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Media Technology Influence on Work Engagement, Existential Fulfillment and Flourishing among Working Professionals

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Abstract

The implementation of media technology across everyday life has introduced fundamental changes to human experiences in recent years, by changing how people seek intentions and understand meanings in their existence. Modern media technology innovations have brought dramatic differentiation to human connections in the context of their environment. Media technology has influenced the emotional states, professional development, psychological well-being, and social connections of individuals. To comprehend the impact of technology on humanity, this study aims to understand how media technology influences work engagement, an individual's pursuit of meaning, self-actualization, existential fulfillment, human flourishing and overall well-being. Research analysis has been performed using a literature review combined with theoretical frameworks and empirical data, which brings to the forefront that media technology serves complex and multifunctional roles and functions in our lives. It demonstrates bipartite effects on personal development as it holds the potential to enhance existential satisfaction and personal growth, but also poses certain risks to individuals, like overreliance and escapism, and to social well-being as social isolation, superficial engagement, and existential anxiety. In the 21st century, modern technological developments have transformed our communication styles, social interactions, educational processes, and emotional perception. Digital media backed by artificial intelligence has brought extensive change to virtually every domain of human life through its substantial proliferation. "The study involved participants from the medical, managerial, and IT sectors and utilized various psychological assessment tools, including the Media and Technology Usage and Attitudes Scale (MTUAS), the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), the Existential Fulfillment Scale, and the Flourishing Scale." The results were statistically significant and demonstrated that media technology negatively impacts workers' engagement levels, their feelings of existential fulfillment, and flourishing in life. It was found that extensive reliance on technology leads people to experience reduced levels of engagement in work and lower levels of Fulfillment and Flourishing. Evidently, technology serves as a proven expediting tool and possesses credible optimization capabilities. Henceforth, for our optimum personal growth, meaningful engagement, and personal and professional positive emotional outcomes, recommendations have been specified on how to employ technology in everyday life to achieve the best of technological innovations, while simultaneously preserving the essence of being human.

Keywords: Media Technology, Work Engagement, Existential Fulfillment, Flourishing, Working Professionals.

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Introduction

Media technology enhances existential fulfillment to its highest degree by enabling people to understand wider truth perspectives while expanding their intellectual base through personal interests. It helps explore various aspects through new ideas, cultures, and worldviews. The internet functions as an online library to enable people to access a wide range of information, exploration of philosophical ideas, spiritual practices, and psychological theories that serve as a tool to explore the understanding of purpose that matters to people. Online forums, educational platforms, TED Talks, and Coursera enable users to develop their learning skills and achieve personal growth through self-education. These platforms help individuals advance their intellectual levels, which leads to personal growth and enables them to achieve a sense of accomplishment through learning (Siemens, 2005).

Video channels on YouTube, together with social media platforms, present their users with different views that let them build both empathy and personal development, cultural awareness, and personal growth. People can develop through participation with content that tests their thinking. People who go beyond their preformed opinions will embark upon intellectual progress, which advances their understanding of themselves and the world around them (Shah, 2021).

In present-day hectic society, where people face social isolation or distance, relationships are maintained through various digital communication features via social media, which also enable users to create new friendships and connections. Through these platforms, users can make social connections that help develop feelings of communal integration, strengthen emotional support, collaborative intent and shared purposes in common, which can assist individuals in achieving meaning in their lives through these platforms (Wellman, 2001).

The invention of social media platforms, together with digital communication tools, has revolutionized human relationship-building mechanisms. New technologies transgress geographical boundaries through their creation of worldwide social networks. Such user platforms give people the ability to sustain relationships between family members and friends by sharing vital information, life experiences, and offering mutual support. The need for social connections is fundamental for flourishing because emotional support and a sense of belonging produce meaningful interaction opportunities (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Through media technology, members of marginalized communities and socially isolated groups find essential support to overcome loneliness. Online support groups, virtual communities, and social media provide interactive environments, enabling individuals to exchange stories, information, guidance, and emotional support. For instance, people with mental health issues, chronic illnesses, or niche interests can bond through online communities that improve their sense of community and belonging (Baker & Moore, 2021).

The combination of social media platforms, together with YouTube and blogs, provides people with media technologies to fulfill their creative ambitions. By producing and sharing content, individuals explore their personal identities and, along with the feedback, strive to establish their values in alignment with a meaningful and prosperous life. McLuhan (1964) explains that receiving feedback enables people to strengthen their self-esteem and helps in achieving better levels of personal fulfillment.

