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Understanding the Adverse Effects of Enterprise Social Media on Employees via FoMO

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Abstract

Purpose: Enterprise social media (ESM) technology has transformed workplace communication, actively driving the progress of organizations and their employees. However, an increasing number of studies suggest that ESM is a double-edged sword. This study integrates the Stressor-Strain-Outcome (SSO) framework with the Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) theory within the context of ESM. It considers the stress experienced by employees while using ESM as an antecedent to FoMO and explores its negative impact on employees' emotional changes and subsequent behaviors. **Research design, data and methodology:** Data collection was conducted through an online survey targeting enterprise employees who use ESM in their daily work (N=400). Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to evaluate the research model and hypotheses. **Results:** The findings reveal that FoMO significantly mediates stress (including both challenge stress and hindrance stress) and negative employee reactions. **Conclusions:** The results expand the literature on FoMO in the context of ESM and provide new insights into existing research on workplace stressors. These findings also offer practical implications for enterprise managers and policymakers in understanding employee experiences with ESM.

Keywords : Enterprise Social Media, Fear of Missing Out, Turnover Intention, Emotional Exhaustion, Knowledge Acquisition

JEL Classification Code: C12, C51, J63, L86, M15

1. Introduction

As the digital transformation progresses, enterprise social media (ESM) platforms, such as Yammer (from Microsoft), Connections (from IBM), Chatter (from Salesforce), and DingTalk (from Alibaba), have been widely adopted by enterprises across industries to optimize digital workforces to enhance and maintain enterprises' competitiveness (Shi et al., 2024; Sun, Ding et al., 2023; Sun et al., 2021). In particular, driven by the prolonged pandemic over the past few years and the increasing prevalence of remote work, ESM has gained popularity (Jia et al., 2022). According to prior studies, 98% of Fortune 500 companies are utilizing at least one ESM for organizational internal use (Cohen, 2017; Luqman et al., 2023; Tang et al., , 2019). The global market value of ESM is expected to exceed $26.5 billion by 2032 (Future Market Insights, 2022; Talwar et al., 2023).

ESM, also known as Enterprise 2.0 and Enterprise Social Networking (ESN), refers to social media services used within organizations. As an effective tool for organization-wide communication, ESM is actively utilized to improve internal social collaboration and promote knowledge sharing among organizational members (Jia et al., 2022; Shi et al., 2024; Sun et al., 2021; Sun, Mengyi et al., 2023; Talwar et al., 2023). ESM is considered to help reduce

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communication costs within organizations, trigger innovative interactions and divergent learning among employees, and enhance employee productivity (Pitafi et al., 2023; Sun, Mengyi et al., 2023).

The use of ESM technology has revolutionized the way of communication in the workplace, actively driving the improvement of organizations and their employees (Sun, Ding et al., 2023; Sun, Mengyi et al., 2023). However, an increasing number of studies indicate that ESM is a double-edged sword (Shi et al., 2024; Sun et al., 2021; Talwar et al., 2023). The dark sides of ESM are believed to potentially lead to negative outcomes (Sun et al., 2021). For instance, conflicts between work demands and ESM usage may hinder the completion of work tasks (Sun et al., 2021). Moreover, information overload, communication overload, and social overload caused by technology-work conflicts have been indicated to potentially cause employees' perceived fatigue, ultimately reducing their work performance (Sun et al., 2021). The use of ESM has also been associated with employees' distractions or disruption of work tasks (Shi et al., 2024). These negative effects contradict the intentions of organizational managers to adopt ESM for use in their organizations (Sun et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the technological affordance of ESM may cause employees to be exposed to the threat of technological stress (Shi et al., 2024). Dependence on technology to keep up with others may lead to Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) (Budnick et al., 2020; Van Zoonen et al., 2022). When enterprise employees are in a highly visible online communication environment like ESM, they tend to experience this sense of missing out (Bodhi et al., 2023; Budnick et al., 2020; Van Zoonen et al., 2022). This sense of missing out is specifically manifested as a concern about missing valuable career opportunities or great social experiences when temporarily leaving ESM (Bodhi et al., 2023; Budnick et al., 2020; Van Zoonen et al., 2022). Employees with FoMO tend to use work-related technologies more frequently and engage in work-related communications to avoid missing critical information and opportunities (Van Zoonen et al., 2022).

