Scroll, Pause, and Repeat: How Social Media Fuels Procrastination and Disrupts Work-Life Balance

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ABSTRACT

The current study investigates the interrelationships between social media use, social media fatigue, procrastination behavior, and work-life balance among corporate employees in Pakistan. The primary research objectives are to examine how social media fatigue mediates the relationship between social media usage and both procrastination and work-life balance, and to explore the moderating role of cognitive emotion appraisal in these dynamics. A quantitative methodology was employed using a sample of corporate employees, with data analyzed through Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results reveal that social media fatigue significantly mediates the impact of social media use on both procrastination and work-life balance, while cognitive emotion appraisal moderates these effects, particularly by reducing the negative outcomes associated with fatigue. The study concludes that effective emotional regulation strategies can mitigate the adverse effects of social media fatigue. Future research should explore these relationships across different industries and cultural contexts and consider longitudinal approaches to better understand the temporal effects of social media fatigue on employee performance and well-being.

Social media has been the greatest source of disruption in this new age of media. Where people benefit from easy access to information, it also hampers your focus and psychological well-being. This study examines how excessive social media usage affects procrastination and work-

life balance, with social media fatigue as a key mediator. The study focuses on employees in multinational corporations in Pakistan, analyzing how prolonged exposure to social media leads to fatigue, impacting both their personal and professional lives.

Using theories like self-determination, gratification, and emotion appraisal, the research highlights the moderating role of cognitive-emotional reappraisal in mitigating these negative outcomes. The study employs a quantitative research approach with data collected from corporate employees, and it utilizes Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) for hypothesis testing. Findings suggest that emotional regulation, particularly cognitive reappraisal, can significantly reduce the negative effects of social media fatigue on procrastination and work-life balance. The study contributes to the growing body of research on social media's impact on employee well-being and offers practical implications for corporate policy and employee management.

The extensive use of social media has profoundly impacted people's daily lives, drawing increased attention from social science researchers who seek to understand its influence on social interactions and user experiences. Creating profiles on platforms like Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook allows individuals to access, share, and create content, facilitating communication among users (Ellison & Boyd, 2007). These platforms offer publicly accessible information and user-generated content that enhances online engagement.

Figure 1 illustrates that out of the 8.01 billion people in the world, 5.44 billion are unique mobile phone users, accounting for 68% of the global population. There are 5.16 billion internet users, representing 64.4%, while 4.76 billion individuals, or 59.4%, are active social media users. The graphic highlights the massive reach of digital platforms and devices, reflecting their role in global connectivity and interaction, and this has been taken from the Digital Global Overview Report (2023).

Figure 1
Total Social Media Users (Digital 2023-Global Overview Report)
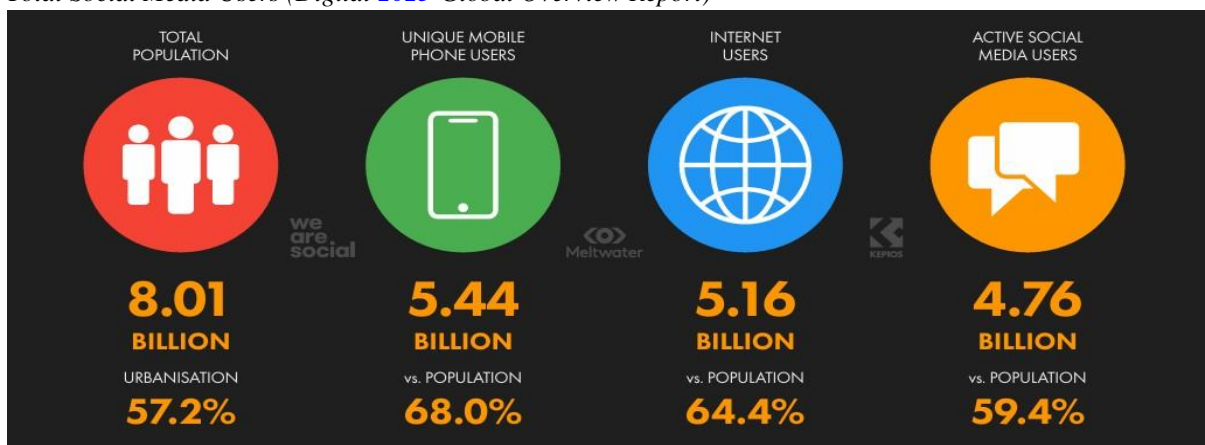
According to the Pew Research Center's 2015 study, 74% of adult internet users have at least one social media account, with 52% managing multiple profiles, an increase from 42% in 2013 (Duggan, 2015). A 2021 study by Kepios Analysis reported that 490 million new users joined social media platforms the previous year. Additionally, 63% of internet users aged 50 to 64 and 56% of those aged 65 and older are now actively using at least one social network.

Although there is extensive research on social media use among adults, fewer studies focus on adult perspectives (Duggan, 2015).

