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Review

A tool and a tyrant: Social media and well-being in organizational contexts

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Abstract

Social media technologies have the potential to be helpful and harmful to employees. We seek to move beyond this broad dichotomy by providing a concise review of current research on the relationship between social media use in organizational contexts and employee well-being. Our review comprises 51 articles which are grouped by theoretical focus: personal behavior theories, social behavior theories, and communication theories. The review illustrates that the negative implications of social media use can be ascribed to excessive usage patterns, the context, and personal circumstances of use. Alternatively, the positive implications of social media relate to the ways in which these technologies satisfy personal needs. The findings help contextualize the negative and positive implications of social media use for employee well-being.

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Introduction

In 2006, Andrew McAfee [1] heralded what he described as the "dawn of emergent collaboration," discussing the ways in which a new group of

technologies labeled *enterprise 2.0* allows teams and individual workers to communicate and collaborate across time and space. Included under the umbrella of enterprise 2.0 are tools such as blogs, wikis, social media, and messaging software. These tools are significant because "they knit together an enterprise and facilitate knowledge work in ways that were simply not possible previously" (p. 22). In this review we specifically focus on social media, which has become a term to refer to various technologies that are characteristic of this idea of *enter-prise 2.0*.

We can broadly distinguish between two types of social media that are frequently utilized for organizational or vocational purposes: Public social media (PSM) and enterprise social media (ESM). Social media can be distinguished from traditional communication technologies by allowing any user to communicate in ways that are potentially visible to other users, permitting users to see communication occurring between other users, and articulating a visible network of relationships among users [2,3]. This increased access and insight into the communication and connections of others has led to radical transformations in the ways employees communicate, collaborate, and learn. Indeed, there is a burgeoning body of literature on the way social media makes possible, or affords, new ways of organizing [3,6], outlining potential benefits to knowledge sharing [7-9], job performance [10-12] and opportunities for social capital creation [13]. However, in the context of employee well-being evidence pointing to a "dark side" of ESM [14,15], and PSM is mounting [16,17]. Clearly, ESM and PSM are not inherently good or bad, nor are noted benefits and drawbacks exclusive to the use of social media technologies. The adoption and utilization of information and communication technologies in organizations is often claimed to be a double-edged sword [18,19] contributing to both health promoting and health inhibiting consequences [20].

In this review we adopt a broad perspective on employee well-being to include both positive (e.g., vigor, engagement), negative (e.g., conflict, exhaustion), and overall satisfaction indicators related to work (e.g., commitment, job satisfaction). The aim of our review is not to confirm that the presence and use of PSM or ESM

results in positive or negative outcomes, but rather to provide more clarity on the mechanisms and theoretical perspectives underlying the relationship between ESM, PSM, and well-being outcomes. In other words, we seek to contextualize the relationship between social media technologies and employee well-being. In this review we guide the discussion based on the nomological network presented in Figure 1, which was derived from the articles included in this review.

Theoretical perspectives

Public Social Media (PSM) include platforms that are not confined, or bounded to organizational spaces, and include platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn [2,3]. Though these technologies have gained popularity outside work contexts, users frequently engage with these platforms for work-related purposes [4]. Second, Enterprise Social Media (ESM) are primarily used for internal communication and social interaction within an organization and among organizational members. Leonardi and colleagues [5] define ESM as: "Web-based platforms that allow workers to (1) communicate messages with specific coworkers or broadcast messages to everyone in the organization; (2) explicitly indicate or implicitly reveal particular coworkers as communication partners; (3) post, edit, and sort text and files linked to themselves or others; and (4) view the messages, connections, text, and files communicated, posted, edited and sorted by anyone else in the organization at any time of their choosing" [5, p. 2]. Though specific platforms may vary substantially in their specific features or interfaces, all ESM share these characteristics.

We identified 51 published peer reviewed articles on PSM and ESM use in organizational contexts focusing on the implications for employee well-being, summarized in Table 1. We searched the following databases for relevant studies on PSM or ESM use and well-being: ISI Web of Knowledge, Scopus (Elsevier), ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar. We also obtained relevant papers through a forward (i.e., reviewing sources that cite included articles) and backward search (i.e., reviewing sources that are cited in included articles). Table 1 provides an overview of the 51 articles included in this review. Of these studies 16 consider ESM, 14 consider PSM. Notably, 15 studies did not specify the type of social media considered while 6 studies include an index comprised of both ESM and PSM. In terms of well-being indicators 14 studies focus on job satisfaction, while 16 studies focused on work engagement and/or exhaustion. Other studies focused on outcomes that could be considered indicative of wellbeing such as positive emotions, workplace agility, turnover intention, and work-life conflict (see Table 1 for a detailed overview).