Existing research indicates that FoMO negatively impacts individuals' psychological and behavioral outcomes (Bodhi et al., 2023; Tandon, Dhir, Islam et al., 2021). Managers and policymakers of organizations are advised to develop strategies to mitigate the negative effects of FoMO on employee well-being (Bodhi et al., 2023). Although some prior studies have explored the consequences of FoMO in the workplace and provided guidelines (Bodhi et al., 2023; Budnick et al., 2020), and some existing studies have reviewed and discussed FoMO as a dark side of ESM usage, such as Sun et al. (2021). However, empirical research on the antecedents and consequences of employees' FoMO in ESM remains scarce. Additionally, FoMO-related studies and findings to date are still mainly based on the context of personal social media. Although ESM and personal social media share some common features, they also differ significantly (Jia et al., 2022). The specificity of the workplace also means that findings of personal social media cannot be directly applied to ESM contexts (Jia et al., 2022). It is necessary to re-customize and examine variables based on the backgrounds of enterprises and employees. Understanding the antecedents and consequences of employees' FoMO in ESM usage is of great significance for developing strategies to improve the effectiveness of ESM in organizations and achieving organizational business goals.

Therefore, this study extends the Stressor–strain–outcome framework (SSO) by considering the stressors perceived by employees during ESM use as antecedents of FoMO. This study proposes that the FoMO experienced by enterprise employees during ESM use is influenced by three types of stressors: challenge stress (e.g., responsibilities, workload, time pressure, and work commitments), hindrance stress (e.g., role ambiguity and job insecurity), and normative stress (social pressure to act in specific ways). Secondly, this study applies FoMO theory in the ESM context, exploring its roles in influencing employees' emotional changes and, in turn, affecting their continuous use of ESM for collecting knowledge as well as their turnover intention. This study attempts to address the following two research questions.

RQ1. What pressures influence organizational employees' FoMO in the context of ESM?

RQ2. How does employees' FoMO affect knowledge acquisition and turnover intention?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Stressor–strain–outcome Framework

The Stressor–strain–outcome framework (SSO) consists of three main components: stressors, strain (caused by stress), and the psychological or behavioral outcome (Koeske & Koeske, 1993; Ye et al., 2023). The SSO framework positions strain as a mediator, linking stressors to outcomes and providing a foundational framework for explaining the impact process of stressors (Cao et al., 2018; Koeske & Koeske, 1993; Ye et al., 2023). Due to its practicality and validity, the SSO model has been extensively and repeatedly used by numerous studies on the causes and outcomes of stressors (Ye et al., 2023). Considering the effectiveness of the SSO model in explaining the impact process of stress in the context of technology use, this study applied the SSO framework to the ESM research context to identify the effects of stressors on

enterprise users. In this study, various stressors experienced by ESM users and their potential consequences, i.e., FoMO, are treated as stressors. Emotion interruption and emotional exhaustion caused by stressors are treated as strain, while discontinuation of knowledge acquisition and turnover intentions are considered as psychological outcome factors.

2.2. Fear of Missing Out

When individuals are extensively exposed to social activities, they may develop a feeling known as Fear of Missing Out (FoMO) (Przybylski et al., 2013; Van Zoonen et al., 2022). FoMO is defined as a personal perception of worry or concern that they may be missing out on more rewarding experiences that other people have had (Przybylski et al., 2013; Van Zoonen et al., 2022).

The perception of FoMO is particularly notable in highly visible communication environments (Przybylski et al., 2013; Van Zoonen et al., 2022). Due to the high-visibility technical features of social media, an increasing number of studies have linked FoMO to the context of digital technologies such as social media (Tandon, Dhir, Almugren et al., 2021; Van Zoonen et al., 2022). FoMO is also present in workplace. FoMO in the workplace refers to a tendency of individuals worry about missing out on valuable career opportunities or positive workplace social experiences when they leave their jobs or disconnected from work (Bodhi et al., 2023; Budnick et al., 2020; Van Zoonen et al., 2022).

In the context of work-related digital technology usage, FoMO also represents individuals' strong need to keep connected online with others and exchange information actively and passively by using ESM (Bodhi et al., 2023). Unlike other kind of fear factors that hinder ESM use, prior research has indicated that FoMO promotes users' engagement with ESM platforms (Van Zoonen et al., 2022). FoMO is also considered a motivator that drives individuals to participate more frequently in work-related interactions, actively engage in work-related information seeking and gathering, and avoid missing out on connections, information, or important opportunities (Van Zoonen et al., 2022).

Meanwhile, as a kind of fear, FoMO has been found to not conducive to individuals' healthy psychology behaviors (Bodhi et al., 2023; Tandon, Dhir, Islam et al., 2021). Previous studies have shown that FoMO leads to addiction and problematic work-related social media use, resulting in decreased employee job performance and well-being (Bodhi et al., 2023).