The widespread use of social media has prompted research into its psychosocial effects. Some studies suggest that social media use negatively impacts subjective well-being, leading to lower moods, depressive symptoms, and reduced life satisfaction (Liu, 2021). Murtaza (2021) found that dependence on technology has hindered interpersonal interactions. However, other studies found no significant negative effects or even positive outcomes, such as reduced feelings of isolation and improved well-being (Tandoc, 2015). The psychological impact of social media use continues to be a significant area of research due to the platform's global prevalence (Liu, 2021).

Due to the widespread use of social media, researchers have ample opportunity to investigate both the positive and negative effects of these platforms. This pervasive presence enables a thorough examination of how social media influences individuals and society, impacting communication, behavior, and well-being. Focusing on well-being, recent research (Hattingh, 2022) has emphasized the serious effects of FOMO (fear of missing out) and its links to negative aspects of social media use, such as overuse, fatigue, and reduced well-being.

Another insight that eyebrows and pushes us to delve more into this phenomenon is the stats shared in the Digital 2023 Global overview Report. As shown in Figure 2, "To fill up spare time" ranks among the top 2 reasons why individuals use social media. This is the exact reason social media fatigue and procrastination take their roots. People in all fields, e.g., students and professionals, use social media to fill their spare time. Employees deliberately delay their important tasks at the workplace and give their precious time to social media for temporary satisfaction and fulfillment of social needs. What workers refer to as "spare time" is actually work time that costs the corporation a lot of money.

Figure 2

Reasons for Using Social Media. Source: Digital 2023-Global Overview Report
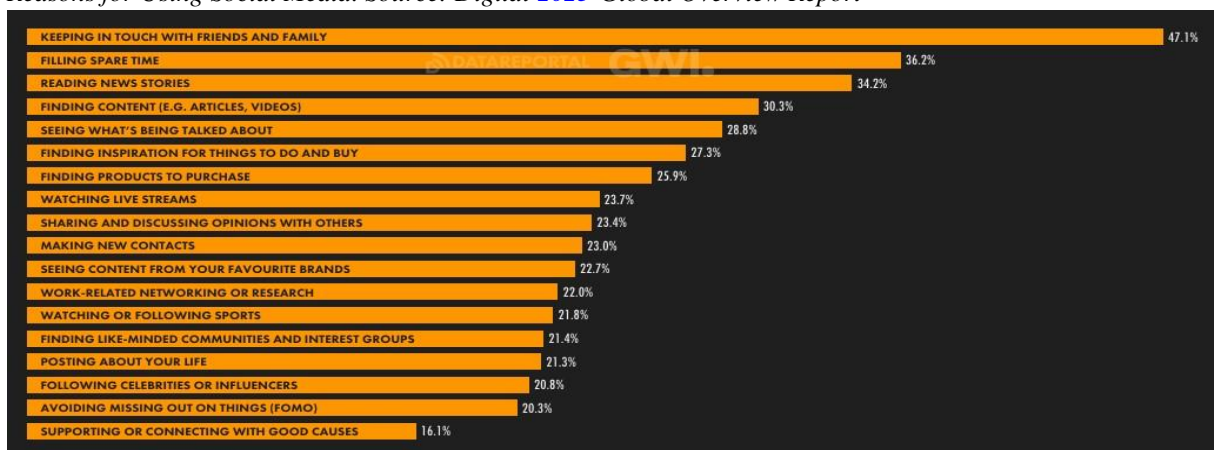
Procrastination, the act of delaying the initiation or completion of a planned task, is prevalent in many aspects of modern life. Studies by D'Abate and Eddy (2007) and Nguyen (2013) reveal that most individuals procrastinate for over 25% of their working hours. A notable example can be seen in economics. In the medical field, research shows that patients often delay medical appointments, neglect preventive health measures, and postpone seeking treatment, all forms

of procrastination (Sirois, 2013). In the presence of procrastination at the workplace, the necessary tasks at work may be affected. For example, van Eerde (2016) found that social media use can negatively impact job engagement by causing work interruptions. Similarly, research by Syrek and colleagues in 2018 revealed that excessive social media use at work was associated with lower performance and reduced employee engagement, resulting in a disrupted work-life balance.

Although numerous studies worldwide and in Pakistan have explored the effects of social media usage on procrastination and social media fatigue, there has been a lack of research specifically investigating its impact on work-life balance in Pakistan. Moreover, the role of emotional regulation in these dynamics has not been sufficiently addressed. This study aims to examine how emotional regulation—specifically cognitive reappraisal—can mitigate the negative effects of social media exhaustion on work-life balance and procrastination, highlighting its importance as a coping strategy for emotions triggered by social media fatigue.

Theoretical Framework

Selecting foundational theories for a research study requires a deliberate and methodical approach to ensure the chosen theories align with the research question, objectives, and overall context. In this study, the Uses and Gratification (U&G) theory, introduced by Katz (1973), serves as the primary framework for examining social media usage. This theory focuses on understanding the social and psychological needs of individuals, which drive their expectations from social media. It suggests that people turn to social media to fulfill personal desires and expectations, explaining why they engage in communication and activities with other users. In organizational settings, employees use social media to express their emotions and expect acknowledgment and attention from others. U&G theory links actions to outcomes, making it valuable for analyzing media use motivations in both professional and leisure contexts (Kouvonen, 2008).

