Collection Techniques***

The primary instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire comprising 19 items designed to assess the five main variables of interest: digital stress, work climate, organizational innovation, journalist ability, and journalist performance. These items were developed based on existing literature on digital stress and organizational behavior, ensuring content validity. A 5-point Likert scale was employed for each item, allowing participants to express their degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." The questionnaire was distributed to the selected journalists, and the data were collected manually to ensure completeness and clarity.

Table 1. Grid instrument

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>
Digital Stress	4
Work Climate (IK)	4
Organizational Innovation (MO)	4
Journalist Ability (KP)	4
Journalist Performance (KJ)	3

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS software, starting with reliability and validity tests to confirm the internal consistency of the items. The normality of the data was tested using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method, and the heteroscedasticity test was applied to examine variance stability across observations. A multiple linear regression analysis was subsequently performed to determine the influence of the independent variables on digital stress. This approach allowed for an examination of the relationships between organizational innovation, work climate, journalist ability, and performance with digital stress, facilitating the testing of the study's hypotheses.

### ***Observation Guide***

The data in this study were analysed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which consists of three interrelated stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. In the data reduction phase, the researcher selected, focused, and simplified the raw data obtained from observations, interviews, and document analysis to ensure its relevance to the research objectives. This process involved filtering out less significant information and organizing the data to facilitate further analysis.

Variable data was obtained using the Likert Scale measurement tool and processed through SPSS software, where the questionnaire consisted of 19 statement items that had been prepared. The measuring tool used is the Likert Scale (1= "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree"). In item 1) *Digital stress*, 4 sub scale items e.g. "I feel that the use of digital tools in journalism work is too complicated"; 2) *Work climate*, 4 sub scale items e.g. "I am worried that the information I send and receive as a journalist through digital technology is not safe enough"; 3) *Organizational innovation*, 4 sub scale items such as "I am feel that the information and communication technologies used in the workplace are too complicated and time-consuming to learn"; 4) *Journalist skills*, 4 sub-scale items e.g. "Are you worried that your job could be replaced by automation or AI technology?" (5) *Journalist performance*, 3 sub-scale items e.g. "Are the information and communication technology functions available in the workplace not suitable for the needs of your task?". Based on the results of the reliability analysis, the digital stress gauge has good reliability with a *Cronbach's Alpha* value of 0.897. This means that the items in this instrument generally contribute positively. The items included in this study are listed below:

*Digital Stress*

1. I am often confused by the features provided by software or digital platforms to carry out journalistic tasks
2. I often feel that the use of digital tools in journalism work is too complicated and takes longer than expected
3. I don't have enough time to learn the new functions of technology that are necessary for journalism
4. My personal life is disrupted because the problems of journalistic work often follow me through digital technology

*Working Climate*

1. Digital technology has made it difficult for me to separate my journalistic work from my personal life, leading to an imbalance
2. The expectation of always being available and responding immediately through digital technology interferes with my break time and personal life
3. I am worried that the information I send and receive as a journalist through digital technology is not secure enough
4. I often feel anxious about the possibility of hackers or unauthorized parties accessing sensitive information related to my journalistic work

*Organizational Innovation*

1. Technical problems with the digital tools I use for journalism, such as malfunctions or slow responses, cause me to lose valuable time
2. I know where I work that I have adopted new technology to improve the work process of journalists
3. I feel that the information and communication technologies used in the workplace are too complicated and time-consuming to learn
4. I feel supported by the management to propose and implement innovative digital-based ideas in making journalistic works

*Journalist Abilities*

1. Are you worried that your job could be replaced by automation or AI technology?
2. Do you feel your organization provides adequate training to develop your digital skills?
3. Is your workload increasing due to the use of information and communication technology?
4. Do you feel that digital technology helps improve the quality of the journalistic content you produce to be more flexible, such as the ability to work remotely, online collaboration

*Journalist Performance*

1. Is technical support in the workplace inadequate when you're facing issues with information and communication?
2. Are the information and communication technology functions available in the workplace not suitable for the needs of your task?
3. Do you often encounter technical issues or information and communication technology breakdowns that interfere with your work?

