

Received: 17 July 2024, Accepted: 28 August 2024

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33282/rr.vx9i2.143>

**Nexus Between Excessive Enterprise Social Media Usage and Employee Creativity:
Mediating Role of Enterprise Social Media Fatigue and Moderating Role of Job
Autonomy**

Ramsha Saleem¹, Dr Muhammad Akram², Muhammad Adnan Fraz³,

Muhammad Ateeq-ur-Rehman⁴, Ghaliyah Firdaus⁵

- 1. MS Scholar at Bahria Business School, Bahria University Islamabad**
Email: saleemramsha412@gmail.com
- 2. Associate Professor, Bahria Business School, Bahria University, Islamabad**
Email: makram@bahria.edu.pk
- 3. PhD Scholar, Bahria Business School, Bahria University, Islamabad**
Email: adnan.fraz@hotmail.com
- 4. PhD Scholar, Department of Sociology, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi**
Email: ateeqrehman68@gmail.com
- 5. M Phil Research Scholar, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad**
Email: ghaliyah.firdaus95@gmail.com

Abstract

This study delves into the negative effects of excessive Enterprise Social Media (ESM) usage on employee creativity (EC), focusing on information overload and ESM fatigue. While ESM is recognised for fostering collaboration, its overuse raises concerns about productivity and well-being, particularly in contexts like Pakistan, where work-life balance is often overlooked. Using a quantitative approach and data from 500 IT professionals, the study reveals that ESM fatigue significantly undermines creativity and mediates the relationship between Enterprise Social Media and Employee Creativity. Furthermore, low job autonomy exacerbates these effects, while higher job autonomy buffers the negative impact. These findings emphasise the need for strategic ESM usage and initiatives to promote job autonomy to improve employee outcomes and organizational performance.

Key Words: Enterprise, Social Media, Employee Creativity, Job Autonomy, Organization, Performance

1. Introduction

In the business world, creativity is considered an essential driving force behind an organization's innovation and growth and for its competitiveness. Creativity can be observed at the individual, team, and organizational levels. In the realm of organizational psychology, the concept of creativity is defined as the ability of employees to generate ideas and solutions that are original and beneficial for the organization. This is one of the widely accepted definitions and has been used as a foundation in many disciplines. To assess creativity, the emphasis is put on the outcome rather than a cognitive journey through which creative ideas ultimately emerge. This allows creativity to be quantified with relative ease.

Over the past years, a lot of research has been conducted in this area and reportedly more than 9000 articles have been published to date. According to research, creativity is a mental process through which people come up with unique ideas or solutions to a problem. Creativity is driven by personal growth needs and a learning mindset and is crucial whether it is for personal work or organization. In essence, fostering creativity can lead to innovation providing the company leverage over its competitors and ensuring its offerings stay relevant (Gonlepa et al., 2023b).

Today businesses operate in a very competitive environment and to maintain that competitive edge enterprises leverage technological tools to foster communication, collaboration and knowledge sharing. These tools and social media tools encourage creativity and information sharing that result in improved performance of employees. One of the most prominent tools is enterprise social media (ESM) platforms like Microsoft teams, Google Workspace, Atlassian, Slack and many more. These platforms are being adopted in organizations in Pakistan especially in information technology (IT) industry. Such tools enhance employees skills, improve their analytical abilities and make the processes efficient (Si et al., 2023a).

As organizations increasingly rely on ESM to enhance communication and collaboration, questions regarding its effects on employee productivity and well-being have gained prominence. While the advantages of ESM are widely acknowledged, its overuse has led to challenges such as ESM fatigue, which can adversely affect employee creativity.

Indeed, Enterprise Social Media (ESM) has revolutionized workplace collaboration, but its unintended consequences, such as ESM fatigue, raise critical concerns for employee well-being and productivity. The overutilization of it may lead to poor task execution as employees become overwhelmed with the amount of information being shared. Furthermore, it can lead to distraction, and absentmindedness causing employees to lose focus, and they may start wasting their time on activities non-related to work. Excessive usage of ESM can lead to ESM fatigue which is the state where employees feel exhausted and dissatisfied with their jobs. This information overload can cause stress and pressure, eventually decrease not only employee productivity but also the companies (Luqman et al., 2021).