The second theory supporting this investigation is the concept of Compensatory Internet Use (TCIU), which suggests that individuals may use social media as a way to cope with negative emotions or uncomfortable situations (Kardefelt-Winther, 2014). This concept proposes that using technology in a compensatory manner can lead to excessive use and negative outcomes. Previous studies (Yao et al., 2023) have applied TCIU to explain phenomena like fear of missing out and excessive social media engagement. According to TCIU, employees may excessively use social media at work to cope with unmet social needs or stressful personal and professional situations (Repetti, 2014).

The Limited-Capacity Model of Motivated Mediated Message Processing (LC4MP), a theory that integrates communication studies, psychology, and cognitive science, describes patterns of human communication and information processing (Lang, 2006). This theory asserts that humans have a limited capacity for processing information, which places constraints on how communication is handled. Excessive social media use during work hours results in information overload, which impairs cognitive function and creates stressful situations for employees. Depreli (2024) noted that social media platform users often experience negative effects such as exhaustion and fatigue due to the stress of processing large amounts of information.

Emotion appraisal theories propose that emotional responses are shaped by individuals' perceptions of events and how these events influence their core emotional states. These theories highlight the role of cognitive evaluations and internal emotions in shaping emotional experiences. Frijda and Zeelenberg (2001) suggest that emotions can be seen as processes rather than single mental states, and these processes act as coping strategies designed to achieve desirable emotional outcomes. Social media use at work can have both positive and negative impacts on performance.

Finally, boundary management theory addresses the practice of actively maintaining or blurring the boundaries between different aspects of life (Greenhaus, 2012). According to Ticona (2015), employees blur the lines between work and personal life when they attend work-related social events, participate in family-inclusive company gatherings, or respond to urgent work emails on weekends. When employees engage in excessive social media use at work, these blurred boundaries can spill over into their personal lives, leading to further entanglement between work and home responsibilities.

Literature Review
Social Media Use

Mansour (2018) describes social media as an electronic social structure composed of individuals, organizations, and groups. Young people, including children and teenagers, actively engage with a wide range of social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, and WhatsApp (Naguib, 2018). These online interactions often go beyond casual exchanges, fostering connections with entities like corporations, national identities, or loyalty to sports teams (Ali, 2024). Consequently, social media plays a significant role in shaping not only personal relationships but also broader affiliations that influence identity and interests.

The first company to utilize these features was SixDegrees, which positioned itself as a platform for messaging and communication (Ellison & Boyd, 2007). Despite millions of users signing up, SixDegrees was shut down in 2000 due to financial issues. It is crucial to distinguish between "social media" and "social networks," as the two terms are often confused (Drahošová, 2017). "Social media" is the preferred term, encompassing a wide range of online platforms and tools designed for collaborative communication and enhancing social interaction. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, YouTube, and TikTok have revolutionized the way people connect and communicate (Ekwueme, 2019). These platforms are highly appealing to users as they offer valuable tools for building and maintaining relationships with peers (Reddick, 2013). Users are attracted to social media for its ease of access to information, entertainment, and convenience (Chai & Kim, 2012). Notably, social media has proven effective in disseminating critical health information during events like the COVID-19 pandemic (Gever, 2024).

Yang et al. (2023) point out that social media has become deeply embedded in modern life, affecting social relationships and behaviors. It facilitates information sharing and expression of opinions and enhances social interaction (Zhou et al., 2022). As of January 2022, 58.4% of the world's population, over 4.62 billion people, used social media regularly, with an average of 2.5 hours spent daily on these platforms (Digital Report, 2023). Social media's accessibility

allows users to engage in conversations anytime, from anywhere. Through content creation and sharing, users have the power to shape public opinion online (Kim et al., 2021).

Social Media Fatigue

Given the widespread use of social media, researchers have a broad range of opportunities to explore both the positive and negative outcomes of these platforms. Focusing on the latter, a 2022 study (Hattingh et al., 2022) emphasized the serious consequences of FOMO (fear of missing out) and its links to problematic social media behaviors such as excessive use, exhaustion, and decreased well-being. The term "social media fatigue" refers to the unpleasant emotions, such as stress, exhaustion, and low energy, that can arise from prolonged social media use (Ravindran et al., 2014). Furthermore, it has been shown that using social media in the workplace is associated with feelings of envy, as individuals often engage with social media in an attempt to alleviate feelings of inadequacy, which can ultimately result in social media burnout (Tariq et al., 2022). Zhu and Bao (2018) describe "social media fatigue" as a subjective assessment of burnout, boredom, or weariness stemming from social media engagement. These ideas help explain the psychological and physical dimensions of social media exhaustion.