There is tremendous variety in the theoretical perspectives used in these studies, and no dominant explanatory framework emerged. We broadly classify these perspectives into personal behavior theory, social behavior theory, and (mass) communication theories. Personal behavior theories include Self-Determination Theory, Technology Acceptance Models, Job Demands and Resources Theory, Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping. Social behavior theories include Social Exchange Theory, Social Capital Theory, Organizational Support Theory. Communication theories used to study social media and well-being are mainly limited to Communication Visibility Theory and Uses and Gratification Theory.

Personal behavior theories

The plurality of studies adopted personal behavior theories to investigate the relationship between social media use and well-being. Studies applying Self-Determination Theory seek to explain the positive relationship between social technology use and job satisfaction through increased autonomy, relatedness, and competence at work [21]. Use of social media is viewed as enabling or empowering workers to meet selfperceived needs related to their roles and motivations within the organization (see Figure 1). Indeed, employees using social media have been found to report greater self-determination and job satisfaction [22]. Conversely, too much social media use might lead to diminished returns, and studies report a curvilinear relationship between the frequency of social media use and work motivation and need satisfaction [23].

A second stream of personal behavior theories focuses on stress and occupational well-being models. For instance, several studies have adopted the Job Demands and Resources Theory, particularly to study the impact of PSM. These studies identified negative (i.e., health impairment) and positive (i.e., motivational process) relationships between PSM and engagement and burnout indicators [17]. Others suggested social media usage itself operates as a resource facilitating support and identification, leading to greater worker engagement [24], or as a demand where social media use intensity was found to be linearly and positively related to exhaustion [25,26]. Findings indicate that mindfulness helps to mitigate the negative impact of social media use on well-being [25]. Occupational stress models indicate that excessive use of social media is linked with social media overload and exhaustion [27], while task-oriented use of social media (as opposed to relationship-oriented use) may mitigate the negative impact of role conflict on job satisfaction [28]. Finally, one study adopted Affective Events Theory demonstrating that the intensity of social media use with colleagues was positively related to both workplace fun and stress, which then contributed to effects for affection, reciprocity, and trust [29].

¹ Notably the sum of.

Social behavior theories

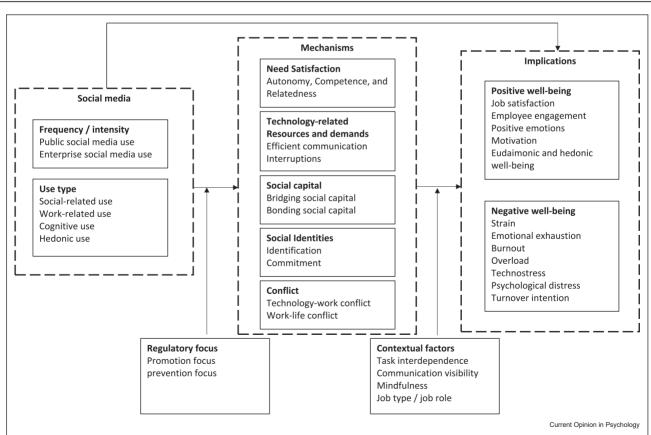
Social Capital Theory is a frequently adopted framework suggesting that various uses of PSM and ESM may contribute to workers ability to amass and access resources through the initiation and maintenance of relationships with others, both within an organization or with a broader community of practice or professional group [30]. This social capital can be both bridging, allowing workers to establish relationships more easily with others they would not regularly interact with, or bonding, allowing workers to deepen or strengthen existing relationships [31]. As reflected in Figure 1, several studies have considered the mediating role of social capital in understanding the association between social media use and well-being outcomes. For instance, bonding social capital is found to mediate the relationship between PSM use and job satisfaction, while bridging social capital is not [32]. Similarly in the context of ESM use bonding social capital was found to positively mediate the relationship with job satisfaction, while bridging social capital yielded a negative indirect relationship [33]. Again, in the context of mobile instant messaging bonding social capital mediated the relationship between use frequency and job and relational satisfaction, while bridging social capital did not [34].

