

**Relationship between Employees Social Media Addiction and Workplace Procrastination: Preference for Organization as a Moderator**Muhammad Usman Ahmad<sup>1</sup>, Zafar Ahmad<sup>2\*</sup>, Faiza Khalid<sup>1</sup>**Abstract**

Workplace procrastination is a major area of concern in the modern workplace especially since there has been an uptrend in the use of social media worldwide. Worsening workplace procrastination is often attributed to increased social media use. However, some studies show positive effects of time management skills on procrastination. As such, this study explores the moderating effect of Preference for Organization (PFO) (a facet of time management behavior) on the relationship between employees' social media addiction (SMA) and workplace procrastination (WP). Employees from both private and public sector organizations residing in Rawalpindi and Islamabad were included in the sample. Convenience sampling was used to ensure a large pool of participants to improve statistical power of findings. Employed (329) men and (171) women between the ages of 22 and 50 ( $M=39.60$ ,  $SD=.47$ ) were included in the study. The questionnaire for the study included the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS), the Workplace Procrastination Scale (WPS), and the Preference for Organization (PFO) subscale of the Time Management Behavior Scale (TMBS). Results for the moderation analysis, Model 1 of Process macro, show that there was a significant effect of SMA and PFO on procrastination and a significant interaction effect of SMA and PFO on WP, such that an increase in PFO can reduce the effects of SMA on workplace procrastination. The study highlights the importance of improving employee training and introducing programs in organizations that help increase an organized way of working to improve productivity and reduce procrastination.

**Keywords:** Social Media Addiction, Time Management Behavior, Workplace Procrastination

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**Introduction**

The use of social media platforms has become ingrained in the modern life and our daily routines; influencing both social and professional lives of people. However, as our reliance on social media increases, adverse

effects of this engaging and distracting form of media needs to be understood, especially its effects on the work life of employees. Addiction to social media is characterized by excessive and compulsive use of social media platforms; this engagement interferes with everyday activities and work tasks (Griffiths, 2013).

One of the most common issues that affect workplace performance and influence overall organizational outcomes is workplace procrastination (Asio, 2021; Steel et al., 2022). Workplace procrastination is characterized by willful postponement of work and necessary tasks despite the knowledge that a delay will inevitably lead to negative outcomes (Metin et al., 2016). Employees who are more likely to procrastinate are often observed to have

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lower job related satisfaction, have higher stress levels and lower job performance (Kim & Seo, 2015; Nereim et al., 2020; Rozgonjuk et al., 2021). With the increasing trend of social media use this area is still relatively less understood, especially in terms of its effects on workplace procrastination. Studies show that increased social media use is often associated with reduced attention to work-related tasks (Hen et al., 2021; Lavoie & Pychyl, 2001). Employees' addiction to social media is often marked by increased procrastination and decreased productivity (Griffiths, 2013)

Procrastination has long term detrimental organizational outcomes impacting employee output and performance. Furthermore, procrastination is worsened with subsequent use of social media platforms that leads to deteriorating employee productivity. Employees showing signs of social media addiction are more likely to spend their time on non-work related activities in comparison to work related activities (Rozgonjuk et al., 2018).

Employees exhibiting social media use often engage in cyber slacking and non-work-related internet activities during work hours (O'Neill et al., 2014). The nature of social media platforms is such that they are designed to increase engagement and keep attention focused on their content instead of on work tasks (Bock & Ho, 2009; Ismail, 2022). This can become a habit that leads to an addiction towards social media, eventually leading to procrastination and reduced work output (Kim & Seo, 2015).

Studies often show a strong correlation between workplace social media addiction and procrastination (Rozgonjuk et al., 2018); while fewer studies focus on mitigation strategies. One possible means of reducing the negative impact of social media addiction on workplace procrastination is by improving self-regulation skills of the employees. Studies show that increased organizational

skills among employees are associated with improved time management, task prioritization and reduced procrastination (Claessens et al., 2007; Zimmerman et al., 2023). A research found that smartphone distraction positively predicted anxiety through the mediated path of Procrastination; however time management appeared to moderate this relationship, thus lessening the negative effects of Smartphone distraction (Jin et al., 2024). So, by increasing employees Preference for Organization the negative effects of social media addiction can be mitigated and workplace procrastination may be reduced.

Organizational preference; the desire to be organized, is an important self-regulation skill that can help employees with structuring their tasks, time management and prioritization (Macan, 1994). Those showing a preference for being organized have been observed to be more goal oriented and less likely to procrastinate (Mustapha et al., 2021; Claessens et al., 2007). Individuals with better time management tend to have lower stress and higher job performance (Mata et al., 2021). Furthermore, increased organizational skills are associated with better focus and higher task orientation, meaning those with stronger time management skills tend to be less distracted by social media and are better able to perform at their work tasks (Tanrıöğen & Işcan, 2009). It is important to establish if and how inculcating organizational salience can help mitigate the high correlation between social media use and procrastination.