As the use of Social Media Platforms (SMPs) increases, users are exhibiting symptoms of FOMO and social media exhaustion (Jabeen et al., 2023). Tandon, Dhir, Talwar, et al. (2021) have drawn attention to social media exhaustion, a negative consequence of using SMPs, and its role in prompting temporary or permanent breaks from these platforms. Ravindran et al. (2014) define social media fatigue as a state of burnout and depletion caused by engaging with SMPs. Jabeen et al. (2023) also attribute it to users' struggle to manage the volume of information and conversations on SMPs, highlighting cognitive processing limitations. The "dark side of social media," a topic of growing research, has received particular focus in recent years (Tandon et al., 2022). Tandon, Dhir, Islam, et al. (2021) and other scholars have examined various manifestations of social media fatigue, FOMO, and envy triggered by social media, as well as their impact on academic performance and mental health (Malik et al., 2020), underscoring the complex relationship between social media and well-being.

Procrastination

Ellis and Knaus (1977) define procrastination as the tendency to delay tasks to the point where it causes personal discomfort. It can act as a defense mechanism for individuals with low self-esteem (Burka & Yuen, 1983).

Procrastination, as defined by van Eerde (2016), is the delay in accomplishing a task due to postponing intended actions. Avoidance typically occurs with unpleasant or less appealing tasks than alternative activities. Studies show that employees spend an average of 1.5 to 3 hours daily on personal activities during work hours. D'Abate and Eddy (2007) estimated that each employee loses $8,875 annually due to engaging in non-work-related personal activities during work hours. This leads to a 30–40% loss in productivity, costing up to $85 billion annually in the U.S., as between 30% and 65% of online activity at work is unrelated to job duties (Sharma, & Gupta, 2004) These significant impacts highlight the importance of understanding procrastination.

van Eerde (2016) defines procrastination as a delay caused by postponing the execution of a planned task. This avoidance typically occurs with tasks that are either unpleasant or less

appealing than more desirable alternatives. Employees may appear to be working on their computers but are actually engaged in activities like playing games, browsing social media, shopping online, or instant messaging (Metin et al., 2015). Research shows that "cyberslacking" results in substantial costs for businesses (Garrett & Danziger, 2008). Additionally, studies indicate that habitual procrastinators often miss deadlines, jeopardize project success, and influence others to delay tasks (Pychyl & Sirois, 2016). Procrastination is generally seen as a negative trait in the workplace, leading to various unproductive behaviors such as time theft, absenteeism, and presenteeism—where employees are physically present but not fully engaged in their tasks (Lorinkova & Perry, 2017).

Work-life Balance & Emotional Regulation

Achieving an ideal balance between work and personal life is a key goal for modern professionals. This topic has gained significant attention in recent years, resulting in numerous studies (Ahmad, 2021). The widespread use of computers, social media, and smartphones in today's workplace has removed traditional time and location boundaries. Schlachter et al. (2018) note that this shift can lead to negative effects on employees, such as work-family conflict, emotional exhaustion, job burnout, and work-life imbalance (Xie et al., 2018). Many individuals struggle to balance work and family responsibilities, resulting in increased work-related stress (Karkoulian et al., 2016). Job stress is a significant issue in the European Union and contributes to various work-related challenges (Rajendran & Theiler, 2012). Maintaining work-life balance is essential for employee well-being and affects various factors such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Molnár et al., 2021)

Work-life balance can be broadly understood as the successful alignment of different aspects of a person's life (Thakur et al., 2020). It refers to an employee's ability to manage both work and personal responsibilities (Carlson et al., 2009). Consequently, achieving work-life balance becomes crucial for employee recovery. From an employer's perspective, supporting employees in attaining an optimal work-life balance provides a competitive advantage in attracting and retaining talent (Karatepe, 2010). In other words, work-life balance actively enhances employees' subjective well-being (Yang & Jo, 2022). A study in Hong Kong's hotel industry (Wong & Ko, 2009) found that flexible work schedules, adequate time off, dedication to work, and social support in the workplace all contributed positively to work-life balance. Emotions significantly influence our behavior, thoughts, and interactions with others. People use various strategies to manage their emotions, and the ability to do so effectively is known as emotion regulation (Salovey et al., 1995). This skill has been associated with positive outcomes, including improved psychological well-being (Ford & Gross, 2018). Beliefs about emotions are crucial, as they shape how we engage with the world, especially in emotional situations. The exploration of how emotion-related beliefs impact emotional and interpersonal outcomes is gaining increasing attention (Ford & Gross, 2018). Effectively managing emotions is highlighted as a core aspect of emotional regulation (Salovey et al., 1995). According to various theories (Bartsch et al., 2008), there are instances where individuals must consciously control their emotions, further emphasizing the importance of understanding and managing emotional responses.

Hypothesis Development
Social Media Use & Social Media Fatigue
A study by Goasduff and Pettey (2012) explored the concept of social media fatigue, revealing that certain groups of users experience fatigue due to the overwhelming amount of information they encounter. The study surveyed 6,295 participants from 11 developed and developing markets, ranging in age from 13 to 74, between December 2010 and January 2011. Social media fatigue occurs when users feel bombarded by the vast quantity of content, the large number of friends and contacts, and the effort required to maintain these relationships. Additionally, a recent research by Sano et al. (2019) suggests that factors like user boredom and privacy concerns also contribute to social media fatigue. This emphasizes the complex nature of the issue and the importance of fully understanding the various factors that lead to social media fatigue to address it effectively. Building on the existing literature regarding social use and social media fatigue, the following hypothesis is proposed to explain the relationship between these two variables.