In addition, positive implications of ESM and PSM use are grounded in Social Identity Theory and Perceived Organizational Support Theory. For instance, Sias and Duncan [35] demonstrate that employees' interactions with their organization's Facebook page (i.e., PSM) leads to greater organizational identification. In turn, connections with coworkers on social media may increase perceived organizational support and spontaneity in the organization [36]. Negative implications are typically attributed to boundary conflicts, which have been demonstrated in the context of work-related PSM use [4] and work-related use of ESM [37]. Boundary conflicts are common with social media because the ability to communicate anywhere, anytime, and the persistence of communication on platforms over time make it more likely for use to blur boundaries between work and nonwork domains, and potentially induce time-, strain-, and behavior-based conflict [37,76]. Finally, drawing on Social Cognitive Theory excessive use and social media addiction is found to negatively impact well-being through reduced positive emotion [49].

Communication theories

Uses and Gratification Theory [39,43] and Communication Visibility Theory [46,75] are other frequently

Figure 1



Integrated framework based on literature review.

Summary of reviewed articles.				
Ref	Medium	Well-being indicator	Theoretical perspective	Findings
Personal [21]	Behavior Theories Knowledge sharing platform	Job satisfaction	Self-Determination Theory	The results indicate a positive relationship betwee online sharing behavior and job satisfaction. Furthermore, online knowledge sharing behavior positively related to autonomy, relatedness, and competence at work.
52]	Social media use at work	Job satisfaction	Affective Events Theory	Social media use in the workplace moderates the relationship between workplace ostracism and satisfaction. Specifically, ostracized employees that use social media frequently are more satisf than those who are less active.
23]	Social media use at work	Need satisfaction; Motivation	Self-Determination Theory	The study demonstrates a curve—linear relationsh between social media use and work motivation i.e., after a certain point work motivation and ne satisfaction reduces.
22]	Social media use for work	Job satisfaction	Self-Determination Theory	The results demonstrate that employees using so media for work purposes have higher self-determination (autonomy, competence, relatedness), which in turn increases job satisfaction.
53]	PSM	Work-life conflict.	E-leadership theory	The results indicate that Twitter use, and employ internal communication were positively related time and strain-based conflict, through the "aggravating impact of social media" (i.e. demanstress, workload).
54]	Social media use	Job satisfaction	Big Five Personality model	Social media use was positively correlated with justification. The study indicates that social me use moderated the relationship between extroversion and job satisfaction, and between agreeableness and job satisfaction.
55]	Virtual Employee Engagement Platform	Employee engagement	Technology Acceptance Model; Self- Determination Theory	The study indicates that the actual use of virtual employee engagement platform is positively related to employee engagement, which is turn positively related to employee participation and intention to stay.
56]	ESM	ESM-related exhaustion; employee creativity	Conservation of Resources Theory; Regulatory Focus Theory	Socio-instrumental use of ESM is indirectly and positively related ESM-related exhaustion, throu interruption overload and psychological transiti. The suggests a positive moderating impact of promotion focus, and a negative moderating impact of prevention focus, on the relationship between socio-instrumental use of ESM and psychological transition.
57]	Social media use	Employee engagement	NS ^a	The study, conducted among 209 Indian workers indicates that social media use for work can improve employee well-being, through improve collaboration and learning.
50]	ESM & PSM	Burnout; Technostress, Psychological distress	Technology Acceptance Model; Self- Determination Theory	Depending on different motivations and age grou (millennials versus older generations), social media use both positively and negatively affect technostress, burnout, and psychological distre
62]	PSM at work	Job satisfaction	Job Demands and Resources Theory	Coworker support and job demands were positive related to social media use intensity, which in t was positively related to job satisfaction.
25]	PSM at work	Burnout	Job Demands and Resources Theory	Social media use at work is positively related to emotional exhaustion. Mindfulness lessens this positive relationship.
[26]	PSM at work	Burnout	Job Demands and Resources Theory	Social media use intensity is positively and linea related to emotional exhaustion. For the relationship between social media use intensit