Self-regulation theory developed by Baumeister & Heatherton (1996) proposes that those with strong self-regulation skills are more adept at managing their productivity and are less likely to get easily distracted. Preference for organization (POF) can be considered a form of self-regulation, as it is a sub trait of time management, this can enable individuals to be better at coordination,

prioritization and time management which would inevitably help reduce negative effects of procrastination. Employees at workplaces with higher self-regulation would be better equipped to manage the distraction of social media and its detrimental impact on productivity (Steel et al., 2022). Thus, this study aims to establish a moderating role of 'Preference for Organization' on the relationship between social media addiction and procrastination by proposing that PFO enhances employee's ability to resist distractions.

### **Rationale**

Nowadays the use of social media has become an integral part of people's daily lives. Individuals of all ages are connected through social platforms, it influences their daily lives by providing a means of communication, news and information (Abbasi & Huang, 2020). However various studies on social media find that it may not be necessarily a positive influence; showing correlations between social media and reduced general well-being (Kocak et al., 2023; Simsek et al., 2019). Although research into the effects of social media use on wellbeing has gained significant attention, there remains a gap in literature on how social media usage specifically affects procrastination behavior in professional settings in the local context. It remains an important topic for investigation as understanding the buffering effect of time management on the relationship between social media use and procrastination can have positive implications for the health and productivity of employees (Mosquera et al., 2022). The aim of the current study is to examine how Social Media Addiction relates to Workplace Procrastination and the moderating role of 'Preference for Organization' in this relation. This work is grounded in self-regulation theory: the idea that procrastination results from a problem with an individual's ability to harness their

behavior towards long-term goals (Baumeister & Heatherton, 1996). The study will help to understand how social media use predicts workplace procrastination and thus provide us with valuable insight into how organizational leaders can increase productivity, well-being and mental health of their employees. This study therefore aims to fill the gap in research by investigating how social media addiction (SMA) influences workplace procrastination behavior and how preference for organization (time management behavior) can buffer the relationship between them. Hence this research contributes theoretically and practically to the available literature, which will serve as guide for further investigations in the future.

### **Hypothesis**

1. Higher Preference for organization will negatively moderate the positive correlation between Social Media Addiction and Workplace Procrastination.

### **Method**

#### **Research Design**

This is a quantitative research and the data was collected using a cross-sectional survey design. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS and PROCESS macro by Andrew Hayes (2018) and run through Model 1 of process macro for the moderation analysis.

#### **Sampling**

The sample consisted of 500 employees (329 men and 171 women) from both public and private sector organizations located in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, selected through a non-probability convenience sampling method. Participants were aged 22 to 50.

#### **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

Individuals employed at an organization, aged 22 and above, who were located within the vicinity of Islamabad and Rawalpindi were approached to ask for their participation in the study. Anyone not employed or not

located within the cities of Rawalpindi or Islamabad was not included in the study.

### **Instruments**

#### **Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSNAS)**

Social media addiction scale (Andreassen et al., 2016) measures excessive use of social media measured according to six dimensions such as salience, mood modification, and conflict. It has 6 items with an estimated reliability of .86.

#### **Workplace Procrastination Scale (WPS)**

The WPS was developed by Metin et al. (2016) to measure the degree of workplace procrastination by measuring the frequency in which the worker does not work at their workplace. The scale has 24 items with two dimensions, soldering and cyber slacking. Its reliability was measured to be

#### **Preference for Organization (PFO)**

POF is a subscale of the Time Management Behavior Scale (Macan, 1994), which assesses the degree to which an individual prefers an orderly way of working. It consists of 5 items with reliability of 0.788

### **Procedure**

Heads of various organizations within Rawalpindi and Islamabad were approached to ask for their permission to collect the data from their employees. No discrimination was made in the selection of sample; both private sectors organizations and government run organizations were approached. After gaining permission to approach the employees, those willing to participate were provided with the consent form and briefed on the particulars of the study, they were then provided with the questionnaire contain the scales of the variable to be studied. They were briefly instructed on how to fill the questionnaires and allowed to ask questions regarding the study. After the employees

understood the task, they were left to answer their questionnaires. Both completed and incomplete questions were collected at the end of the day so as to account for the distributed questionnaires. As the study employed convenience sampling, there was a high response rate. Participants were thanked for their participation and were provided with an email of the researcher to contact about any issues regarding their participation.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Participants were informed of their rights before participation; they were informed that they could chose to exclude themselves from the study at any time and that the information collected from them would be used in an ethical manner and their anonymity would be ensured. They were provided with an informed consent that contained the basic information regarding the study and the participant's rights. Participants were assured that no harm would occur as result of their participation in this study.

