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Coping with Stress after Pleasure

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Apart from using IT artifacts for utilitarian purposes, users use IT artifacts for hedonic purposes as well. Whereas utilitarian usage is primarily aimed at completing some work tasks, hedonic usage is for deriving pleasure, sometimes while getting work done. Irrespective of the intended purpose, users may be exposed to stress during or after IT use. Information systems scholars have studied this IT-related stress (i.e., technostress). They have identified different stressors, i.e., causes of technostress (e.g., Ayyagari et al. 2011), the effect of technostress (Ragu-Nathan et al. 2008; e.g., Tarafdar et al. 2007), and how users can cope with technostress (e.g., Pirkkalainen et al. 2019). However, research on technostress has focused mainly on stressors inherent to the IT (e.g., usability and failure), IT-related workload, and organizational context.

Nevertheless, users may as well derive pleasure from using IT and, after that, get stressed. For instance, some student interviewees, which I recently interviewed for a study on IT-use, noted that when they interact with IT (e.g., games and social media apps) from which they derive pleasure, they afterward feel stressed because they have less time for other things, including completing school assignments. Also, Lintula et al. (2018) noted that even when users derive momentary pleasure from an IT, the actions they take to derive such pleasure may conflict with their personal and social norms. Such internal conflicts may ruin the derivation of pleasure and result in strain or technostress. Although prior literature has studied coping mechanisms for technostress related to, for instance, the characteristics of IT, IT-work fit, and IT-induced workload, it has done little to understand how users cope or can cope with technostress after pleasure. We intend to engage in a study that addresses how users can cope with stress after pleasure. The research is important because, aside from its potential contribution to our theoretical understanding of technostress and coping mechanisms, users may find it useful to control and cope with technostress after pleasure. Further, organizations may find it useful in managing productivity losses to individual use of IT, especially for hedonic purposes.

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