Extant research has investigated the negative effects of FoMO among enterprise employees. To mitigate the negative impacts of FoMO on employees' normal work, some studies have also provided practical suggestions for managers and policymakers (Bodhi et al., 2023; Budnick et al., 2020). It is undeniable that empirical investigations of workplace FoMO are still in their infancy, and understanding of employees' FoMO in the workplace remains limited (Bodhi et al., 2023). Particularly in the context of ESM, which is characterized by high information visibility and a highly transparent network environment (Pitafi et al., 2023), fully understanding the antecedents and consequences of employees' FoMO is essential for minimizing its negative impact on employees' normal work and identifying optimal solutions.

2.3. ESM Related Stress

The potential impact of stressors on employees has received increasing attention from scholars (Ding et al., 2019). Stressors caused by work demands trigger stress mechanisms, which in turn invoke individuals' adaptive responses (Ding et al., 2019; Hameed, 2024). Based on the impact of stressors on individuals' job performance, stressors can be categorized into challenge stressors and hindrance stressors (Hameed, 2024). Existing researchers have also applied such a classification method to studies on technology-related stress (Shi et al., 2024; Tarafdar et al., 2019), e.g., stress in IT-supported work environments (in the context of ESM) (Ding et al., 2019).

Challenge stressors typically include responsibilities, workload, time pressure, and job commitment (Ding et al., 2019; Hameed, 2024). In the existing literature, challenge stressors are viewed as manageable stress perceived by employees and are therefore often considered positive stressors (Ding et al., 2019). Overcoming these stressors is conducive to employees' personal growth and development (Ding et al., 2019; Hameed, 2024). Challenge stressors are also believed to elicit employees' positive responses, such as focus, enthusiasm, confidence, higher responsiveness, and proactive problem-solving motivation (Ding et al., 2019; Hameed, 2024). Moreover, challenge stressors have been noted to motivate employees to actively gather resources, to be fully engaged, and to continuously concentrate on their work (Ding et al., 2019).

The visibility of ESM provides employees with a highly efficient way to access work-related information (Shi et al., 2024). The use of ESM is considered to enable employees to perceive information support, including advice, experience, and knowledge (Hameed, 2024). For individuals facing challenge stressors, using work-related ESM can make them feel that they have sufficient resources to address complex problems and overcome challenge stressors more easily (Hameed, 2024). Using ESM can benefit employees facing challenge stressors, such as getting a promotion or personal growth (Hameed, 2024; Lepine et al., 2005). In other words, when employees perceive stress as a challenge stress and attempt to overcome it, they tend

to use ESM to increase the likelihood of success (Shi et al., 2024). Therefore, this study argues that individuals facing challenge stressors will keep connected through ESM and actively engage in information exchange to acquire resources for overcoming challenge stressors. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Challenge stress leads to FoMO.

On the other hand, hindrance stressors are typically evaluated as negative and are associated with negative effects (Ding et al., 2019; Hameed, 2024; LePine et al., 2005; Podsakoff et al., 2007). Hindrance stressors often include role ambiguity and job insecurity (Ding et al., 2019). Hindrance stressors are considered likely to hinder personal development and limit employees' success on the job (Ding et al., 2019; Hameed, 2024; Sun et al., 2022).

Although work-related ESM use enables employees to cope with stress by accessing information shared by colleagues (Chen & Wei, 2019; Hameed, 2024; LePine et al., 2005), the visibility of ESM is also believed to exacerbate hindrance stress, causing employees experiencing such stress to feel higher levels of anxiety and burnout (Shi et al., 2024; Sun, Liu et al., 2020). Since hindrance stressors are often recognized as stress unmanageable, they can trigger individuals' negative reactions like anger, fear, frustration, resentment, anxiety, and dissatisfaction (Ding et al., 2019; Hameed, 2024). Employees facing such hindrance stressors may intentionally adopt passive behaviors, such as intentionally avoiding work, absenteeism, or passively performing work tasks (Ding et al., 2019; Hameed, 2024). Furthermore, hindrance stressors may lead to employees' avoidance intentions, such as escaping from the current situation (in the context of ESM usage, avoiding using ESM) (Ding et al., 2019; Hameed, 2024; Shi et al., 2024). Therefore, this study argues that individuals facing hindrance stress are likely to adopt a negative and evasive attitude toward participating in information exchanges and acquiring resources to solve problems. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Hindrance stress inhibits FoMO.

On the other hand, people often care about others' expectations and others' perceptions of their behavior. Subjective norm pressure refers to the social pressure individuals perceive to act in a particular way (Masur et al., 2023). Although subjective norm pressure has been extensively studied in the context of social media and information technology, research on the influence of perceived norms in work-related technology use is still in its infancy.