Ref	Medium	Well-being indicator	Theoretical perspective	Findings
				work and depersonalization an inverted U-shape relationship was found.
[63]	ESM	Employee engagement	Kahn's Framework of psychological conditions	The findings demonstrate a significant positive correlation between ESM use frequency and employee engagement
[58]	Social Media addiction	Emotional exhaustion	Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping	The results show that social media addiction is negatively related to mindfulness, which in turn in negatively related to emotional exhaustion. Furthermore, the results demonstrate that social media addiction is positively related to emotion focused coping, which in turn in positively related emotional exhaustion.
[59]	Social Media use	Work engagement	Episodic Process Model, Self- Regulatory Resource Model	Overall, the findings suggest that the use of social media at work is related to lower levels of work engagement. However, the study also examined concurrent and time-lagged effects, demonstrating that non-work social media use could serve as a micro-break from work, helping employees to replenish their resources, subsequently improving work engagement
[69]	ESM	Psychological meaningfulness, safety, and availability	Kahn's framework of psychological conditions	ESM use is indirectly and negatively related to cyberslacking, through three psychological conditions. Specifically, EMS use at work is positively related to psychological meaningfulnes psychological safety, and psychological availability, which in turn are negatively related to cyberslacking
[24]	ESM & PSM	Social support, Engagement, identification.	Job Demands and Resources Theory	Non-work related communication through social media platforms is positively related to work engagement through social support and organizational identification.
[70]	ESM & PSM	Job satisfaction; commitment	Stimulus-Organism- Response Theory	ESM and PSM use are positively associated with jo satisfaction, which is in turn positively related to commitment. Notably, PSM is positively and significantly related to affective and normative commitment, but not to continuance commitmen ESM is not significantly related to any form of commitment.
[28]	Social Media use within teams	Job satisfaction	Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping	Task-oriented social media use and relationship- oriented social media use differentially moderate the relationship between job stressors and job satisfaction. Such that high levels of task-oriente social media use mitigate the negative impact of role conflict on job satisfaction. While high levels relationship-oriented social media use, does not mitigate, but bolsters the negative impact on role conflict on job satisfaction.
[29]	Social media use	Workplace Guanxi	Affective Event Theory	The results demonstrate that social media use intensity with coworkers is positively related to workplace fun, and stress. Workplace fun in turn positively associated with affection, reciprocity, and trust. While stress is negatively related to affection and trust.
[27]	Social media use	Social media overload, social media exhaustion	Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping	Excessive social media use is positively related to information, communication, and social overload which in turn is associated with social media exhaustion.
[76]	PSM	Emotional exhaustion	Boundary Theory	Public social media use for work increases emotion exhaustion through work life conflict
[17]	PSM	Work engagement, Emotional exhaustion	Job Demands and Resources Theory	Positive and negative indirect effects on engageme and exhaustion through social media related demands (Interruption, work-life conflict) and resources (accessibility, efficient communication

Table 1	Fable 1 (continued)				
Ref	Medium	Well-being indicator	Theoretical perspective	Findings	
Social [60]	Behavior theories ESM	Eudaimonic and hedonic well-being	Social Capital Theory	ESM use is treated as a moderator between well- being and knowledge sharing. Results do not confirm this relationship.	
[61]	ESM and PSM	Intrinsic work motivation, proactive work behavior	NS	The study demonstrates that the relationships between social media use and work motivation and proactive behavior are mediated by personal blogging and blogging with coworkers. Specifically, social media use has a positive impact on work motivation and proactive behavior through blogging with coworkers, while the indirect effect through blogging with outsiders is negative.	
[33]	ESM	Job satisfaction	Social Capital Theory	Work-related and social-related use of ESM is positively related to bridging and bonding social capital. Bonding social capital has a positive association with job satisfaction, while bridging social capital yields the opposite association.	
[32]	PSM	Job satisfaction	Social Capital Theory	PSM use intensity is positively related to job satisfaction. Work related PSM utilities do not directly affect job satisfaction. The results imply that information utility has a positive indirect relationship with job satisfaction through bonding social capital. This relationship was not found for bridging social capital, or for other utilities such as network utility or organizing utility.	
[64]	ESM and PSM	Employee engagement	Social Network Theory	The results indicate that employee engagement is positively associated with the time leaders spend on internal online networking platforms. This relationship is not found for time spend on external social networking platforms.	
[37]	ESM	Life-work enrichment; work- life conflict	Boundary Theory	The results show that time spent on work-related content is positively associated with work-life conflict, but not significantly related to life work enrichment. In turn, time spent on life-related content is positively related to life-work enrichment, but not to work-life conflict.	
[65], ^b	Social networking site use	Job satisfaction; Organizational commitment	Social Exchange Theory	Social networking site use intensity is positively related to job satisfaction and commitment, which in turn positively affect job performance.	
[66]	ESM	Positive emotions	Social Capital Theory; Broaden- and-build Theory of Positive Emotions	The results demonstrate that ESM use is positively associated with workplace integration, which in turn, leads to positive emotions, and ultimately job performance.	
[67]	ESM	Turnover intentions	Social Capital Theory; Emotional Dissonance Theory	The results demonstrate that ESM use increases workplace integration, which in turn reduces turnover intention. Additionally, there is a significant positive indirect effect of ESM use on job satisfaction through workplace integration, and a significant negative indirect effect on ESM use on perceived work stress through workplace integration	
[49]	Social network site use	Positive emotion; Physical and mental health	Social Cognitive Theory	Social networking site addiction is positively related to task distraction and negatively related to positive emotions. Positive emotions in turn, are positively related to performance and health (both mental and physical health). Task distraction was negatively associated with performance.	
[68]	Social networking site use	Job satisfaction; Organizational commitment	Social Exchange Theory	The results demonstrate a positive association between social networking site use intensity and job satisfaction. Job satisfaction in turn, affects organizational commitment and job performance. Both organizational commitment and job	