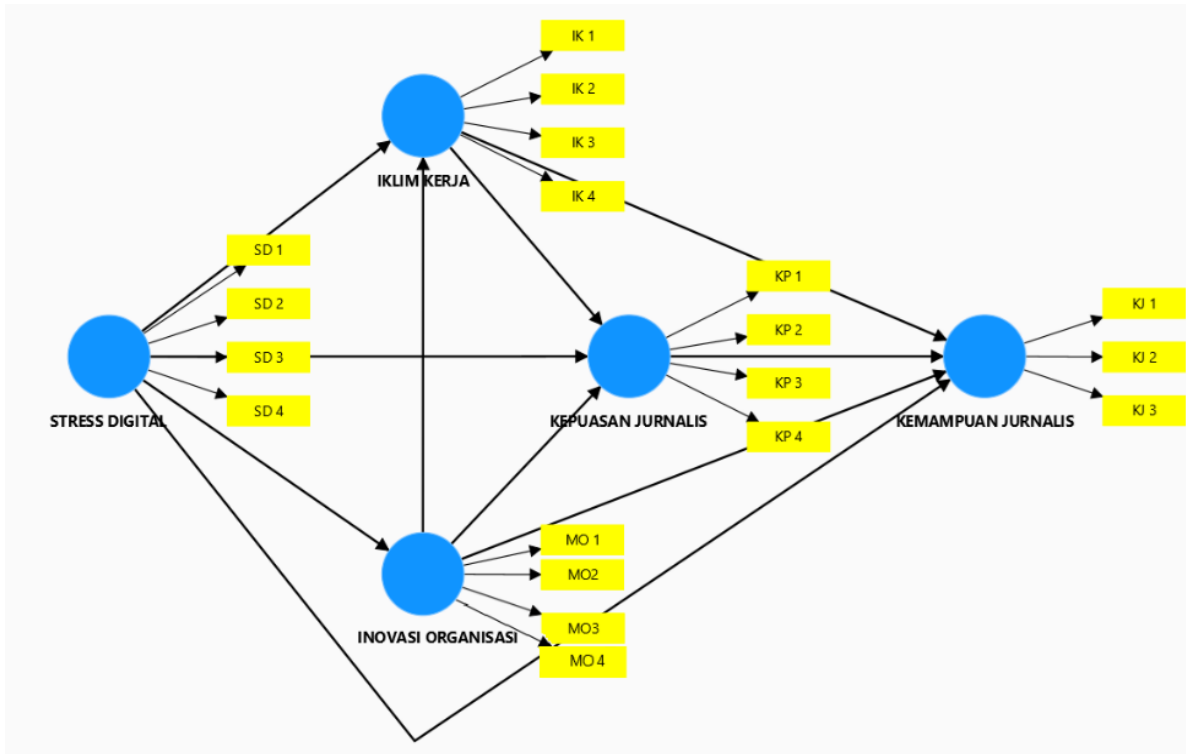


Figure 1. Model of Relationships Between Variables Affecting Digital Stress in Journalists

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The statistical analysis in this study was carried out using SPSS software. Initially, a validity test was conducted on all 19 questionnaire items, and the results indicated that all items were valid, with correlation coefficients exceeding the critical value. The results of the analysis showed that all items had a significant correlation with the measured construct, with the value of  $r$  calculated  $> r$  of the table indicating that the items were valid. The reliability test showed a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.897, confirming strong internal consistency. Based on the results of the normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method, the significance of  $0.200 > 0.05$  is known, so it can be concluded that the residual value is normally distributed. After knowing that all data are normally distributed, a heteroskedasticity test is carried out to test whether there is an unevenness of variance from residual in one observation to another (Juliandi et al., 2014). Usually, cross-section data contains heteroscedasticity situations because this data collects data representing various small, medium, and large sizes (Ghozali, 2016). The Table 2 is the results of the heteroskedasticity test.

Table 2. Heteroscedasticity test results

Type		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	t	Coefficient	
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients		Beta	Sig.
1	(Constant)	3.570	.747		4.779	.000	
	TotalMO	-.201	.105	-.272	-1.911	.059	
	TotalIK	-.115	.072	-.214	-1.582	.116	
	TotalKP	.179	.057	.326	3.158	.002	
	TotalKJ	.024	.075	.036	.321	.749	

a. Dependent Variable: ABS\_RES

The results from Table 2 provide an analysis of heteroscedasticity within the variables studied. Specifically, for the Organizational Innovation (MO) variable, the significance value (Sig.) is 0.059, which is greater than the 0.05 threshold. This indicates that there are no symptoms of heteroscedasticity in this variable, meaning that the variance of the residuals remains consistent across the observations. Similarly, the Work Climate (IK) variable has a Sig. value of 0.116, which also exceeds the 0.05 threshold. This result further confirms that the Work Climate variable does not exhibit heteroscedasticity, implying stable variance across different observations. On the other hand, the Journalist Ability (KP) variable has a Sig. value of 0.002, which is below the 0.05 threshold, suggesting that it does experience symptoms of heteroscedasticity. This indicates that the variance of residuals for this variable varies across observations. Finally, the Journalist Performance (KJ) variable has a Sig. value of 0.749, which is much higher than 0.05, signalling that there are no symptoms of heteroscedasticity in this variable. Overall, while most of the variables maintain consistent variance, the Journalist Ability variable exhibits instability in variance, requiring further consideration.