The rise of digital art production, combined with music composition and writing under Instagram and Quora, allows social media to enable users to present their abilities on a broad spectrum, which produces a sense

of satisfaction and growth, paving the way for self-actualization. People who develop genuine and authentic content that connects and reflects upon society and current trends often receive recognition and numerous awards, which induces a sense of profound fulfillment as their creative ideas receive desired acknowledgement (McLuhan, 1964).

There exist numerous advantages on account of media technology within society, but humanity is subjected to certain conjoined vulnerabilities, as social media faces one of the primary criticisms for fostering social comparison. Facebook and Instagram users frequently showcase curated highlights of their lives through their platforms. These platforms' software promotes the spread of idealized life presentations that might not show the entire reality of life. These deceptive experiences result in feelings of inadequacy, anxiety, and lack of self-esteem. Research by Vogel et al. (2014) demonstrated that people who undertake regular social comparisons are at greater risk of reduced levels of life satisfaction and well-being and may develop negative self-perception.

Media technologies provide vast content through their platforms, but the level of interaction they promote is superficial in nature. Individuals now prefer to view headlines, videos quickly and consume multiple information concurrently without active mental participation. But for genuine Fulfillment and Flourishing, becoming mindful through deep reflection, along with critical thinking, is quintessential. Carr presents his argument in *The Shallows* that the internet establishes "a culture of distraction" (2010). This "distraction culture" renders people inefficient in carrying out significant, deep thought processes. Internet-based technologies pull people away from developing critical existential goals and meaningful relationships (Carr, 2010). The rise of social media platforms has transformed personal life into consumer goods through staged public postings by users, which results in a substantial gap between self-presented online and an authentic, real one. The actual self-experience differs from the constructed self's online representation (Gergen, 2002).

Several information platforms create an information overflow that overwhelms people with an excess of stimuli. Endless online news feeds, coupled with updates and advertisements on the internet, have converted personal experiences into a format that serves commercial purposes. Media content through advertisements generates too much information, which causes individuals to face challenges in processing meaningful information. The continuous stream of information that people encounter regularly results in cognitive fatigue after trying to concentrate on essential tasks (Carr, 2010).

Multiple digital platforms work as addictive systems through user-designed engagement mechanisms. Prolonged digital engagement results in diminished focus because it reduces attention spans and disparages one's capacity to concentrate. This inadequate focus and self-reflection quality leads to diminished performance in personal relationships, work engagement, and overall development. The "dopamine-driven" nature of social media likes, notifications, comments, and messaging features results in pathological behavior patterns that prevent meaningful activity engagement. Extended periods of browsing through media feeds give immediate pleasure, through which users use these platforms to escape their worries regarding existential matters. The tendency to disregard existential matters through immersing in the online world proves ineffective for lasting satisfaction (Alter, 2017).

Overdependence on digital devices and their incorporation in every domain of life can deteriorate social skills while intensifying feelings of isolation between people. Physical disconnect from present experiences and emotional estrangement from others result in increased feelings of social isolation, together with feelings of loneliness and reduced opportunities for personal growth through direct human interaction.

Individuals now spend their time in front of screens instead of building direct relationships with other individuals in meaningful ways. Under extreme circumstances, digital addiction can lead to an absolute disconnection from the real world, which might produce severe negative effects on human development.

The rapid expansion of media technology systems has unexpectedly changed the conditions of workplace interaction between employees. The technological revolution has transformed professional communication methods, which influenced work-related collaboration and employee commitment to the workplace. These technological tools in contemporary workplaces influence the productivity levels of organizations, such as through instant messaging, video conferencing, and several other collaborative platforms. While these tools try to make communication easier, their impact on employee connectivity is multifaceted. Although media technology helps organizations achieve better engagement results through collaborative work, improper execution can lead to undesirable outcomes. Inadequate management of digital tools results in burnout, together with decreased focus.

Work engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterized by vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli et.al.,2002). Media technology fosters real-time communication, collaboration across distant places, and the availability of information through these systems, allowing organizations to increase employee engagement. Flexible mobile technologies help employees shape their work schedules and improve their work-life balance. This enables flexible working arrangements, which in turn promote a greater work-life balance and higher employee satisfaction (Golden & Geisler, 2007).