According to Gonlepa et al. (2023a), creativity is a crucial element in supporting social and economic reform meanwhile improving one's skills and performance. Management scholars and professionals have been making efforts to create an environment for employees that is inductive to learning, promotes creativity and provides employees with

job autonomy. At present, studies suggest that job autonomy is an essential element in stimulating employees. However, most organizations especially in Pakistan do not provide employees such freedom. Such autonomy and empowerment are reserved for people with higher positions. Often leaving significant part of workforce have little to no job autonomy (Alhassan et al., 2022). They experience a loss of productivity because their time and attention are being diverted by external distractions stemming from using ESM as most of the time employees are not given job autonomy to control their usage of social media.

Employees with minimal autonomy are compelled to check and respond to every notification, which causes information overload leading to ESM fatigue. Work-related and non-work-related activities and tasks can influence an employee's engagement in their job (mine). Pakistan has a high-power distance cultural environment, employees in these cultures typically have fewer controls over how they perform their jobs, which makes them potentially more vulnerable to the harmful effects of overusing ESM (Hai & Park, 2024).

The use of enterprise social media (ESM) or corporate social media has been discussed by many researchers to shed light on the performance and productivity of companies in the manufacturing and service industries. ESMs are known as web-based platforms that allow employees to communicate with each other personally or share messages with the whole organization. It is a multifunctional collaboration platform designed to encourage co-workers to socialize with each other as well as also share sensitive information and documents within the company while ensuring tight security (Si et al., 2023a).

Information overload is a worldwide problem that is being exacerbated by the digitalization of work. We can now access anything through the internet with just the click of a finger which has exposed us to an unprecedented amount of information. the constant usage and bombardment of information has made people feel "worn out". This condition is known as ESM fatigue. As mentioned before, information overload leads to enterprise social media fatigue. It is defined as a state of mental fatigue, weariness, and exhaustion caused by prolonged use of social media.

2. Research Gap

While research on Enterprise Social Media (ESM) has extensively emphasized its advantages in promoting collaboration, knowledge sharing, and productivity, there has been limited investigation into the negative effects of its overuse, specifically regarding its influence on employee creativity. Most existing studies have been conducted in countries like China and other Asian nations, where cultural and organizational factors significantly differ from those in Pakistan. Consequently, the results from these studies may not entirely extend to the Pakistani context, where work-life balance is frequently disregarded, and private companies function within distinct cultural and structural environments.

Furthermore, even though ESM fatigue has been recognized as a possible outcome of excessive ESM usage, its occurrence, trends, and effects on employees in Pakistani private firms have not been sufficiently investigated. It is vital to comprehend this relationship within the Pakistani context to develop strategies that alleviate the negative impacts of ESM usage.

Additionally, the interaction of significant factors such as job autonomy and ESM fatigue has not been thoroughly analyzed in the current literature. While job autonomy is a well-acknowledged moderator of various workplace stressors, its influence in mitigating the adverse effects of ESM fatigue on employee creativity has yet to receive adequate attention. This oversight highlights the necessity of examining how a lack of job autonomy might worsen the harmful effects of ESM fatigue on employees' creative abilities.

Hence, this study intends to fill these gaps by exploring the overuse of ESM and its consequences on employee creativity in Pakistani private firms, with a particular focus on the mediating role of ESM fatigue and the moderating effect of job autonomy. In doing so, it contributes to the wider discussion on optimizing ESM usage while enhancing creativity and well-being among employees.

3. Theoretical Background

3.1 Conservation of Resource (COR) Theory

COR theory is one of the well-structured frameworks in organizational settings in the field of management sciences. This theory focuses on how an individual strives to protect its resources from depleting, and how the actual loss of those resources whether tangible like money or time or psychological resources such as self-esteem and energy. Walter Bradford Cannon was one of the first researchers to study the concept of stress (Hobfoll 1989). Some researchers stated that stress is the stimulus, not a response and this theory defines “stress as an imbalance between the environmental demand and the response capability of an organism”.