Then a multiple linear regression test was carried out, namely a multiple linear regression analysis model used to explain the influence of independent variables on bound variables (dependent). The following are the results of multiple linear regression analysis:

Table 3. Multiple linear regression analysis results

Type	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.748a	.559	.543	3.413

a. Predictors: (Constant), TotalKJ, TotalKP, TotalIK, TotalMO

b. Dependent Variable: TotalSD

It is known that the Adjusted R Square value is 0.543, so it is concluded that the variable influence of independent variables on dependent variables simultaneously is 54%. Then an F test (simultaneous) was carried out to find out whether the independent variables together (stimulants) affected the dependent variables. Here are the results of the F test:

Table 4. Test F results (simultaneous)

Type		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1596.242	4	399.060	34.266	.000b
	Residual	1257.758	108	11.646		
	Total	2854.000	112			

a. Dependent Variable: TotalSD

b. Predictors: (Constant), TotalKJ, TotalKP, TotalIK, TotalMO

It is known that the Sig. value is 0.000 ( $<0.05$ ), so it is concluded that the independent variable has a significant effect simultaneously on the dependent variable. After the F test is carried out, the data will be carried out a T test to test the influence of the independent variable partially on the dependent variable, which is usually used to test the hypothesis in the research. Here are the results of the T test:

Table 5. Results of the T Test (hypothesis test)

Type		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	5.606	1.284		4.366	.000
	Total MO	.453	.181	.259	2.511	.014
	Total IK	.687	.125	.542	5.514	.000
	Total KP	-.168	.097	-.129	-1.721	.088
	Total KJ	.128	.128	.081	1.002	.319

a. Dependent Variable: TotalSD

The Sig. value of the MO variable is 0.014 (<0.05), concluding that the Organizational Innovation variable has a significant effect on the Digital Stress variable (Y). The Sig. value of the IK variable is 0.000 (<0.05) so it is concluded that the Work Climate variable has a significant effect on the Digital Stress variable (Y). This suggests that digital stress is more strongly driven by external organizational conditions such as the clarity of digital systems, technological change pressure, and expectations for constant availability rather than by personal characteristics. The Sig. value of the KP variable is 0.088 (>0.05), thus concluding that the Journalist Ability variable does not have a significant effect on the Digital Stress variable (Y). The Sig. value of the KJ variable is 0.319 (>0.05), so it is concluded that the Journalist Performance variable has a significant effect on the Digital Stress variable (Y). These results indicate the importance of a supportive environment and innovative infrastructure in mitigating digital stress among journalists.

According to Sudariana (2021), Multiple Linear Regression is a linear regression model involving more than one independent variable or predictor. According to Sugiyono (2012), it is stated that multiple regression analysis is used by researchers, if the researcher intends to make forecasts related to the state (ups and downs) of dependent variables (criteria), if two or more independent variables as predictive factors are manipulated (ups and downs). To further interpret the relationship between independent variables and digital stress, a multiple linear regression equation was constructed based on the regression coefficients obtained. The following are the results of the analysis of multiple linear regression equations:

$$Y = 5.606 + 0.453(\text{MO}) + 0.687(\text{IK}) - 0.168(\text{KP}) + 0.128(\text{KJ})$$

This equation suggests that when all independent variables are held constant at zero, the baseline value of digital stress (Y) is 5.606. The value of the MO regression coefficient has a positive value (+) of 0.453, so it can be interpreted that if the MO variable increases, the Y variable will also increase, and vice versa. The positive coefficient for organizational innovation implies that higher levels of innovation in an organization tend to increase digital pressure, due to adaptation pressure or the complexity of new technologies. The value of the IK regression coefficient has a positive value (+) of 0.687, so it can be interpreted that if the IK variable increases, the Y variable will also increase, and vice versa. The work climate variable (IK = 0.687) shows a strong and statistically significant positive effect on digital stress, indicating that a less supportive or more demanding digital work environment may heighten psychological strain. The value of the KP regression coefficient is negative (-) of -0.168, so it can be interpreted that if the KP variable increases, the Y variable will also decrease, and vice versa. Journalist ability (KP = -0.168) had a negative coefficient, suggesting that higher digital competency might reduce stress, though the effect was statistically insignificant. The value of the KJ regression coefficient has a positive (+) value of 0.128, so it can be interpreted that if the KJ variable increases, the Y variable will also increase, and vice versa. Journalist performance displayed a small positive coefficient, indicating a minimal and non-significant influence on digital stress.

These findings reinforce the importance of addressing organizational and environmental factors especially innovation processes and work climate as primary contributors to digital stress, more so than individual skill level or output. The regression model helps to quantify the relative contributions of each factor, providing a valuable diagnostic tool for digital stress management strategies within media organizations.

## CONCLUSION

The results of the study showed that the value of sig. the variables of Organizational Innovation (MO) of 0.014 (<0.05), Work Climate (IK) of 0.000 (<0.05), and Journalist Performance (KJ) of 0.319 (<0.05) so that it was stated to have a significant influence on Digital Stress (SD), while Journalist Ability (KP) was 0.088 (<0.05) so that it did not have a significant influence on Digital Stress (Y). This study shows that organizational innovation and work climate have a significant effect on digital stress in journalists, while journalists' abilities and performance do not have a significant effect. This confirms that digital stress is more influenced by work environment factors than individual

factors. The new concept that can be concluded is that digital stress is an organizational phenomenon, not merely a personal deficiency. The implication is that media organizations need to build a healthy work climate, simplify technology, and set clear work boundaries to maintain the mental well-being of journalists in the digital era.

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