Hypothesis 1 suggests that there is a direct and positive correlation between the use of social media and the experience of social media fatigue.

Social Media Fatigue & Procrastination Behaviour
Procrastination, as defined by Steel and Klingsieck (2015), refers to the intentional delay of important tasks, even when this postponement leads to negative consequences that outweigh any potential benefits. Recent studies suggest that individuals often turn to social media as a way to procrastinate (Meier, 2022). Frequent social media use has been linked to a greater tendency to procrastinate, which in turn contributes to increased feelings of social media fatigue (Klingsieck, 2013). Procrastinating negatively impacts psychological well-being intensifies negative emotions (Sirois & Pychyl, 2013). Social media platforms play a significant role in encouraging procrastination, as users prioritize less important activities over crucial tasks. While social media use is seen as a precursor to procrastination, more empirical evidence is needed to substantiate these claims. Sirois and Pychyl (2013) suggest that procrastination and social media use are mutually reinforcing. Thus, the second hypothesis of our study is derived from this relationship.

Hypothesis 2 posits that there exists a direct and positive correlation between experiencing Social Media Fatigue and engaging in Procrastination Behavior.

Social Media Fatigue and Work-life Balance
Numerous studies have examined the adverse effects of social media across various contexts, including the workplace (Cao et al., 2016). As technology and social media usage continue to evolve, it becomes increasingly important to explore the relationship between social media use and its impact on maintaining a balance between work and personal life (Yao et al., 2023). van Zoonen et al. (2017) observed that increased time spent on social media can lead to decreased performance, affecting both professional and personal aspects of life. This underscores the need for a deeper understanding of how social media influences different areas of individuals' lives and highlights the importance of managing this interaction for overall well-being. From the

existing literature, we conclude that social media fatigue can disrupt an employee's work-life balance.

Hypothesis 3 suggests that there is a direct and adverse correlation between experiencing Social Media Fatigue and achieving a balanced Work-Life equilibrium.

Social Media Fatigue as a Mediator between SM Use and Work-Life Balance as well as Procrastination Behavior

Extensive research in this area emphasizes the challenges individuals face in processing complex communications when overwhelmed with excessive information (Biocca et al., 2007). Additionally, Griffiths (2010) provides valuable insights into the various ways people engage with social media. While some use these platforms to unwind after a long day, others engage more frequently, which can lead to what is known as Social Media Fatigue. This fatigue can intensify tendencies toward procrastination, causing individuals to delay important tasks (Sirois & Pychyl, 2013). As suggested, this can negatively affect overall work productivity and create challenges in maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Recent studies highlight the widespread use of social media as a tool for procrastination. As individuals increase their social media usage, they become more prone to Social Media Fatigue, which further encourages postponing responsibilities. Research also shows that employees experiencing procrastination (Pychyl & Sirois, 2016) are more likely to disrupt their work-life balance. Hence, the following hypotheses are derived.

Hypothesis 4 suggests that Social Media Fatigue plays a constructive role as a mediator in the relationship between Social Media Use and Procrastination Behavior.
 Hypothesis 5 proposes that social media fatigue acts as a detrimental mediator in the association between social media use and achieving a balanced work-life equilibrium.

Emotion Appraisal as Moderator between SM Fatigue and Procrastinative Behavior as well as between SM Fatigue and Work-Life Balance

Previous research has highlighted the importance of maintaining a balance between professional and personal responsibilities (Sánchez Abril et al., 2012). It has been noted that using social media during work hours can diminish job motivation and create conflicts between work and personal life (van Zoonen & Rice, 2017). Several studies also indicate that procrastination is often triggered by various media, especially social media platforms (Reinecke & Hofmann, 2016). Emotions significantly impact our behavior, thoughts, and interactions with others. People use different strategies to manage their emotions, and the ability to do so effectively is known as emotion regulation (Salovey et al., 1995). This skill is associated with positive outcomes, including improved psychological well-being (Ford & Gross, 2018). The ability to manage emotions effectively is considered a key aspect of emotional regulation (Salovey et al., 1995). Various theories (Bartsch et al., 2008) suggest that individuals must sometimes consciously control their emotions, further emphasizing the importance of understanding and managing emotional responses. Emotional regulation is an automatic mechanism that activates when needed to manage situations and control emotions.

In this research context, it is proposed that (1) emotional reappraisal and regulation weakens the relationship between social media fatigue and procrastination, and (2) emotional reappraisal and regulation also weakens the relationship between social media fatigue and work-life balance.

Hypothesis 6 (H6) suggests that Emotional Reappraisal plays a significant and negative role in moderating the relationship between Social Media Fatigue and Procrastination Behavior. **Hypothesis 7 (H7)** proposes that Emotional Reappraisal also significantly and negatively moderates the connection between Social Media Fatigue and Work-Life Balance.