3.2 Basic Principles of COR

The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory emphasizes the primacy of resource loss asserting that individuals are more vulnerable if they lose their resources instead of gaining them. In this study, excessive use of Enterprise Social Media (ESM) can deplete employees' cognitive and emotional resources, leading to stress or fatigue. According to COR theory, this loss of resources impairs their ability to engage in creative thinking, a resource-intensive process (Luqman et al., 2021).

This study also highlights the **Resource Investment Principle** suggesting that employees may strive to protect themselves against stress by gaining personal or organizational resources such as seeking time management or job autonomy. COR theory stresses that employees seek to conserve, protect, and build resources in three areas: Personal, social and structural resources. (Hobfoll et al., 2018).

This study leverages COR theory to explore how excessive ESM usage depletes resources, leading to ESM fatigue, which negatively impacts employee creativity. Furthermore, job autonomy is proposed as a resource that can buffer the negative effects of ESM fatigue.

4. Literature Review

4.1 Effects of ESM Usage on Employees

Companies around the world have adopted social media platforms as a quick and cheap medium to connect with their customers. This helps them increase their brand awareness, personally interacting with their potential customers. This helps them boost the number of leads and sales. In recent years, organizations are utilizing platforms that could help employees accomplish their work and the company's business objectives. These enterprise social media platforms (ESM) are potential tools for internal communication, collaboration, creation, and sharing of content among employees. Recently scholars Archer-Brown and Kietzmann observed in their research that the use of ESM enhances a company's performance and capabilities.

In Pakistan, the rapidly growing IT industry is leveraging these advancements to drive innovation and digital transformation. Over the past decade, the industry has flourished due to factors such as government support, the emergence of numerous startups, and a rising demand for digital solutions across sectors. The adoption of ESM platforms within this growing sector presents an opportunity to further enhance productivity, collaboration, and creativity in a competitive market.

ESM can foster new perspectives and ideas, improve problem-solving skills, and eventually produce innovative results by encouraging an environment of constant communication and knowledge sharing. ESM platforms can further encourage employees to think creatively by assisting in the recognition and celebration of creative initiatives. However, excessive use of ESM is linked to adverse effects, including information overload, reduced job satisfaction, and ESM fatigue (Wang et al., 2022a).

4.2 Factors Contributing to ESM Fatigue

As mentioned above in the study, The effects of ESM fatigue are referred to as the overburden among people who use social media platforms. In organizational settings, ESM fatigue is caused by the techno-overload and family-technology conflict. According to (Si et al., 2023a) these are the main reasons that cause ESM fatigue and decrease in employee creativity. IT professionals may feel compelled to work beyond their working hours and they remain connected to work-related communications. This can lead to burnout, fatigue, and job dissatisfaction (Arnold et al., 2023).

Baj-Rogowska (2023) further elaborates the ESM fatigue in more detail, emphasizing the importance of time investment to their professional and personal life. Here the word time investment or time cost refers to the amount of time lost on usage of enterprise social media excessively and this may exacerbate the feeling of overburden and tiredness. Despite these findings, much of the existing research focuses on productivity, with limited attention to creativity, an essential driver of organizational innovation.