However, constant digital connectivity may cause a condition known as technostress. Ayyagari et al. (2011) identified "technostress" as mental exhaustion that develops from excessive technology utilization. Excessive notifications, prolonged screen time, and bleak demarcation between work and personal activities cause technostress, thereby leading to reduced work engagement, digital fatigue, and burnout (Tarafdar et al., 2015). Therefore, organizations need to establish rules and regulations that minimize the threats arising from excessive use of technology. Strategies need to be crafted regarding digital detox and mindful communication in organizations.

The theories from positive psychology (Seligman, 2011), existential psychology (Yalom, 1980), and critical media studies (McLuhan, 1964) suggest media technology seems to raise major concerns regarding its effects on human existential fulfillment. Digital connectivity generates an enigmatic pattern since it might make people distance themselves from actual connections. People choose to be present but apart in their physical surroundings, as they prefer virtual communication channels instead of real social connections. The recent concept of phubbing serves as an excellent example of this phenomenon because people ignore their present surroundings while being completely immersed in their smartphones.

Various media platforms utilize addictive strategies against users when they employ algorithms to maximize user engagement. Highly engaged users, because of cyclic algorithmic features, often develop addictive behaviors that enhance their feelings of emptiness repeatedly throughout the day. Existential emptiness occurs when people look for fleeting happiness through social media interaction and online notifications without being aware of their true selves by spending time on trivial life activities rather than on genuine ones, due to their addiction to notifications (Alter, 2017).

Existential fulfillment develops from individuals seeking meaning and purpose in life, representing core elements within existential domains. “Existential fulfillment refers to a way of life full of meaning and purpose and reveals an existential psychological approach to life” (Langle et. al,2003). According to Viktor

Frankl(2006), people have the need for meaning as an essential part of their well-being. Logotherapy, according to Frankl, shows people can pursue meaning despite any hardships they face. When confronted with adversity, people attain meaning through upholding personal ethics, maintaining significant relationships, and seeking enlightenment and transcendence.

Existential psychology derives its principles from three theorists: Irvin Yalom (1980), Rollo May (1983) and Viktor Frankl (2006), who studied existential methods. Yalom examines how people engage with core existential inquiries regarding freedom, isolation, meaning, and death. Media technology provides both positive and negative aspects that affect free choice and anxiety. Through the internet, people gain unmatched capabilities for accessing information, conducting digital communication, and creative artistic expression. This autonomy can contribute to self-governance, enhancing personal development and the search for meaning.

Through virtual connections established by media technology, people develop feelings of social detachment, isolation, and disconnection from the real world. Social media, for instance, has led to social isolation mostly among younger generations (Twenge, 2017). Although the use of media technologies, especially online communities, gives individuals the capability to investigate existential concerns and exchange life stories with others, the incessant pursuit of irrelevant information and an endless scrolling of digital feeds might make individuals go haywire and distant from more profound existential reflection.

Positive psychology defines Flourishing as the cultivation of positive emotional states, personal strengths, and a sense of engagement with life's deeper purposes (Seligman, 2011). Flourishing of a person requires doing or being well in the following five broad domains of human life: happiness and life satisfaction; health, both mental and physical; meaning and purpose; character and virtue, and close social relationships.

This life-satisfaction measure allows an individual to weigh the various components of psychological well-being and other aspects of life, as they fit the above-mentioned parameters. The structures, technological developments, laws, and incentives—financial or otherwise—that support the family, workplace, education, and religious community will probably be significant ways for society as a whole to flourish if we want societal good, which is broadly defined as human flourishing and crudely represented by the measures mentioned above.

Social media and digital platforms allow people to experience various positive emotions such as laughter, enjoyment, and satisfaction. However, excessive use of media technology may yield negative emotions, such as anxiety, depression or envy. Various media platforms enhance user engagement through their algorithmic systems through video games, virtual reality (VR), and interactive platforms, but over-reliance on digital participation leads to decreased interpersonal interactions, degrading the quality of human relationships. Also, through the internet, users find ways to investigate and share personal values, beliefs, and worldviews, yet it can also contribute to a sense of meaninglessness driven by valueless content, consumerism, and algorithm-driven interactions.

Objectives

1. To study the effect of Media Technology Use on Work Engagement of Working Professionals.
2. To study the effect of Media Technology Use on Existential Fulfillment of Working Professionals.
3. To study the effect of Media Technology Use on the Flourishing of Working Professionals.