The theoretical framework of the study as reflected in the above mentioned hypotheses can be seen in Figure 3.

Figure 3
Theoretical Framework
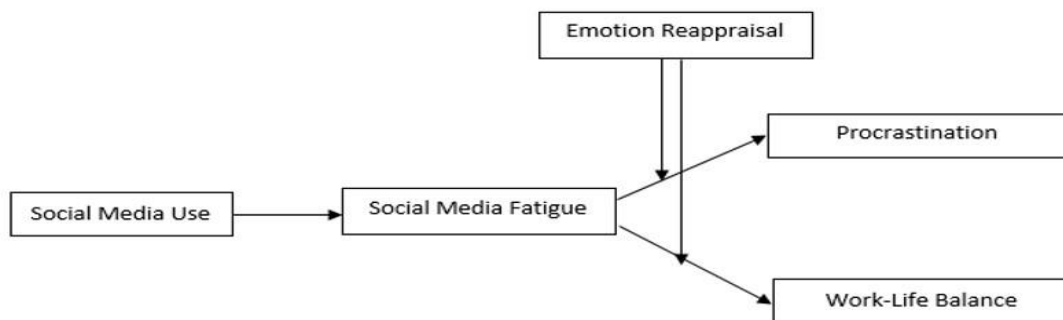
Method
Sampling Procedure and Data Collection
The corporate sector of Pakistan was the source of data collection for the current survey. To represent the corporate sector, the authors purposefully selected six companies, two of which were banks and the rest were multinational organizations. The selected banks were Habib Bank and United Bank, whereas the multinational firms were Levis Strauss Pakistan, Telenor Pakistan, Zong China Mobile and CCBPL(Coca Cola Beverages Private Limited). The rationale behind selecting these organizations is because of their outreach and vast network in the country. Purposive sampling was utilized as the sample approach for this study because we had to make sure that those taking the survey met specific requirements that we had established. This study used a self-administered questionnaire because it was a correlational study in nature.

Measures
This study adapted the scales from already existing studies, and therefore, the validity and reliability of the survey instrument were pre-tested. The scale for social media use, consisting of 10 items, has been adapted from Andreassen et al. (2012). In the same way, five items for social media fatigue were adapted from Bright et al. (2015), and six items for emotional reappraisal were adapted from Gross and John (2003). For work-life balance, six items were

adapted from a study by Dex and Bond (2005). And finally, five items for procrastination were adapted from a study by Tuckman (1991).

Demographics

The study sample consisted of 384 respondents from the working class, including top-level and middle-level management. The percentage of male respondents was 82%, and that of females was 18%. 69% of respondents have an age below 30 years, whereas 31% of Sample Survey participants have an age above 35 years. Furthermore, 30% of respondents' job experience is between the ranges of 5 to 10 years, while 42% of survey respondents have working experience of less than 5 years.

Results

Reliability

The presence of common method bias (CMB) has the potential to result in systematic errors in measurement, which can affect the accuracy of hypothesized relationships. Preventive processes and statistical procedures can be used to reduce CMB. The preventive process includes counter-balancing the order of questions, using simple and specific questions, and ensuring respondent confidentiality (Podsakoff et al., 2003). In this study, the preventive approach was utilized to tackle the issue of CMB. This involved counter-balancing the order of questions, providing explanations for any ambiguous terms, ensuring that questions were clear and specific, and safeguarding the confidentiality of the respondents. These measures were recommended by (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Table 1 shows no reliability issue because all five constructs produce sufficient reliability values. Hence, the authors confirmed that there is no issue of reliability in the current survey.

Table 1
Reliability Coefficient

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha
SMU	.87
SMF	.87
WLB	.89
PROC	.86
ER	.88

Multicollinearity

This study adopts a unique approach to evaluating the validity of formative measures, as noted by Ringle and Sarstedt (2016). Hair et al. (2016) outline three methods for assessing formative validity, and here, the focus is on examining multicollinearity. Collinearity significantly impacts both the weight and importance of formative indicators, making it a key factor in validity assessment. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is used to estimate collinearity strength, with a benchmark of 5. As presented in Table 2, the results showed no collinearity issues, as all VIF values are below this threshold, ensuring the validity of the second-order structures.
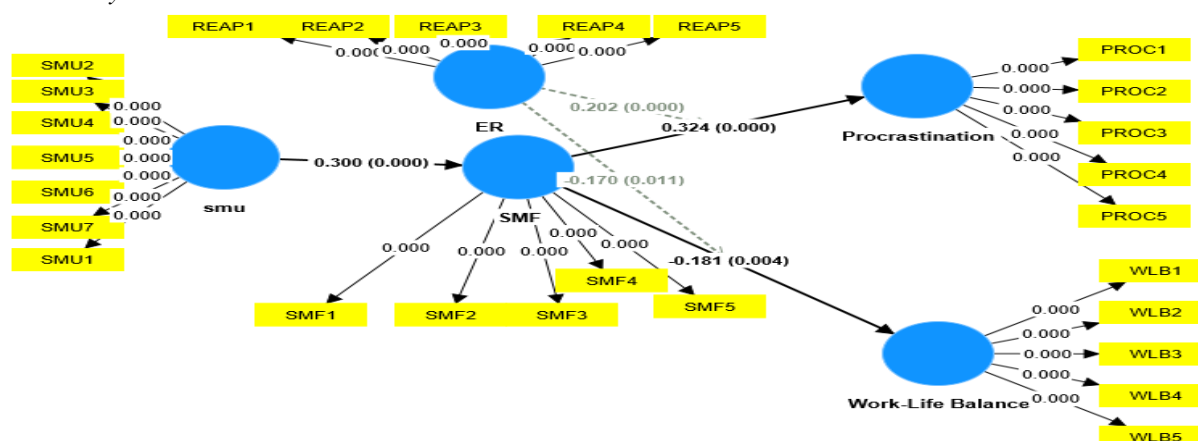
Table 2