### **Results**

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, v25) was used to analyze the collected data. The data comprised of both male (329) and female (171) participants between the ages of 22 and 50 years ( $M=39.60$ ,  $SD=.47$ ), representing a diverse range of professions. Model 1 of PROCESS macro by Andrew Hayes was used to study the moderating role of Preference for Organization between Social Media Addiction and Procrastination. The gender ratio was 61.2% males to 31.8% females. 60.2% ( $n=301$ ) were employed in the public sector, while 39.8% ( $n=199$ ) worked in the private sector. The job status of the participants revealed that 59.8% ( $n=299$ ) were in permanent positions, whereas 40.2% ( $n=201$ ) held contractual jobs (Table 1).

**Table 1***Demographic statistics of participants (N=500)*

Demographics	Categories	F	%	M	SD
Age				39.60	.47
Gender	Male	329	61.2		
	Female	171	31.8		
Job Type	Public	301	60.2		
	Private	199	39.8		
Job Status	Permanent	299	59.8		
	Contractual	201	40.2		

**Table 2***Moderation of PFO on the Relationship between Social Media Addiction and Workplace Procrastination (N = 500)*

Predictors	B	SE	95% CI	
			LL	UL
Constant	-9.47	3.64	-16.64	-2.30
SMA	-.98*	.04	-1.06	-.90
PFO	.27*	.06	.14	.40
SMA* PFO	.02***	.00	.02	.02

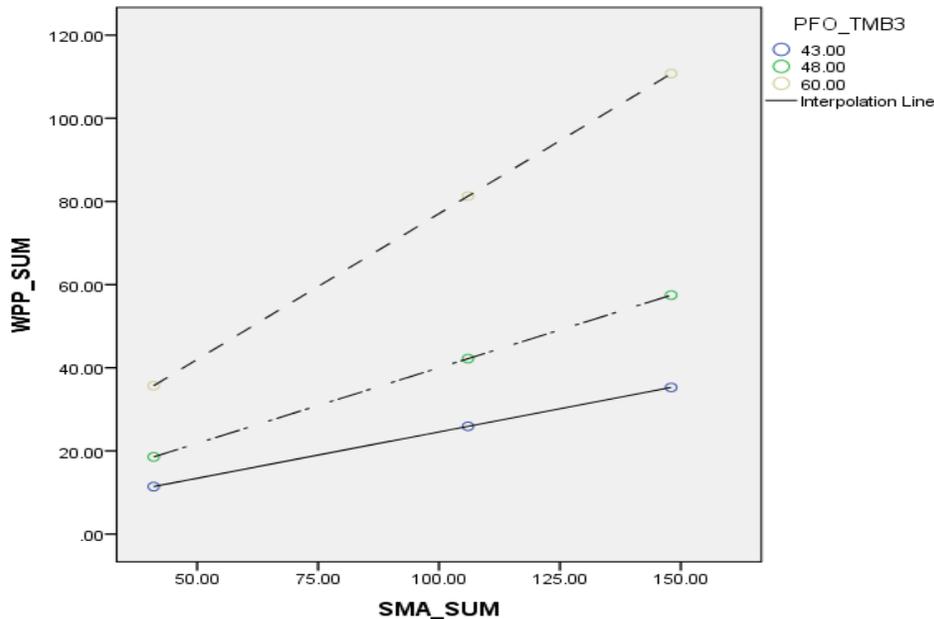
Note.  $R^2 = .87$ ,  $F = 1179.13$ , \*\*\* $p < .000$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$ , SMA= Social Media Addiction, PFO= Preference for Organization

Table 2 shows the regression coefficients for the moderating effect of Preference for Organization (PFO) on the relationship between Social Media Addiction (SMA) and Workplace Procrastination. The significant

interaction term (SMA\* PFO) ( $B = .02$ , 95% CI [0.02, 0.02],  $p < .000$ ) indicates that a preference for organization significantly moderates the impact of social media addiction on workplace procrastination.

**Figure 1**

*Interaction between Social media Addiction and Work procrastination at High, Medium and Low Levels of PFO*



According to the Figure 1, employees who have a strong preference for organization, i.e., score higher on PFO scale, don't show a strong relationship between Social Media Addiction and Work Procrastination. It can be observed that the inclined line indicating the relationship between social media

Addiction and Work procrastination decreases as PFO increases. This shows the important role PFO plays as a buffer between social media addiction and work procrastination.