4.3 Empowering the Modern Workforce: The Role of Job Autonomy

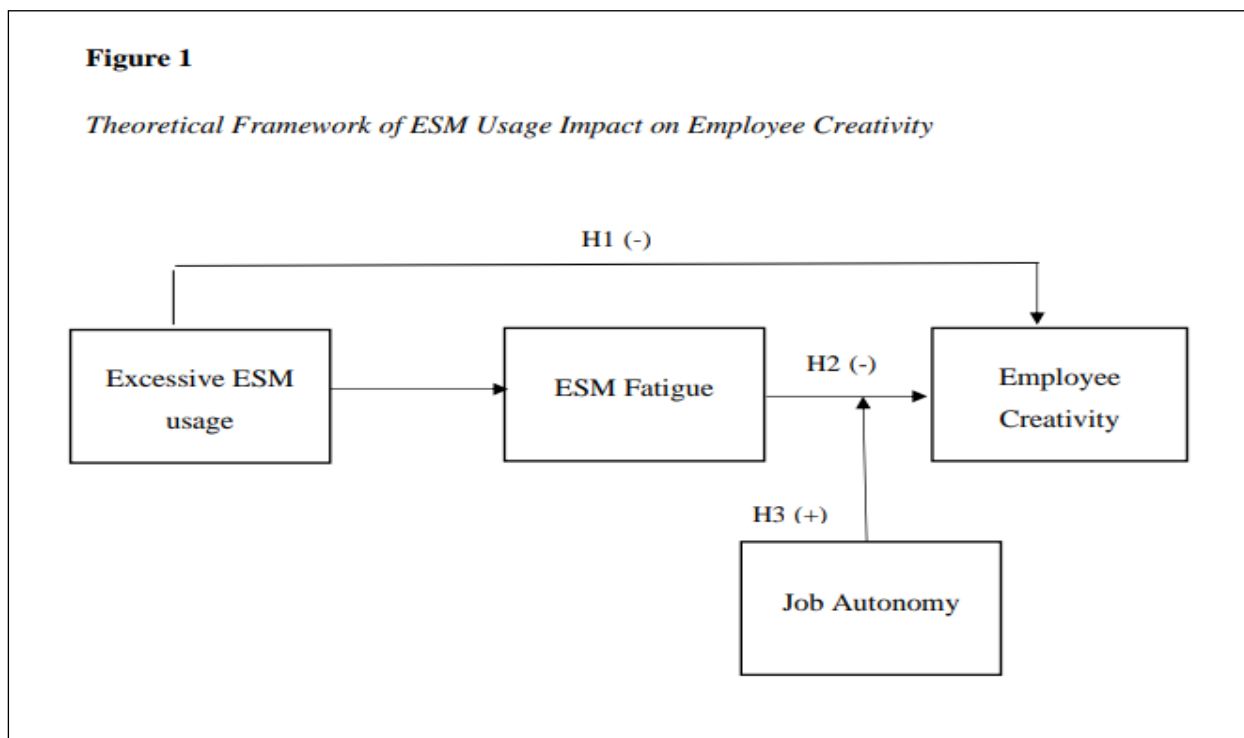
Job autonomy is a critical workplace resource, that has been identified as a potential buffer against workplace stress (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Employees with greater autonomy can better manage their tasks, mitigating the impact of ESM fatigue. Employee performance is influenced by many factors, and in recent years job autonomy has appeared as one of the significant factors to enhance employee creativity. Employee performance is influenced by

many factors, and in recent years job autonomy has appeared as one of the significant factors to enhance employee creativity. When employees have higher work control, they feel a high sense of responsibility to successfully complete that task or job, which can lead them to think creatively and have a positive attitude.

Job autonomy promotes healthy work-life balance, and the employees feel less stress and fatigue. This lowers the chances of stress in unpredictable situations in employees and increases passion for their work (Nie et al., 2023). Employees are more likely to feel satisfaction and happiness in their work, even if they face stress from it. Those employees who have positive emotions can cope up with job demands under cost and time constraints (Jankelová, 2022).

5. Research Model and Hypotheses

The proposed research model investigates the relationship between enterprise Social Media (ESM) usage and its potential adverse effects on employee creativity. ESM fatigue mediates the relationship between employee creativity and ESM, taking job autonomy as a moderator.



Prior research has identified both positive and negative consequences of Enterprise Social Media (ESM) usage in organizational settings. While ESM fosters collaboration and communication, excessive usage can lead to information overload, stress, and fatigue, which hinder employees' ability to focus on creative tasks. Based on this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₁: Excessive use of enterprise social media negatively impacts employee creativity.

The framework of the COR theory suggests that when employees are engaging excessively with Enterprise Social Media (ESM), they are overutilizing these resources more than the capacity because of the pressures of continuous connectivity, overwhelming information and frequent digital interactions. As suggested in the hypothesis this excessive engagement can leave employees feeling exhausted and mentally weary, hindering their capacity for creative thinking.

Various previous literature has revealed some limitations and gaps like ignoring the adverse outcomes such as interruption overload can significantly decrease employee creativity, and they can experience high work stress. It is difficult for employees to make psychological transitions between different tasks and mental status because each task requires the employee's full attention (Yingjie et al., 2019a).

