



The Liberating Effect of AI in Organizations

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ABSTRACT

In the evolving landscape of organizational dynamics, AI emerges not as a usurper of human roles, but as a liberator, unshackling the human workforce from the confines of monotonous and mechanized tasks. This paper delves into a nuanced exploration of the harmonious coexistence of AI and human ingenuity, positing that AI's takeover of routine tasks paves the way for enhanced human contribution in organizations. We meticulously examine three cardinal domains of unassailible human predominance: the richness of human experience, intricate tapestry of intersubjective relations, and profound depths of symbolism and identity. Each domain was dissected, illustrating the irreplaceable nature of human touch and the ensuing enrichment of organizational culture and performance. In conclusion, we propose a counternarrative to the dystopian discourse of AI as a displacer of the human workforce. We assert that AI, in its mechanized precision, liberates human creativity and innovation, fostering an environment in which human potential is not subjugated but is unleashed, accentuated, and celebrated. We argue that this infusion of human essence will redefine organizational success and innovation, making them not just technologically advanced but also richly humanized, creative, and value-centric.

Keywords: *AI in Organizations, Dystopia, Human Experience, Intersubjective Relations, Metaphysical Organizations*

1. INTRODUCTION

There is real hysteria among scholars [1] and the general public alike [2] regarding the so-called replacement of humans by robots, from doing to thinking, notably in the workplace [3]. These concerns often take the shape of a discourse arising from an understanding of technological advancement, which is linear and monodirectional [4]. According to this view, the boundaries of an AI's capabilities are pushed to their extreme potential [5]. Unfortunately, this world of imaginaries suffers from a high dose of linearity and partiality, unconsciously narrowing the conception of what it means to be human [6].

From time to time, the role of tools in human society has always been to enhance individual or group capabilities in both learning and doing [7]. The feedback loop from tools to humans has always impacted and remade the patterns of acting and behaving [8]. This is what Culkin meant by his explication of McLuhan's view on the role of media in ourselves, "we shape our tools, and thereafter our tools shape us" [9]. However, AI is often misconceived as a tool [4], although its role is different [10]. It does not merely extend our physical capabilities

[11] but transcends and transforms our intellectual capacities [12].

This optimistic reading of the rapport between humans and AI in the organizational setting departs from an illuminating hint by Jacob Morgan, who believes that "[o]ur organizations were originally designed for AI, but we just did not have the technology. Humans were forced to take on jobs that were mundane, repetitive, and mindless. Now that we have the technology needed ... we can focus on being more human ... on being creative, innovative, and empathic."

On the other hand, the mechanistic view of human nature, widespread throughout the modern management perspective [13], is the root cause of such pessimistic, apocalyptic alertism, which projects a complete replacement of human resources by AI models in both organizational and social life [4]. The premise of human beings as inefficient machines makes the latter the prey of efficient automated mechanisms [14]. It follows that our intellectual pursuits are almost fully reducible to merely computational and quantifiable outputs, which we call data [15]. This view ignores and downplays the unrepeatable aspects of genuine creativity [16], moral

pursuits [17], and search for meaning [18], which are pervasive in the social and spiritual experiences of individuals and communities worldwide through human history.

This article navigates through the intricacies of the nexus between organizing, as the primary concern of management practitioners and scholars in contemporary organization studies, and AI technologies [19]. It guides readers through the nuisances of human ambition [20], experience [21], inter-subjective interactions [22], and symbolic interactionism [23] as exclusive domains of humane.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Taylor's [13] introduction of the principles of scientific management made efficiency, standardization, and optimization of manual labor a foundational triangle, whereupon the structure of the modern organization was raised [24]. Obviously, he was not aware of the foundation of a mechanistic arrangement of organizational life, where tasks are broken down into simple, easily repeatable elements [25]: a real predecessor of the way AI learns and applies automated procedures.

While Taylor would be recognized for his 'merit' in mechanizing the non-human component of the organizations, epitomized by the standard operating procedures, and could probably be classified as the horizontal dimension of an organization (Taylor, 1911), Weber [26] complemented this perspective by introducing the vertical mechanism of hierarchy, rules, and impersonal relationships between the human elements of the organizational life. He coined take on organizations as bureaucracy and advanced it as an effective means of predicting and standardizing the future behavior of humans in organizations [27].

