UNIVERSITY OF WEST LONDON
The Career University

# UWL REPOSITORY

## repository.uwl.ac.uk

Technostress: a consumer's perspective

**Fracalanza, Patricia and Cachia, Moira ORCID logoORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4470-1701 (2017) Technostress: a consumer's perspective. In: The British Psychological Society Annual Conference 2017, 03-05 May 2017, Brighton, UK. (Unpublished)**

**This is the Published Version of the final output.**

**UWL repository link:** https://repository.uwl.ac.uk/id/eprint/3295/

**Alternative formats**: If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact: open.research@uwl.ac.uk

**Copyright**:

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

**Take down policy**: If you believe that this document breaches copyright, please contact us at open.research@uwl.ac.uk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

**Rights Retention Statement:**

# TECHNOSTRESS: A CONSUMER 'S PERSPECTIVE

**Patricia Fracalanza and Dr Moira Cachia**
**Contact: Moira.Cachia@uwl.ac.uk**

UNIVERSITY OF WEST LONDON

## INTRODUCTION

**Rationale**

- The uncontainable growth of technology has led to the increase of human-technology interaction, making it vital to understand this relationship and improve and adapt technology considering the capabilities and limitations of human's cognitive processes and behaviour (Wikens & Kramer, 1985).
- Scientific research has evidenced that the increasing exposure to new technologies may have a negative effect on its users (Riedl, Kindermann, Auinger & Javor, 2012).
- *Technostress* is the term used by many researchers to address the negative impact of technology on its users. It refers to the incapacity to cope or adapt to the introduction of new technologies (Brod ,1982).

**Background**

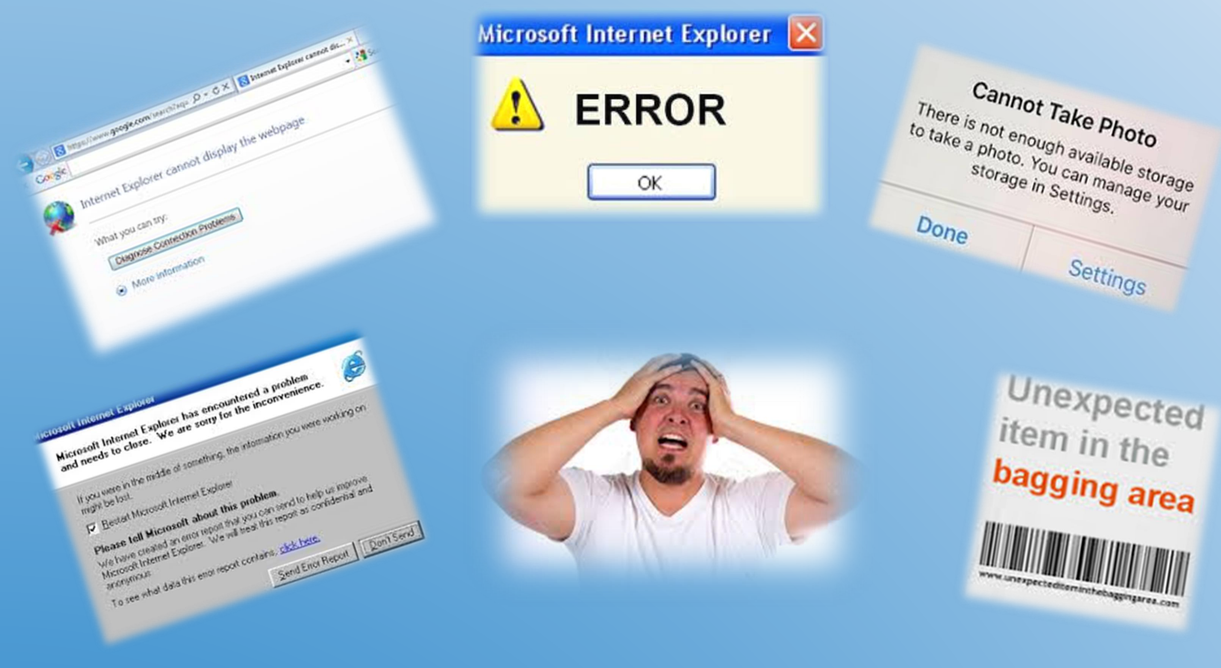
- The study of technostress has gained importance as research has shown that the intense interaction with technology in work environments can affect employees' performance and job satisfaction (Ayyagari, Grover & Purvis, 2011).
- Weil and Rosen (1999) suggest that irritability, headaches, mental fatigue, anxiety and frustration are some of the symptoms expressed by those experiencing technostress.
- Technology resistance and avoidance are found to be some of the coping mechanisms when dealing with the stress caused by technology (Ragu-Nathan, Tarafdar, Ragu-Nathan, & Tu, 2008).
- Technology in private usage context is believed to differ from using technology for work purposes, as individuals have a certain degree of choice in terms of usage. However, in modern societies, shops, libraries, supermarkets and many other services are moving further and faster towards total automation which reduces dramatically the capacity of choice by consumer and service users.

**Aims of the Study**

- To identify the effects of the technological growth and the intense exposure to new technologies experienced by consumers and service users
- To understand the possible negative aspects of the psychological experience of individuals when interacting with technology.