Hypotheses

1. There will be a significant effect of Media Technology Use on Work Engagement of Working Professionals.
2. There will be a significant effect of Media Technology Use on Existential Fulfillment of Working Professionals.
3. There will be a significant effect of Media Technology Use on Flourishing of Working Professionals.

Method

Sample

The sample of the present study consists of 150 working professionals comprising technocrats, doctors, and managers of ages ranging between 30–50 years old from India.

Measures/Tools

1. **The Media and Technology Usage and Attitudes Scale (MTUAS)** (Rosen and Whaling et al., 2013)
   A self-report tool that examines information technology and social media usage, as well as technological attitudes. This is a 60-item measurement tool with 15 subscales that have been demonstrated to be reliable and valid.
   - **Usage Subscales**: The scale consists of 44 items divided across 11 subcategories.
   - **Attitudes Subscales**: The subscales are made up of 16 items, categorized into four dimensions.
2. **Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)** (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2002)
   Work engagement refers to a positive and satisfying mental state connected to one's job, marked by high levels of energy (vigor), strong involvement (dedication), and deep concentration (absorption) (Schaufeli et al., 2002).
   The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) is a self-administered questionnaire consisting of 17 items that assess three key components of work engagement: Vigor (6 items), Dedication (5 items), and Absorption (6 items).
3. **Existential Fulfillment Scale** (Loonstra, Brouwers and Tomic, 2007)
   Existential fulfillment refers to a meaningful and purposeful life (Langle et al., 2003).
   The scale has good reliability and validity and consists of 15 items, 5 items for each of the three dimensions of existential fulfillment: Self-acceptance, Self-actualization, and Self-transcendence. These items will be graded on a 5-point Likert scale, with 0 representing "not at all" and 4 representing "completely" suited to the responder.
4. **Flourishing Scale** (Diener et al., 2009)
   This eight-item scale evaluates an individual's self-assessed success in important life domains such as relationships, self-esteem, purpose, and optimism. It is a reliable and valid tool that provides a single score reflecting overall psychological well-being.

Procedure

At first, rapport was established with the participants, and consent was obtained for their participation. Assuring them of confidentiality, a briefing on the questionnaires was given to them, and consequent clarification of doubts was done. Their demographic information was collected, and the Media and Technology Usage and Attitudes Scale, Utrecht Work Engagement Scale, Existential Fulfillment Scale, and Flourishing Scale were given to them. It was ensured that responses to each statement were given by the

participants. As per the instructions, the scoring was done, and the obtained data was analyzed through regression analysis.

Results and Discussion

Impact of Media Technology on Existential Fulfillment, Flourishing, and Work Engagement through Regression Analysis

Table No.1- Impact of Media Technology on Existential Fulfillment

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.647[a]	.418	.415	5.92582

a. Predictors: (Constant), Media Technology Usage

b. Dependent Variable: Existential Fulfillment

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	40.625	2.479		16.387	.000
	Media Technology Usage	-.047	.010	-.647	-4.702	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Existential Fulfillment

The regression model explains media technology, accounting for 41.8% of the Variance(R Square=0.418) in existential fulfillment. A statistically significant negative correlation of -.647 (p<.001) has been found between the use of media technologies and existential fulfillment, showing that higher usage of Media Technology is correlated to lower levels of existential fulfillment, proving Hypothesis No. 1. Studies by Twenge et.al.(2018) and Keles et al.(2020) also suggest that excessive use of media technology negatively affects psychological well-being and existential parameters such as purpose and meaning in life.

Table No.2- Impact of Media Technology on Flourishing

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.562[a]	.315	.311	6.53491

a. Predictors: (Constant), Media Technology Usage

b. Dependent Variable: Flourishing

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	55.264	2.734		20.215	.000
	Media Technology Usage	-.038	.012	-.562	-3.166	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Flourishing

The regression model explains media technology, accounting for 31.5% of the Variance(R Square=0.315) in Flourishing. A statistically significant negative correlation of -.562 (p<.001) has been found between the use of media technologies and Flourishing from the analysis, demonstrating that higher usage of Media

Technology is correlated with lower levels of Flourishing in the lives of individuals, hence proving the Hypothesis No.2. Huang's (2017) findings also confirm the results of the present study that excessive social media usage has a significant negative impact on Flourishing and mental health.