Employees may struggle to transition between focused tasks and monitoring social media interactions, which can impair cognitive abilities and increase fatigue. The constant expectation to engage and respond swiftly on ESM platforms exacerbates stress. Additionally, miscommunications and disagreements in digital interactions can negatively impact employees' mental health, causing tension and anxiety (Yingjie et al., 2019b). Research in *Acta Psychologica* highlights that ESM usage, combined with perceptions of technology overload, contributes to ESM fatigue, ultimately diminishing employees' creative output (Pitafi & Xie, 2024b).

Thus, this leads to the development of the following hypothesis:

H₂: The relationship between excessive enterprise social media usage and employee creativity is mediated by ESM fatigue.

The overuse of enterprise social media (ESM) results in information overload and mental exhaustion, which can hinder employee creativity. Studies indicate that continuous digital engagement overwhelms cognitive resources, leading to decreased focus and problem-solving abilities. This overload limits employees' capacity for deep thinking, a crucial component for creative endeavours. Furthermore, the expectation for constant responsiveness on ESM platforms interrupts uninterrupted work periods, further obstructing reflective thinking and the generation of ideas.

Research conducted by Si et al. (2023) and Wang et al. (2022b) indicates that cognitive fatigue stemming from extended ESM use detrimentally affects both individual and collaborative creativity. In addition, ESM fatigue intensifies mental exhaustion, lowering employees' ability to adapt, innovate, and take risks—essential elements of creativity. As a result, individuals become mentally fatigued, which decreases their cognitive capabilities for creating, innovating, and solving problems. Hence, the indirect effect of ESM fatigue serves to mediate the detrimental influence of excessive ESM usage on employee creativity. If employees are provided with more flexibility and freedom, job autonomy could help preserve their cognitive resources and enhance their ability to engage in creative tasks. Thus, it is hypothesized that job autonomy moderates the relationship between ESM fatigue and employee creativity.

H₃: Job autonomy moderates the relationship between ESM fatigue and employee creativity.

When examining the correlation between employee creativity and job autonomy, it's crucial to keep in mind that job autonomy “the degree to which employees have control over how and when they do their work” has been shown to have a major influence on various aspects of employee performance, including creativity. Employees who feel empowered to experiment and innovate can work in an environment that promotes creativity when they have autonomy (W. Zhang et al., 2021). The following hypothesis suggests that employees with a high level of autonomy in their jobs can act as a sense of responsibility and achievement in the employees because they are responsible for their consequences. According to (W. Zhang et al., 2020) job autonomy moderates the relationship between employee creativity and ESM fatigue. It is up to organizations whether they allow their employees to do their work how they want to some extent. However, in some job roles such as IT professionals might feel fatigued even if they are given job autonomy (W. Zhang et al., 2021).

6. Method

All measures for the constructs in our research model were adapted from prior literature. This study used a deductive approach, employing quantitative methods to collect data and rigorously test the hypotheses. It is a method where results are concluded by going from general to specific. Data was gathered by using the primary data source method i.e. a structured survey questionnaire. Due to the limited timeframe for this study and the causal nature of the research, data was gathered once from participants using a cross-sectional survey to complete the study on deadline. This study aimed to explore the causal effect of excess enterprise social media use on employee creativity in Islamabad and Rawalpindi's IT sector. A sample size of 500 employees was determined by using the well-known Krejci and Morgan table (1970). The original sample size of 500, with 396 valid responses provides adequate representation for achieving a 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error. This provided a thorough insight into the consequences of using EMS excessively. To ensure that every individual in the population had an equal opportunity to be chosen, this study employed convenience sampling. This method improves the accuracy of the sample.

7. Measures

To collect quantitative data, a survey questionnaire was systematically designed on Google Forms. It was designed to be easily understandable and accessible. The first section was demographics, which helped us understand the profiles of respondents. Moreover, the Likert scale was used to understand the variables and how individuals perceived them. Participant's responses were kept confidential. The questionnaire was filled out both in person and through online platforms. Responses to each topic were measured on a 7-point Likert scale, i.e. 1 = Strongly disagree and 7 = Strongly agree. For excessive enterprise social media (ESM), an 8-item scale was given by Caplan & High (2006), i.e. I spend a considerable amount of time using enterprise social media, etc. For enterprise social media fatigue, an 8-item scale Ayyagari et al. (2011), i.e. I feel burned out from my enterprise social media activities, etc. For employee creativity, a 6-item scale was used by Rhee & Choi

(2017), i.e. I offer fresh approaches to completing duties at work, etc. For job autonomy, a 6-items scale was used by Saragih (2011), i.e. I have considerable autonomy to decide the direction of my job, etc.