Formative Constructs Multi-Collinearity

Variable/Constructs	Items	VIF
Social Media Use	SMU1	1.75
	SMU2	2.43
	SMU3	2.77
	SMU4	2.74
	SMU5	4.11
	SMU6	1.79
	SMU7	3.01
Social Media Fatigue	SMF1	2.51
	SMF2	2.41
	SMF3	3.86
	SMF4	2.36
	SMF5	3.63
Procrastination	PROC1	1.76
	PROC2	1.98
	PROC3	2.20
	PROC4	2.52
	PROC5	2.13
Work-life Balance	WLB1	2.67
	WLB2	2.34
	WLB3	2.69
	WLB4	2.74
	WLB5	2.24
Emotion Reappraisal	ERAP1	3.15
	ERAP2	1.96
	ERAP3	3.19
	ERAP4	4.75
	ERAP5	2.97
	ERAP6	3.42

Hypothesis Testing

The structural model is essential for evaluating the presence and importance of path coefficients. In addition to identifying the path coefficient itself, as well as its significance and variance values, employing bootstrapping is crucial for assessing the structural model in PLS-SEM. Converging validity, discriminant validity, and reliability tests were conducted before testing hypotheses to confirm the validity and reliability of the model. Following the completion of the bootstrapping process, the structural model incorporating results are given in Figure 4 and Table 3.

Figure 4

Path Analysis

As shown in Table 3, this study tested three direct relationship hypotheses (H1: SMU→SMF, H2: SMF→PROC, and H3: SMF→WLB). Results from the structural model confirm significant support for both direct and mediated hypotheses. Social media use (SMU) strongly affects social media fatigue (SMF) (β = .30, *p* = .000), indicating that increased SMU raises SMF. SMF, in turn, significantly increases procrastination (PROC) (β = .32, *p* = .000) while negatively impacting work-life balance (WLB) (β = -.17, *p* = .005) as higher SMF leads to a decline in WLB.

Mediation analysis revealed that SMF mediates the relationships between SMU, PROC, and WLB. In the partially mediated hypotheses (H4: SMU→SMF→PROC, H5: SMU→SMF→WLB), SMF significantly mediates the impact of SMU on PROC (β = .09, *p* = .000) and has an adverse effect on WLB (β = -.05, *p* = .009).

The study also explored the moderating effect of emotional reappraisal. Contrary to expectations, emotional reappraisal positively moderates the SMU→PROC relationship (β = .20, *p* = .000), indicating its role as a self-regulation strategy. However, emotional reappraisal improves the SMF→WLB relationship, reducing the negative impact of SMF on WLB (β = -.170, *p* = .011).

Table 3
Path Coefficients of Direc, Mediation, and Moderation Hypotheses

Hypotheses	Relationship	β	*t*	*p*	*p* Level	Direction
H1	SMU→SMF	.30	3.70	.000	***	Supported
H2	SMF→PROC	.32	5.76	.000	***	Supported
H3	SMF→WLB	-.17	2.78	.005	**	Supported
H4	SMU→SMF→PROC	.09	4.38	.000	***	Supported
H5	SMU→SMF→WLB (ER as	-.05	2.63	.009	***	Supported
H6	moderator)	.20	3.53	.000		Rejected
H7	SMU→SMF→WLB	-.17	2.55	.011	**	Supported
	(ER as moderator)					

Discussion

The primary goal of this study is to evaluate the proposed research hypotheses through the structural model and examine the relationships between variables. By applying the PLS methodology, the study minimizes errors and enhances the model's ability to explain variance in dependent variables. The study focuses on path coefficients, the R^2 coefficient, and mediation linkages to evaluate the model's validity. The analysis provides insights into how effectively the model explains variance in the dependent variables, assessing its predictive capacity.

The need to maintain a consistent online presence is often driven by a fear of missing out, leading people to remain connected to social media and other online communication channels. This constant connectivity can cause burnout and exhaustion, particularly when individuals juggle multiple online activities simultaneously, such as browsing social media, responding to emails, and participating in online meetings. The overload of information and communication signals can lead to fatigue, stress, and a sense of being overwhelmed.