Table No.3- Impact of Media Technology on Work Engagement

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.412[a]	.170	.164	13.883

a. Predictors: (Constant), Media Technology Usage
b. Dependent Variable: Work and Well-being

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	101.440	5.946		17.059	.000
	Media Technology Usage	-.059	.025	-.412	-2.357	.020

a. Dependent Variable: Work and Well-being

The regression model explains media technology, accounting for 17.0% of the Variance(R Square=0.170) in Work and Well-Being. A statistically significant negative correlation of -.412(P<.001) has been found between the use of Media Technologies and Work Engagement, indicating that higher usage of Media Technology corresponds to lower levels of Work Engagement. These results prove Hypothesis No.3 in this study. Individuals who use technology more experience distraction at work and reduced engagement. Media Technology can act as a demanding factor in a job that negatively impacts work engagement(Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). Sonnetang et.al. (2018) also highlighted that the excess use of technology makes individuals psychologically detached from their work, thus adversely impacting their work engagement.

As suggested by research, media technology provides significant opportunities for people to express themselves through intellectual means and enhance their growth and well-being. Digital interactions allow for meaningful connections, yet they generate problems through superficial interactions, social competition, social comparison, and isolation. The essential factor for individuals to maximize their use of media technology is to put checks and use it optimally. The degree of fulfillment in life emerges from cultivating mindfulness in the digital age and promoting real-life interactions more than through virtual means. By prioritizing deep, meaningful engagement with media, while developing their awareness of self and surroundings, and handling these technological tools efficiently, individuals can realize and fulfill their authentic existential goals and traverse the path of fulfillment.

Through all aspects of media technology, humans may either improve or obstruct their personal development and flourishing. Although its introduction, application and understanding bring substantial mental health benefits and address multiple problematic issues, doubts about self-worth, information overload, and social isolation, yet as we navigate through this digital era, proper equilibrium is demanded when people use media technology to get both advantages and avoid potential harm, as the deliberate management of technological advancement leads to positive results and flourishing of individuals. People should mindfully use technology by engaging in activities that consolidate authentic human relationships, self-improvement, and promote better health orientation.

Conclusion

The relentless explosion of media technology has nevertheless profoundly changed the nature of human life, weaving a complex web in which is the promise of limitless possibilities and the peril of unfathomable peril. Convincingly, research in this domain shows how the widespread use of digital tools in the hands of informed professionals closely impacts the central elements in which human success proliferates – Existential Fulfilment, Flourishing and Work Engagement. Over-indulgence in the digital world begets an identifiable decline in workplace efficiency, weakens the quest for meaning and strips the brilliant vigour of his being.

In order to master this tumultuous digital landscape with uncanny wisdom, people and organizations must develop an ethos of transparent purposefulness. Professionals can get past the critical complexities of distraction, social strife, and technostress by leveraging technology as a wall of intellectual and creative transcendence- utilizing its unlimited powers to nurture arcane knowledge, to enable authentic contact, and to emancipate the limitless wells of imagination. Participating in this expedition requires near-sacredness in inner clarity, the safeguarding of immutable rules, and an intense commitment to the worldly connections that feed the soul's quest for deep interdependence and personal transformation. As trailblazers of common prosperity, organizations will need to embrace acts of visionary foresight, such as inviolate timeouts from digital life or perfect standards in communication, which protect the can-not-be-stopped drive and operational excellence of their leaders.

Essentially, moving toward a condition of stunning fulfilment and dazzling vitality necessitates that technology becomes a foundation beneath the feet of transcendental power rather than ruling servility. This enables them to live in a life with a meaningful purpose, a profound connection, and tenacious resilience that lasts through time. In the culmination of relentless technological transition, the constant summons of future questioning is to delve into humanity's most fearful depths such that we, as curators of our celestial personae, might utilize our inventive prowess to create an eternal account of value, wonder, and supernal glory.

The advancing development of media technology shapes how people prosper, as well as their pursuit of existential goals. Humanity should emphasize understanding how media influences their well-being and growth, and take curated, intentional steps to handle technology intelligently. A careful, attuned approach can let people maneuver digital age complexity effectively to build a more fulfilling and meaningful life. Future studies and discourse about thriving and fulfillment of human beings pertaining to technology will continue to be a quintessential aspect of further research since the co-existence of humanity and technology will continue to be a long haul.

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