Both of these views should be assigned the merit of 'coding' the conceptual frameworks of the algorithm that was known as modern organizations [28]. We are required to be frank enough to admit that what data sciences are doing nowadays is almost completely built upon our ideas, that is, management theories and models [60]. By adding to the predictability of repetitive and routinized job processes, Taylor and Weber have paved the way for the use of technology to automate repetitive and routine tasks [29].

AI and automation are typically designed to take over programmable tasks [4] carried out by humans only because the technology to perform these tasks has not yet been invented. This narrative reflects the dynamic evolution of every technological expansion since the emergence of the Industrial Revolution. We could draw an analogy to hysteria that likely accompanied each wave

of technological uptake, painting a vivid picture of societal resistance and adaptation. Each new technological introduction, from steam engines to assembly lines, and now to AI, has stirred a mix of anxiety and awe, prompting societies to confront and adapt to the imperatives of enhanced efficiency and productivity while grappling with the human implications thereof [30].

Why did human societies across the planet during the last centuries so generously welcome this expansion of the domain of technologized knowledge? From efficiency [13, 28] to predictability (26, 31) to the significant reduction in human errors [15, 29], all valid reasons testify to the increasingly humanized role of organizational members in organizational life. The ongoing integration of technology in organizational practices not only enhances productivity, but also augments the human capacity for innovation and value creation [4].

These appeasing overtones do not intend to hide the emerging need for new human skills appropriation and learning, as new professions and skills gain prominence, while others become more obsolete in the labor market. Pink [32] argued for an increasing demand for creative and empathetic professions, such as artists, inventors, and storytellers, paralleling a shift towards a society that values right-brain qualities. Emotional intelligence and critical thinking will remain exclusive domains of human members of organizations in the foreseeable future [33], underscoring the evolving landscape of skillset demands in a world increasingly intertwined with technology. Hochschild [34] warns of the commercialization of these human and spiritual domains, illuminating the potential commodification of emotional labor. However, this is counterbalanced by the liberation from more transactional episodes expected by AI, marking a distinctive shift in the allocation of human and machine roles in various organizational processes.

However, the introduction of AI in almost every routinized and predictable operation within organizational boundaries and the commercialization of the spiritual is not the only challenge that concerns management scholars. Human societies witness dramatic waves of job displacement and new forms of inequalities [35] as the rapid proliferation of AI technologies redefines traditional job roles and economic structures. Transhumanist future imaginaries raise both concerns and optimism by projecting the collaborative nature of the relations between humans and AI [76], suggesting a co-evolution that could potentially harness the strengths of both to achieve unprecedented innovation and productivity.

3. DISCUSSION: THE LIBERATING EFFECT OF AI IN ORGANIZATIONS

The entrance of AI models and tools into organizational life will surely replace the human workforce in the domains of work that are repetitive, specialized, and automated. As stated above, this is the nonhuman realm of organizational events. On the other hand, this replacement creates room for humans to focus and dedicate more resources (both spiritual and material) to genuine human contributions to organizational success. Below, I discuss three areas that open up for reconsideration and re-examination by management practitioners and scholars following an AI overtaking of what is already robotic in organizational life.

3.1. *The Landscape of Human Experience*

Human experience is a dynamic phenomenon that unfolds within the intricate interplay between the social, subjective, and spiritual realms of existence [21, 36]. It burgeons from the instantaneous interaction between human consciousness and its encompassing social and natural environments [37, 38]. However, fluidity and evolution are intrinsic characteristics. Individuals often revisit their archived experiences, reinterpret, and ascribe new layers of meaning, fostering a continual process of transformation and enrichment [39, 40]. This perpetual emergence underscores the evolving roles that experiences play in shaping both individual identity and organizational dynamics [41, 42].