**Research Question**

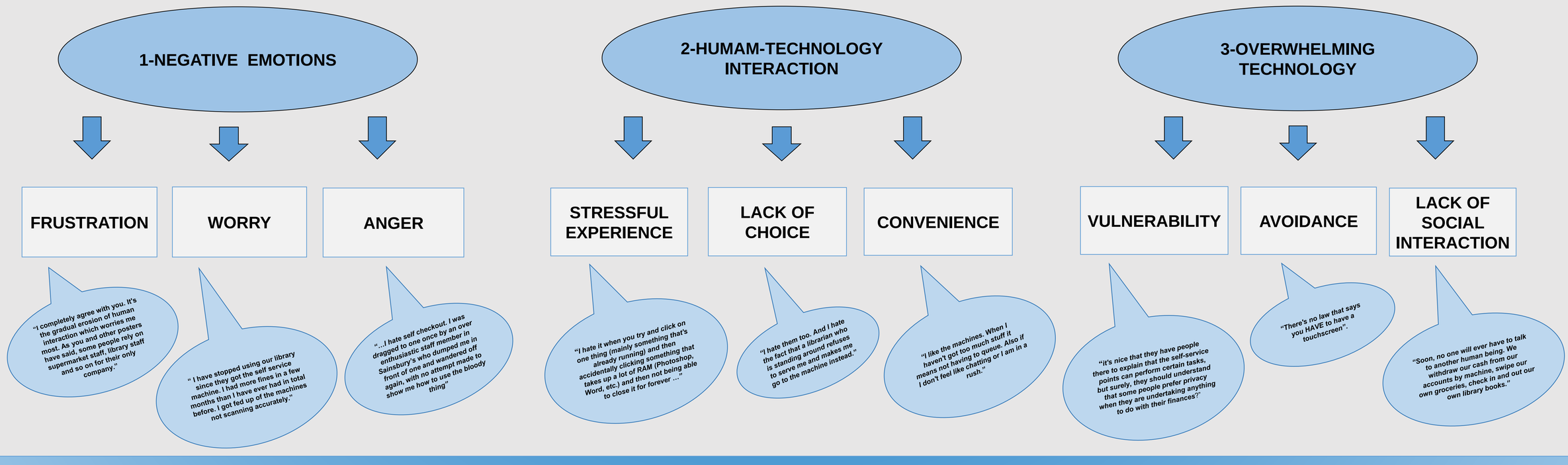
Does the constant interaction and exposure to new technologies in modern societies generate stress for consumers and service users?




## METHOD

- A qualitative approach was chosen for this study as the researcher aimed to investigate further explicit and implicit aspects of the negative effects caused by human-technology interaction.
- The data chosen for the analysis were online forums, discussion boards and comment sections extracted from five different websites under the public domain. The discussions were chosen due to their content on experiences of individuals with technology. The collected data was posted online from 2012 to 2016, and it is still available for public access.
- Thematic analysis was selected as the methodology as allow the researcher to look across sets of data, identifying themes related to the studied theory.
- The researcher analysed the data following Braun and Clark (2006) six steps thematic analysis. The themes and sub-themes emergent from the analysis are illustrated in the analysis section.
- Ethical approval was obtained from the University of West London Psychology Ethics Committee prior to conducting this research.

## THEMATIC ANALYSIS




## DISCUSSION / CONCLUSION

**Findings:**

- The study demonstrates that consumers and services users do encounter difficulties when interacting with new technologies on day to day tasks and these difficulties often translate into frustration and anger.
- As previous studies demonstrate, in the work context employees perceive their environment to be tightly controlled by technology, this study also evidenced that in a private life' context consumers and service users also sense a decrease of social communication and possible alternatives to technology interaction.
- The findings also indicate that convenience encourage individuals to adapt to new technologies. However, avoidance and hesitation appears to be some of the mechanisms adopted by users when feeling overwhelmed by technology

**Strengths**

- Online forums offer rich data since the sense of anonymity can lead people to being more honest and open about their own experiences.
- The various discussion forums included in the data covered different uses of technology on a daily basis.

**Limitations**

Demographics could not be obtained through the data collection method used in this study. Information such as age and gender could have enabled the researcher to also identify individuals who are more vulnerable to technostress than others.

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY AND FURTHER RESEARCH

**Implications of the study**

This study contributes to understanding further the aspects of technostress in different contexts. It also evidenced that technological growth is not a unilateral phenomenon and its favorable outcome depends on both innovation and consumption.

**Further Research**

To explore further the effect of age on technology acceptance and adaptation as studies have shown that elderly are more reluctant to accept new technologies.

## REFERENCES

Ayyagari, R., Grover, V., & Purvis, R. (2011). Technostress: Technological Antecedents and Implications. *MIS Quarterly*, *35*(4), 831–858.
Braun, V & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in psychology, 3:77-10
Brod, C. (1982). Managing Techno stress: Optimizing the use of computer technology. Personnel Journal (pre-1986); 61, 000010; ProQuest Business Collection, 753-757
Maier, C. (2014). Technostress: Theoretical Foundation and empirical Evidence. University of Bamberg.
Niehaves, B., & Plattfaut, R. (2014). Internet adoption by the elderly: Employing IS technology acceptance theories for understanding the age-related digital divide. *European Journal of Information Systems*, *23*(6), 708–726.
Ragu-Nathan, T. S., Tarafdar, M., Ragu-Nathan, B. S., & Tu, Q. (2008). The consequences of Technostress for end users in organizations: Conceptual development and empirical validation. *Information Systems Research*, *19*(4), 417–433.
Riedl, R., Kindermann, H., Auinger, A., & Javor, A. (2012). Technostress from a Neurobiological perspective. *Business & Information Systems Engineering*, *4*(2), 61–69.
Wickens, C. D., & Kramer, A. (1985). Engineering psychology. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *36*(1), 307–348.