

Americans are worried about AI in the workplace: Poll

September 11 2023, by Cara Murez



Could an algorithm take your job someday? Concerns about artificial

intelligence, or AI, are plaguing U.S. workers, according to a new American Psychological Association poll.

Some workers are uncomfortable with the way their employers are tracking them, while others worry that AI will make their jobs obsolete.

"Employers interested in investing in [artificial intelligence systems](#) must also invest in their [employees](#), educating them about the role of AI and provide opportunities for feedback," said [Arthur Evans Jr.](#), chief executive officer of APA.

"The [workplace](#) is changing rapidly. Open and honest communication from employers can help relieve employees' anxieties about the unknown and improve overall well-being, which is associated with higher organizational performance," Evans said in an association news release.

[The APA poll](#) surveyed more than 2,500 employed adults in the second half of April.

Nearly 2 in 5 workers polled said they were worried that AI might one day make some or all of their job duties obsolete. About 64% of those who said they were worried about AI also said they felt tense or stressed during the workday, compared to 38% of those who were not worried about AI.

Workers with a [high school education](#) or less were significantly more likely than those with a four-year college degree to be worried that their jobs would become obsolete—44% to 34%.

About 50% of Black workers, 46% of Hispanic workers, 44% of Asian workers and 34% of white workers expressed significant worry about this.

About 51% of workers across different workplace settings said their [employer](#) uses technology to monitor them on the job. This included 49% of [office workers](#), 49% of manual laborers and 55% of customer/client/patient services workers.

Among those who were monitored on the job, morale was lower.

About 46% of those who were monitored said they were uncomfortable with being tracked (vs. 23% of workers who did not report being monitored), 51% felt micromanaged (vs. 33%), and 39% felt emotional exhaustion at work (vs. 22%).

Nearly 2 in 5 workers who were worried about AI said they believed they did not matter to their employer, the poll found. More employees who were monitored also reported feeling not valued at work compared to peers who were not monitored.

Mattering at work is one of the "Five Essentials" to strengthen workplace well-being, according to the U.S. Surgeon General's Framework for Mental Health and Well-Being in the Workplace.

That framework says [workers](#) who feel appreciated often have an increased sense of value and meaning. They are also better able to manage stress.

Those who don't feel valued are at risk for stress, irritability or signs often associated with workplace burnout.

"We know that people want to feel as if their work makes a difference in the lives of others," Evans noted. "And employees who feel like their job duties can be replaced by [artificial intelligence](#), or that their employer feels the need to constantly surveil their work, are less likely to feel as if the work they do matters.

"It is up to employers to make sure that any new technologies they introduce into the workplace enhance rather than diminish that sense of meaning. Employers who pay attention to how technology affects their employees will perform better," Evans said.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [mental health in the workplace](#).

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Citation: Americans are worried about AI in the workplace: Poll (2023, September 11) retrieved 29 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2023-09-americans-ai-workplace-poll.html>

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