Previous research highlights that both users and service providers experience social media fatigue, which can significantly impact procrastination behavior. Unlike most studies that focus

on academic procrastination, this research examines general procrastination, aiming to fill a gap in the literature. Engaging in simultaneous online activities can lead to information overload and communication fatigue, which ultimately results in burnout. These feelings of fatigue can encourage procrastination, as individuals delay tasks in favor of less important activities. Although social media can improve productivity, it can also harm work-life balance, leading to conflicts between professional and personal roles. The constant engagement with social media blurs the boundaries between work and home life, causing individuals to become mentally absorbed and struggle to disengage. This can result in increased stress, work-life conflict, and a decline in job satisfaction. The study supports the hypothesis that social media fatigue negatively affects work-life balance, revealing the detrimental impact of excessive social media use on both personal and professional responsibilities.

The study examines the role of social media fatigue in mediating the relationship between social media use and procrastination. Excessive social media engagement leads to fatigue, which in turn contributes to procrastination. Individuals experiencing social media fatigue are more likely to delay important tasks, further exacerbating procrastinatory behavior. This finding supports the hypothesis that social media fatigue significantly mediates the relationship between social media use and procrastination.

Similarly, social media fatigue also mediates the relationship between social media use and work-life balance. Excessive social media use leads to fatigue, which in turn negatively impacts work-life balance. Individuals who experience social media fatigue may face heightened work-life conflicts as the demands of both personal and professional life become increasingly difficult to manage. The study confirms that social media fatigue significantly mediates the relationship between social media use and work-life balance, highlighting the negative effects of social media fatigue on balancing various life roles.

This study also explores the moderating effect of emotional reappraisal, a self-regulation strategy, on the relationship between social media use and procrastination. It was expected that emotional reappraisal would reduce the impact of social media fatigue on procrastination, but the results suggest otherwise. Emotional reappraisal was found to have a positive moderating effect, meaning that individuals who employ this strategy may still experience increased procrastination when facing social media fatigue. Emotional reappraisal, while typically considered an effective self-regulation technique, may not always help individuals mitigate the negative effects of social media fatigue. Instead, the study finds that emotional reappraisal exacerbates procrastinatory behavior linked to social media use.

The moderating role of emotional reappraisal on the relationship between social media fatigue and work-life balance was also investigated. It was expected that emotional reappraisal would strengthen the mediated relationship between social media fatigue and work-life balance, helping individuals better manage their responsibilities. The analysis revealed that emotional reappraisal moderates the link between social media fatigue and work-life balance, ultimately leading to improved balance. Although emotional reappraisal did not reduce procrastination in the previous hypothesis, it appears to enhance individuals' ability to maintain a healthy work-life balance when dealing with social media fatigue.

Limitations

This study's data was exclusively sourced from the corporate sector in Pakistan, limiting the generalizability of its findings to other developing countries, as business conditions may differ significantly. Additionally, it did not account for population size or specific industries within Pakistan, though data was gathered from a range of manufacturing sectors. The research used a cross-sectional approach, capturing a single moment in time rather than tracking changes over time, which limits its ability to reveal evolving trends or long-term effects. The study's theoretical model focused on five variables related to social media fatigue, but it did not explore other factors beyond procrastination. A broader range of variables could offer a more comprehensive understanding of social media fatigue in future studies. Another limitation is the exclusive use of quantitative methods. Incorporating a mixed-method approach could provide deeper insights into employee behavior in the digital age.

Future Directions

In this study, we used a cross-sectional method, collecting data from participants at a single point in time. Despite our efforts to thoroughly review the literature on fatigue and procrastination, there is room to refine the procrastination model by incorporating new concepts. This research offers recommendations for future studies:

- Expand research to other Asian and global regions for cross-cultural comparisons of social media usage.
- Include more industries, such as textiles and pharmaceuticals, beyond banks and multinationals.
- Explore additional factors contributing to FOMO, building on the existing listerature.
- Conduct longitudinal studies to track evolving customer preferences.
- Utilize qualitative methods, like interviews, to deepen insights into procrastination's multidimensional impacts.
- Investigate the moderating role of emotional reappraisal on procrastination and work-life balance.
- Study boundary conditions affecting the link between social media fatigue and procrastination. Include control factors to enhance the relevance of future studies.
- Explore FOMO's psychological impact on procrastination in future research.

Conclusion

This study highlights the significant role of social media fatigue in influencing procrastination and work-life balance. Continuous social media use leads to fatigue, which mediates the relationship between social media use and both procrastination and work-life balance. While emotional reappraisal was found to exacerbate procrastination in individuals facing social media fatigue, it positively moderates the impact of social media fatigue on work-life balance. The findings underscore the need for individuals and organizations to carefully monitor social media use and implement strategies to maintain a healthy work-life balance, manage fatigue, and reduce procrastination. Understanding the role of emotional reappraisal and other self-regulation strategies can help mitigate the negative consequences of excessive social media use.

Declarations
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Disclosure Statement

Ethics Approval
This study was conducted as per the ethical guidelines given in Helsinki Declaration. The authors got approval from the ethical committee of Beaconhouse National University, Lahore Pakistan, Ref: BNU/QA/IRB/24/001.

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