Table 1

Demographic Category	Count	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	203	51.26
Female	194	48.99
Age Group		
Up to 20	246	62.12
21-30 years	31	7.83
31-40 years	51	12.88
41-50 years	17	4.29
50 years or above	51	12.88
Education		
12 years of education	33	8.33
14 years of education	29	7.32
16 years of education (BS Hons, etc.)	144	36.36
18 years of education (MS, MPhil, etc.)	171	43.18
PhD or more	19	4.8
Income Level		
Up to Rs 50,000	72	18.18
Rs. 50,001 to Rs. 100,000	77	19.44
Rs. 100,001 to Rs. 150,000	71	17.93
Rs. 150,001 to Rs. 200,000	41	10.35
Rs. 200,001 or more	1	0.25
Prefer not to say	134	33.84
Organization Tenure		
Less than 1 year	144	36.36
1-3 years	139	35.1
4-6 years	68	17.17
7-10 years	21	5.3
More than 10 years	24	6.06

The survey questionnaires were distributed to 500 participants in IT firms operating in twin cities of Pakistan, achieving a 100% distribution rate. Of these, 400 were returned, resulting in an 80% return rate, while 100 were not returned, 27 accounting for 20%. Among the returned questionnaires, 4 were defective and rejected, representing 1% of the responses. The study's sample consisted of 396 participants from IT firms, with a nearly equal gender distribution (51.26% male, 48.99% female). A majority were young professionals (62.12% aged up to 20), and 79.54% had at least 16 years of education. These demographics reflect a tech-savvy, educated workforce prone to high engagement with enterprise social media, making them an ideal sample to explore the effects of ESM fatigue on creativity.

Table 2

	EC	EEU	EF	JA	JAXEF
EC1	0.832				
EC2	0.892				
EC3	0.914				
EC4	0.908				
EC5	0.876				
EC6	0.872				
EEU1		0.645			
EEU2		0.625			
EEU3		0.764			
EEU4		0.804			
EEU5		0.608			
EEU6		0.747			
EEU7		0.765			
EEU8		0.698			
EF1			0.809		
EF2			0.892		
EF3			0.881		
EF4			0.0909		
EF5			0.909		

EF6			0.896		
EF7			0.762		
EF8			0.743		
JA1				0.784	
JA2				0.924	
JA3				0.903	
JA4				0.93	
JA5				0.921	
JA6				0.909	
JAXEF					1

8. Measurement Model

The measurement model evaluates the measurement properties of latent constructs and demonstrates how they have been measured using their observable variables. Four reflecting constructs have been used in this study: job autonomy, ESM fatigue, employee creativity, and excessive use of enterprise social media. Twenty-eight items were used to measure these constructs as shown in Table 2 and Figure 2. In SmartPLS 4, CFA was carried out for every reflective construct (Ringle et al., 2015). Figure 2 depicts the model, with rectangles displaying the items used to measure constructs and circles displaying the constructs. The outer loadings must be more than 0.60 (Byrne, 2016) or 0.70 (Hair et al., 2010). The algorithm's results indicated that every factor loading value was higher than the minimum cutoff criterion of 0.7. Except for EEU2 and EEU5, the overall results demonstrated acceptable reliability.

Convergent Validity

To compare the convergent validity composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and alpha are used. The algorithm's outcome demonstrated that, according to Hair et al. (1998), the CR for each of the constructs was over 0.7, a good sign of convergent validity. When the score is more than 0.5, implying that the items represent more than 50% of the variance in the construct, the AVE Composite dependability is considered well-measured. Table 3 shows alpha and CR values greater than 0.7 and AVE greater than 0.5, showing the acceptable level of internal consistency and convergent validity.