Experience will continue to remain an exclusive domain for humans in the foreseeable future ([43]. In an organizational world where automated, repetitive, and routine processes are assumed by AI [4], technology is poised to play a supportive role in aiding individuals and organizations to store and harness experiences effectively [44]. AI, with its inherent capacity for data storage and processing, enables augmented utilization of archived human experiences [45]. Consequently, human beings will likely have significantly more time to allocate to this exclusive domain and exploit it in varied and frequent manners that contribute to the overall quality of life and human happiness [46, 47]. Happy and fulfilled individuals have traditionally been regarded as expensive resources for contemporary organizations [48]; however, with the advent and proliferation of AI, these resources are anticipated to be more ample and accessible in the future [76].

In conclusion, it is anticipated that we are on the cusp of witnessing organizations teeming individuals unencumbered by routine and repetitive tasks, thanks to the intervention of AI [4, 76]. Contrary to the ominous predictions and dire warnings of the naysayers, these entities are set to be abuzz with individuals whose

capacities for innovation, creativity, and complex problem-solving are unprecedentedly unleashed [32, 49]. Against all alertist warnings and apocalyptic expectations, AI, rather than being a repressive or suppressive force, is posited to play a liberational role, ushering in an era where the accomplishment of human potential is not just a lofty ideal, but an attainable reality [35, 46].

3.2. *The Intersubjectivity of Human Relations*

The realm of intersubjective relations stands as another bastion of the inherently human domain, characterized by its spontaneous and dynamic nature [50, 51]. Within this space, the collective, unpredictable, and non-deliberate interaction between individuals and communities orchestrates the ever-evolving symphony of societal norms, beliefs, ethics, and values. Renowned scholars have long emphasized the emergent and organic nature of these processes, a terrain where the scripted and algorithmic approach of AI is yet to tread with competence and credibility [52, 53]. As human beings, our collective rituals, ceremonies, and shared experiences – celebrations and mournings, individual achievements, and communal milestones – are engrained in the intricate tapestry of our societal fabric [54]. In this context, AI, while advancing in its capacities, still lingers at the precipice, observing a world replete with emotional, psychological, and spiritual nuances that are as yet beyond its grasp.

Not only will individuals and communities continue to thrive, organizations will also remain imbued with their unique rituals, values, and stories. As Schein [55] posited, organizational culture, marked by shared beliefs and values, plays a pivotal role in shaping behaviors and attitudes within the workplace. Historical entities, especially those rooted in the rich past and mission-driven organizations such as NGOs and government bodies, will continue to be guided by their foundational ethos [56; 75]. Intersubjective relations, as expounded by Mead [22] and later researchers, will endure as the bedrock upon which organizational politics and power dynamics are anchored. The Nietzschean "will to power" concept [57] will persist in informing the struggles for power and influence within organizational confines. Leadership traits, as theorized by Bass [58], continue to be grounded in an individual's inherent traits and characters, echoing the classical trait theory of leadership. The dynamism of human behavior in the workplace, especially in an era marked by remote and hybrid work, will still be spurred by internal needs and motivators, resonating with Maslow's hierarchy of needs [59] and Herzberg's two-factor theory [60].

As a result of AI's encroachment into the sphere of routinized processes, both leaders and employees are

likely to experience a newfound latitude in their roles. They are anticipated to shift their focus towards nurturing organizational culture and enhancing the softer, human-centered aspects of their organizations [35, 61]. The alleviation of operational stressors, such as stringent deadlines, ambitious targets, and exhaustive reporting, now shouldered by AI models and algorithms, is expected to foster an environment in which intersubjective relations can flourish [4, 62].

In this recalibrated organizational setting, the vibrancy of workplace interactions is poised to be unshackled by the routine constraints that once stifled creativity and innovation [63]. The traditional tension between operational efficiency and innovative flairs is expected to attenuate, ushering in an era where human ingenuity is given space to flourish [64]. This evolution of the organizational milieu is envisioned to engender a more nuanced, enriched, intersubjective experience both within and between organizations [76].