Ref	Medium	Well-being indicator	Theoretical perspective	Findings
[71]	PSM	Job satisfaction	NS	performance are not directly associated with social networking site use intensity Job satisfaction is positively associated with the amount of time spend on Facebook interacting with
[36]	Social Media connections	Organizational support, Organizational spontaneity	Perceived Organizational Support	co-workers. The study finds positive correlations between the percentage of co-workers social media connection and organizational support and spontaneity.
[34]	Mobile instant messaging	Job satisfaction, Relational satisfaction	Social Capital Theory	Instant messaging use and affordances are positively associated with job and relational satisfaction, and with online bridging and bonding social capital. Bridging capital was not associated with satisfaction outcomes, while bonding social capital was positively related to the two satisfaction measures.
[35]	PSM	Organizational identification	Social Identity Theory	The results indicate that employees' interaction with organizational Facebook activity positively affects organization identification. This relationship is partially mediated by bridging outcome, but not by bonding outcomes.
[72]	PSM and ESM	Vitality	Theory of Swift Guanxi	The positive relationship between work related social media use and vitality is fully mediated by reciprocal favours and relationship harmony
	unication theories			
[38]	NS	Social capital	Uses & Gratification Theory, Social Capital Theory	The results demonstrate that social, hedonic, and cognitive use of social media affect structural dimensions of social capital. In addition, cognitive use positively affects the relational dimension of social capital, while hedonic and cognitive use both affect cognitive dimensions of social capital (albei in opposite directions).
[43]	Social media use at work	Technology-work conflict, strain	Uses & Gratification Theory	The results indicate that cognitive use of social media at work reduces strain. This relationship is not found for social or hedonic use at work. Social and hedonic use at work is positively and indirectly related to strain through, technology-work conflict
[45]	ESM	Overload; ESM strain	Communication Visibility Theory; Cognitive Load Theory	The results demonstrate an inverted U-shaped relationship between work-related ESM use and information overload and between work-related ESM use and social overload. In addition, the study reports a U-shaped relationship between social-related ESM use and information overload and between social-related ESM use and social overload. Finally, communication visibility positively moderates the inverted U-shaped relationships between work-related ESM use and information overload and between work-related ESM use and social overload, but negatively moderates the U-shaped relationship between social-related ESM use and information overload.
[73]	Social media use at work	Work engagement	NS	The results indicate that social media use with colleagues is positively related to both work engagement and innovative performance.
[39]	ESM	Turnover intention	Uses & Gratification Theory	Utilitarian use of ESM is negatively associated with turnover intentions, while hedonic use demonstrated a positive association with turnover intention. These relationships are found to differ depending on job type (i.e., managerial, technical and job level (i.e., low, medium, high level).
[46]	ESM	Employee Agility	Communication Visibility Theory	Communication visibility mediates the relationships between ESM use and employee agility. Furthermore, ESM-related strain moderates the