## Discussion

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the moderating role of 'Preference for Organization' in the relationship between Social Media Addiction and Workplace Procrastination. Research suggests that people's excessive use of social media has a detrimental impact their mental health. Excessive use of social media has drained workers motivation, morale and happiness due to "digital fatigue" (Demircioglu & Chen, 2019; Rasmussen et al., 2020; Zheng & Ling, 2021). Social media may be entertaining and provide ephemeral amusement, but the constant stimuli they offer do little to encourage real-life activities

or actual achievements (Wartberg et al., 2020). Exposure to smartphone platforms such as social media has been associated with increased symptom of depression, anxiety and loneliness indicating that extended time online may come with detrimental effects (Nereim et al., 2020). Similarly higher use of social media has also been linked with reduced worker motivation and increased procrastination (Bizzi, 2020).

The results show that increased social media use relates to an increase in procrastination and that a preference for organization negatively relates to procrastination. Studies support the negative influence of increased social media use on procrastination as it can

cause distraction from work task delaying the work (Jin et al., 2024). The positive influence of PFO has also been observed in settings where social media use is high (Arıbaşı, 2021). Preference for organization is a sub variable of time management, and is closely associated with self-regulation (Wolters & Brady, 2021). Individuals with better organizational skills with self-maintained order of tasks and schedules can better manage the distraction of social media and complete their tasks on time (Mata et al., 2021). Results found that there was significant interaction effect of PFO and SMA, which means there is a significantly buffering effect of PFO on the relationship between social media addiction and workplace procrastination. Employees who exhibited an orderly way of working (PFO) demonstrate higher resilience against the distractions of social media and are more task oriented (Liu et al., 2022). Thereby are also less prone to procrastinate at work. These findings are in line with preexisting literature showing that individuals, who are more orderly and effective in time management, are more likely to maintain focus and productivity (Claessens et al., 2007; Steel et al., 2022).

The results of this research have positive organizational outcomes as findings show that inculcating and improving time management strategies and an orderly way of working among the employees can have positive outcomes by reducing the negative impact of social media use on procrastination. It could be useful for employers to take into consideration training programs for new and existing employees to improve their orderly way of working and by limiting social media usage during working hours, similarly, by promoting digital wellness initiatives and encouraging mindful social media use, there may be a way forward in the social media dominated world (Bock & Ho, 2009).

### **Limitations and Suggestions**

This research employed a cross-sectional design that suited its objectives; however, the findings may lack generalizability due to the use of convenience sampling, which does not accurately represent the larger population. Future studies would benefit from employing simple random sampling to yield more generalizable results. Often times Cross-sectional researches examines many variables that can interact in complex ways with each other. Without longitudinal data, it can prove challenging to control for confounding variables. Cross-sectional research collects data from a single point in time which makes it difficult to establish the temporal order of events. Therefore, the findings of the present research might yield more reliable results if conducted as a cohort, panel, or mixed-method study. Since the data is collected at a single point in time, external factors or events occurring during that period in time may positively or adversely influence the results, further limiting their generalizability. Future research should also focus on identifying and including potential confounding variables to enhance the robustness of the findings.

### **Conclusion**

This research explores the relationship between excessive social media use and Procrastination, and the moderating role of Preference for Organization (PFO) among public and private sector employees. The results of this research highlight the detrimental effects of high social media usage on employee procrastination. Social media use increases procrastination while conversely, a strong preference for organization, indicative of better time management, helps lower its negative effects. PFO acts as a protective factor, enabling individuals to better manage distractions and maintain task orientation. These results align with existing literature, highlighting the significance of effective time

management strategies in mitigating the adverse effects of social media. Results of this study offer valuable insights into the role played by social media in working world.

### Implications

Social media has become hard to avoid in the present day, and its presence in workplace can often be difficult to limit, as such studies that focus on managing the negative outcomes associated with it are of great importance. Based on the results of the following study, better organized individuals are better able to manage social media addiction, and are better at resisting procrastination. The following research shows how important HR initiatives and training departments can be for improving employee productivity and reducing procrastination. By incorporating a culture that values an organized way of working and managing tasks, as they can significantly help in reducing the negative effects of social media use, organizations can improve job satisfaction among employees. Social media use has become necessary in various jobs and fields as such reducing the time spent on social media can be difficult in fields where the main job is to work on social media platforms, thus this research offers ways to incorporate strategies that allow for increased productivity, ability to meet deadlines and achieve goals even with high usage of social media platforms. As such implementing effective time management behaviors and ability to be organized can result in effective reduction of procrastination behaviors and improve job performance.

### Contribution of Authors

Muhammad Usman Ahmad: Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Writing – Original Draft  
Zafar Ahmad: Methodology, Writing - Reviewing & Editing, Supervision

Faiza Khalid: Methodology, Formal Analysis, Writing – Original Draft

### Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest declared by the authors.

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### Data Availability Statement

The datasets of the current study are not available publicly due to ethical reasons but are available from the corresponding author [Z.A.] upon the reasonable request.

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