3.3. Symbolism and Human Identity

Symbols and identity, the fundamental constituents of our communities and organizations, are conceived from both human experience and interaction as well as divine revelations [65, 66]. They are not mere semiotic representations, but are imbued with profound meanings and collective memory [67, 68]. A significant portion of human society interprets their existence, aspirations, and core values from a metaphysical perspective facilitated by symbolic interaction [22, 23]. Organizations are intricately woven into this complex tapestry, drawing their most precious resources, human capabilities, both intellectual and social, from these symbolically enriched communities [55, 69].

Organizations are unlikely to rely on AI to generate or interpret the complex nuances of members' symbolic interactions and identities [70, 71]. AI, with its unparalleled capability of storing, processing, and utilizing symbols, lacks the innate metaphysical touch needed to fully comprehend the depth and breadth of the symbolic layers of communal existence and communication [72]. AI is not poised to interpret or recreate the intricacies of human dreams, emotions, ideas, and conflicts with the same richness and diversity as humans [73]. Consequently, contemporary organizations are expected to allocate more focus and resources to understanding and respecting these human phenomena [43]. An enhanced appreciation of the role that these elements play in shaping organizational members' relationships with organizational goals, strategies, and structures is anticipated [41].

The logical consequence of the persistence of individuals' and communities' symbolism in contemporary organizations is the augmented attention

and valuation of these authentic elements of human existence [65, 66]. Members of organizations are expected to be freer to participate in and co-create the meanings and implications of the symbols, values, and beliefs of their collectivities [69, 74]. The role of artificial intelligence in automating mundane and routine activities and processes in both business and community settings [4] is anticipated to enable fuller and deeper engagement with symbolic events [70]. Thus, organizations can transform into more metaphysical spaces, where symbolic and cultural elements are not only preserved but are also enriched and diversified [55, 75].

4. CONCLUSION

The advent of the AI epoch is unfolding, presenting a complex array of challenges and opportunities within the sphere of organizational life. Among scholars in the field of management, a dichotomous narrative is discernible. One strand of discourse exudes optimism, envisaging a future in which organizations attain unprecedented levels of efficiency and innovation, closely approximating their theoretical and imaginative zeniths. Conversely, a contrasting narrative is imbued with apprehension, expressing reservations concerning the preservation of human centrality amidst the tumultuous terrain of a foreseeable future, marked by pervasive AI integration. Each narrative offers distinct perspectives, underscoring the multifaceted impacts that AI is poised to exert on organizational dynamics and human roles within these constructs.

Instead of yielding to alarmist contentions that suggest an imminent domination of human functions by AI, a reflexive reassessment of our historical trajectory in organizational studies is required. This involves a critical inquiry into the extent to which the field of organizational and management studies has inadvertently facilitated a paradigm conducive to AI assimilation, particularly concerning the replaceability of human elements. The core question centers on whether the foundational tenets and structural modalities of existing organizational typologies inherently embody AI-like characteristics, thus rendering the anticipated AI 'takeover' a natural progression rather than an intrusive replacement. While AI's potential intrusion is often construed as a threat within the discourse of organizational studies, an alternative perspective warrants consideration. Could the recalibration of AI's role, particularly its ascendancy in performing AI-congruent tasks within organizations, potentially catalyze human liberation? This liberation would entail a shift towards roles that are intrinsically human, characterized by creativity, empathy, and other distinct human attributes, thereby engendering a more human-centric organizational ethos.

Moreover, AI's integration extends beyond reclaiming operational domains initially earmarked during the advent of Taylorism; it is anticipated to permeate the realm of quantitative research comprehensively within organizational studies. Every phase, from data accumulation and dissection to the construction of theoretical frameworks, is susceptible to AI's precision and efficiency. This ascendancy of AI is poised to obviate the necessity for human intervention in tasks characterized by their routinized and automated nature. Consequently, this shift portrays a reorientation in the research focus. Qualitative research, especially investigations centered on nuanced and multifaceted human experience, is predicted to be burgeoning in prominence. Impending AI dominance in quantitative spheres accentuates the intrinsic value and uniqueness of human-centric qualitative inquiries, illuminating the intricate landscapes of human experience and interaction unattainable by AI's algorithmic precision.

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