Ref	Medium	Well-being indicator	Theoretical perspective	Findings
				relationship between communication visibility and employee agility, such that the positive relationship between visibility and agility is less strong at higher levels of strain.
[44]	ESM	Conflict, Employee creativity	NS	The results demonstrate that ESM use is not significantly related to relationship conflict but is significantly negatively related to task conflict.
[74]	ESM	Employee Agility	Information Processing theory	There is a positive relationship between ESM use and employee agility. Work expertise strengthens this relationship. IT proficiency does not moderate this relationship.
[40]	PSM	Work engagement	Constructivist Communication Perspective	Social media use for work has indirect effects on engagement and emotional exhaustion through increased work pressure and increased autonomy
[75]	ESM	Employee agility	Communication Visibility Theory	The results indicate that ESM usage is positively related to metaknowledge, which in turn improves employee agility.
[41]	PSM	Job satisfaction, turnover intention	Uses and Gratification Theory	Work-related and social-related use of social media are positively related to job engagement and organizational engagement. Job satisfaction and turnover intention are indirectly affected through organizational engagement and organizational commitment.

Notes.

utilized communication theories in studying the implications of social media use in organizational contexts. These approaches suggest that ESM and PSM can be viewed as technologies that facilitate greater well-being by enabling important social, cognitive, and hedonic uses [38,39]. This research reveals ways that social media allows workers opportunities to access and contribute communication to meet situated needs, and how this can empower and motivate workers. For example, work-related and social-related use of PSM have been found to positively relate to work engagement [40,41]. Notably, to date studies on ESM use and psychological well-being have not used communication theory to study this association.

However, the broad communicative possibilities enabled through social media also pose challenges for workers in terms of managing potential increases in the volume and visibility of communication [42]. Research has demonstrated that social and hedonic use of social media at work may generate strain through increased technology-work conflict [43], while work-related ESM use is positively related to task conflict [44]. Furthermore, communication studies have suggested that there is an optimum level of work-related ESM use, after which overload and ESM-related strain increases [45]. These studies have also identified important contextual factors demonstrating that the impact of social media use in organizations on well-being may be dependent on

job type (e.g., technical position, managerial position), job level (i.e., low-level, middle-level, high-level) [39], ESM-related strain [46] and communication visibility [45]. Hence, these factors are included in Figure 1 as important contextual factors, potentially moderating the (in)direct effects identified in the reviewed studies.

Conclusion

The use of PSM and ESM is not inherently good or bad; but based on particular contexts and forms of use they are more or less likely to produce negative or positive consequences for the well-being of organizations and employees [14,15,47]. The nature of outcomes associated with workplace social media use is shaped by the type of use (work-related, social-related), the intensity of use, the context of use, and the personal circumstances of usage (e.g., mindfulness) [25]. Specifically, the studies reviewed here demonstrate that across theoretical perspectives, excessive and addictive use may generate negative impacts [15,25,27,43,48,49,58]. Similarly, several studies identify a non-linear relationship with well-being indicators suggesting that too much social media use may become detrimental [26,45], but that moderate levels of social media use may be beneficial for employees [40].

Several methodological and conceptual observations based on this review offer a potential future research agenda for the ongoing study of social media and well-

a NS indicates not specified.

^b This is a replication study of Moqbel et al. [65] in a different cultural context.

being in organizational contexts. First, most studies on social media use have relied on a narrow set of methodologies [51], primarily relying on cross-sectional selfreport survey research (for an exception see Ref. [40]). Research in this area needs to diversify methodological approaches, and in particular take advantage of the availability of behavioral trace data produced with social media use. These data can both increase the potential scale and scope of findings and increase the reliability of conclusions regarding individual and organizational social media activities. Conceptually, it is problematic that many studies do not explicitly define and operationalize the social media technologies considered or treat various technologies interchangeably. Studies need to recognize that distinct differences exist among social media in terms of the nature of users, the material features of platforms, and the norms for use.

Finally, the different theoretical perspectives considered here - i.e., personal behavior theories, social behavior theories, and communication theories generate diverse knowledge about social media and well-being in organizations. An important step in moving toward greater theoretical unity could be to utilize meta-analytical approaches to synthesize the results across perspectives. Additionally, it should be noted that research within all three theoretical approaches is strikingly homogenous in their conclusions that problematic usage patterns (high frequency, excessive or addictive use) are among the most likely sources of a negative impact on well-being. Future research could investigate how much use is too much, and how organizational contexts and phenomena (e.g., communication visibility [45]) qualify the social media and wellbeing association.

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Nothing declared.

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