Table 3

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
EC	0.943	0.944	0.955	0.779
EEU	0.866	0.888	0.89	0.504
EF	0.945	0.951	0.955	0.727
JA	0.951	0.952	0.961	0.804

Discriminant Validity

When the square root of the AVE of a construct is greater than the inter-item correlation, a measurement model demonstrates discriminating validity. It demonstrates that a construct exhibits greater variance when compared to other items when it comes to its associated items. Table 4 shows that items demonstrate that the square root of AVE's values in rows and columns was greater than their off-diagonal values. Thus, Fornell and Lacker's discriminant validity criterion has been satisfied.

Table 4

	EC	EEU	EF	JA
EC	0.883			
EEU	0.03	0.71		
EF	-0.257	0.272	0.853	
JA	0.604	-0.169	-0.204	0.897

Table 5

Results of Structural Model and Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses	Relation	Beta	(M)	(STDEV)	T statistics	P values	Decision
H1	EEU->EC	0.114	0.116	0.052	2.219	0.027	Supported
H2	EEU->EF->EC	-0.041	0.043	0.018	2.306	0.021	Supported
H3	JA->EF->EC	0.162	0.163	0.049	3.293	0.001	Supported

The study examined the relationship between excessive usage of Enterprise Social Media (ESM) and its negative effects on Employee creativity (EC) taking ESM fatigue as a mediator and Job Autonomy (JA) as a moderator through hypotheses testing.

The findings revealed a significant negative relationship between excessive ESM usage and employee creativity (H1), confirming the effects of prolonged ESM interaction on creative output $\beta = 0.114$, suggesting a very small positive relationship between EEU and EC. T-statistic of 2.219 and a p-value of 0.027, confirming statistical significance. Furthermore, the mediation analysis supported the role of ESM fatigue as an intermediary between excessive ESM usage and creativity (H2), with a significant indirect effect $\beta = -0.041$, t-statistics of 0.021 2.306 and p-value of 0.021. Lastly, the moderation analysis highlighted job autonomy's

buffering effect on the relationship between ESM fatigue and creativity (H3), showing that higher autonomy mitigates the negative impact of fatigue on creativity (interaction term $\beta = 0.162$, t statistics of 3.293 and p-value of 0.001. The hypothesis testing results are summarized in Table 5, which highlights the statistical relationships and their significance levels.

These findings align with the COR theory, emphasizing how resource loss (e.g., cognitive overload) from excessive ESM use impacts employee well-being and creativity. Additionally, the role of job autonomy underscores the importance of workplace flexibility in mitigating these negative effects.

9. Discussion

9.1 Key findings

This study corroborates prior research indicating that excessive digital engagement hampers employee creative thinking. Previous literature also reported similar results. For example, (Li et al., 2022b) reported that too much utilization of ESM causes employee creativity, and performance to decrease, and has a significant effect on strain. The results suggested that indeed excessive usage of Enterprise Social Media (ESM) negatively impacts employee creativity supporting hypothesis 1 (H1). Although the platform is designed with the purpose of information sharing and collaboration among the employees, the negative side of ESM should be considered in the adoption of the ESM platform by the organization.

Secondly, the mediating effects of ESM fatigue further validate the findings. The mediation effect can be observed by ($B = -0.041$) suggesting a small but significant negative impact on employee creativity. To investigate how Enterprise Social Media (ESM) impact employee creativity, (Chen and Chen, 2020) developed a dual-path mediation model. The research observed direct and indirect effects of ESM fatigue on employees, lowering ones mental capacity. Due to the weariness and mental overload that come with ESM fatigue, this dual-path mediation model argues that although ESM improves communication and 54 collaborations inside firms, overuse of it may harm employee creativity.

This study extends the literature by showing how job autonomy can mitigate the negative effects of ESM fatigue, a relatively underexplored factor in the context of ESM usage. The value of ($B = 0.162$) reveal that employees with higher job autonomy can mitigate the effects of ESM fatigue, there by maintaining or even enhancing by balancing their activities. These findings are inconsistent with previous literature. For instance, Hobfoll's COR theory emphasizes the importance of resource conservation, and this study supports the idea that job autonomy acts as a critical resource to buffer against resource depletion caused by excessive ESM usage. IT organizations may empower their staff to handle the complexity of ESM usage more skilfully by giving employees more control over their assignments and schedules. In turn, this can prevent ESM fatigue and maintain or improve workforce creativity, both of which are essential for retaining a competitive edge and encouraging innovation in a rapidly evolving technical environment.

