

# The Self-Dehumanizing Effect of Self-Tracking Technology

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## **Abstract**

We live in a culture of quantification, where experiences can be tracked and measured with technology. Wearable wristbands instantly quantify the trajectory of movements, mood, and quality of sleep, smartphones and tablets meticulously measure screen time. We argue that such prolific and ubiquitous quantification by means of self-tracking has implications for the self. Experience quantification reduces sense of humanness by turning an individual into a medium between experience input and output. In three studies (one correlational and two experimental) we demonstrate the mechanistic dehumanizing effect of experience quantification. The findings suggest that the increasingly common consumer practice of self-quantification leads consumers to feel more like machines.

**Keywords:** *technology; identity; dehumanization*

**Track:** Consumer Behaviour