10. Theoretical Implications

It helps in understanding how prolonged usage of enterprise social media can affect employee performance among the employees of the IT sector of twin cities of Pakistan. Most of the previous literature about this research is done in Western and East Asian countries. This study fills a void in the literature by focusing on Pakistan in a way that prior studies have not. Firstly, most of the studies researched the positive influence of Enterprise Social Media (ESM) on employee creativity. The research investigated the use of ESM and established a link between ESM fatigue and information overload caused by it. This specific study has not been conducted in Pakistan. Secondly, the present study investigates the relationship between employee creativity and enterprise social media (ESM) usage mediated by ESM fatigue. The findings imply that those employees who must constantly engage in ESM activities whether for social purposes or work-related tasks, are vulnerable to ESM fatigue. These employees must meet the demands, frequently engage, and spend their time, energy and ability to manage more than they can handle creating an overload and leaving them feeling fatigued, emotionally drained, and burned out as stated by previous studies (Pitafi & Ren, 2021). The results of the study correspond with the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory proposed by Hobfoll (1989), which claims that individuals invest an immense amount of effort into acquiring, developing, and protecting resources; stress results from the loss or threat of these resources and negatively impacts worker creativity.

11. Practical Implications

Since Enterprise Social Media (ESM) offers multiple advantages to organizations it cannot be stopped altogether, managers should establish a guideline, provide support and train workers on the usage of the platform as well as on how to handle disruptions and cognitive load, as well as when to employ ESM. Moreover, supervisors or IT managers can encourage a balanced use of ESM through the following methods: (a) helping employees set goals for their time-bound, work-related use of ESM platforms; (b) assisting staff members in discussing and resolving common issues about ESM platforms; (c) organization should also encourage their employees to express their own opinion on projects or work-related tasks. Organizations and managers must have trust in their employees. This trust can be fostered by giving them some autonomy in completing their tasks. Furthermore, to get the best results, managers should refrain from micromanaging. Providing job autonomy can help in mitigating the negative consequences of ESM fatigue on employees. Organizations should consider redesigning the job descriptions and job roles to provide employees with more control over their work processes.

12. Limitations

It is important to acknowledge the study's limitations. As the data collection process relied on responses from the participants which are prone to self-report bias. The generalizability of the results is limited due to differences in industry norms, and organizational cultures, which have an impact on the study's findings. Ultimately, the cross-sectional design of this study permits the examination of correlations between variables but not causal relationships over time due to the study being non-longitudinal.

13. Future Directions

This study has primarily focused on collecting data largely from Pakistan's twin cities, Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Future researchers are encouraged to broaden their geographical coverage by incorporating other cities to acquire more grasp of the effects of enterprise social media on employee creativity. Furthermore, investigating other service sectors beyond the IT sector may provide useful insights into the findings' generalizability across different environments. Moreover, it should also consider incorporating more mediating and moderating variables such as culture of organization and leadership style to further develop an understanding of the relationship between variables.

14. Conclusion

The present study concludes that excessive usage of enterprise social media (ESM) negatively impacts employee creativity, with the mediating effect of ESM fatigue and the moderating effect of Job autonomy. This research extends existing theories and fills a critical gap in the literature by focusing on the IT sector in Pakistan. The results of this research highlight the significance of managing ESM usage to avoid employee fatigue and foster creativity, as there is a negative relationship between excessive ESM use and employee creativity. The findings of this research are diverse, and they provide insights for companies seeking to optimize the use of these platforms and enhance employee creativity. To minimize the negative effects, organizations must devise policies to help regulate the usage of ESM platforms and improve employee autonomy in the workplace. Moreover, the results also highlight the importance of job autonomy and its positive impact on employees. To investigate the causal relationship between ESM usage, ESM fatigue, and creativity over time, longitudinal studies are recommended to be carried out.

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