In the context of social media, social media users are believed to tend to observe others' behavior and refer to what they perceive as the normal ways of acting to guide or constrain their own behavior (Masur et al., 2023; Zillich & Müller, 2019). In the workplace context, as the use of ESM becomes a routine part of employees' work (Shi et al., 2024), the visibility of ESM inevitably makes employees perceive normative stress from other people, as employees in the workplace tend to refer to and follow their colleagues' ways of doing things in the workplace (Chen & Wei, 2019). Therefore, this study believes that employees using ESM may passively keep themselves connected and participate in information exchanges due to the impact of normative stress. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Normative stress leads to FoMO.

2.4. Emotion Interruption and Emotional Exhaustion

Emotion interruption refers to changes in emotional expression, attention distraction, and unexpected suspension of ongoing tasks caused by information interference (Shi et al., 2024). Frequent interruptions will hinder employees' emotional expression and negatively affect their well-being (Shi et al., 2024). Such interruptions are also considered to impair employees' job performance (Shi et al., 2024).

Prior studies have shown that successive ESM use leads to employees' emotional interruptions (Sonnentag et al., 2018), which in turn result in irritation and decreased work productivity (Shi et al., 2024). Employees tend to perceive emotion interruptions caused by ESM as a form of hindrance in work (Shi et al., 2024). Frequent emotion interruptions triggered by ESM use may distract employees' attention, impair their work mood, consume even drain their energy (Shi et al., 2024; Sonnentag et al., 2018).

On the other hand, when people's cognitive resources are excessively consumed, leading to an imbalance, a vicious cycle of cognitive resource depletion may occur, manifesting in burnout, depression, and emotional exhaustion (Tang et al., 2019). Emotional exhaustion is a key antecedent of burnout, defined as a persistent state of physical and mental fatigue (Tang et al., 2019). Emotional exhaustion in the workplace arises from the continuous consumption of cognitive resources due to excessive work or social interactions (Tang et al., 2019). Prior studies have shown that the use of ESM can distract employees' concentration and negatively impact productivity (Tang et al., 2019). Overuse of ESM may also lead to a decline in employee well-being and emotional stability (Tang et al., 2019).

Due to the high visibility of ESM, employees can expose themselves to a large amount of work-related or unrelated, critical or not critical information on ESM. Additionally, while completing their daily tasks, employees also need to allocate time to filter, identify, and process information to make timely decisions (Tang et al., 2019). On the other hand,

FoMO drives employees to participate more frequently in work-related interactions, spending additional time and cognitive effort on reviewing ESM to avoid missing out valuable information and opportunities (Van Zoonen et al., 2022; Ye et al., 2023). Given the limitations of human cognitive resources, when employees process information that exceeds their capacity, they may experience emotion interruptions or even emotional exhaustion (Tang et al., 2019; Ye et al., 2023).

Moreover, the ease of use and accessibility of ESM create conditions for employees to work anytime overcoming the geographical and temporal constraints like traditional work (Tang et al., 2019). This also means that employees are invisibly expected by their supervisors to keep connected and complete work tasks even after office hours. The blurred work-life boundaries and the role conflicts caused by such invisible expectations are also believed to deplete individuals' cognitive resources and lead to emotional exhaustion (Tang et al., 2019). Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses.

H4&H5: FoMO leads to emotion interruption (H4) and emotional exhaustion (H5).

H6: Emotion interruption causes emotional exhaustion.

2.5. Discontinuation of Knowledge Acquisition and Turnover Intention

Knowledge transfer is considered as an important factor influencing employees' work performance (Pitafi et al., 2023). Knowledge acquisition is one of the key dimensions of knowledge transfer (Pitafi et al., 2023; Sun, Wang et al., 2020). Knowledge acquisition refers to the behavior of seeking and collecting information in the workplace (Pitafi et al., 2023). Due to the visibility features of ESM, such as information transparency and network transparency (Pitafi et al., 2023), ESM is expected by organizations to facilitate employees' knowledge transfer (Pitafi et al., 2023). Moreover, one of the prerequisites for ESM to have a significant impact is that users are able to continuously use ESM in their daily work (Jia et al., 2022) and keep knowledge transfer or knowledge acquisition by using ESM. Conversely, underusing or stopping the use of ESM may limit employees' access to resources related to their job tasks (Sun et al., 2021), thereby failing to meet organizations' expectations of using ESM.

As abovementioned, FoMO drives employees to check ESM messages more frequently, which may lead to emotion interruptions and emotional exhaustion (Tang et al., 2019; Ye et al., 2023). When individuals are in a negative state such as exhaustion or fatigue, they tend to adopt avoidant behaviors, such as intent to pause or even completely stop doing things (Ye et al., 2023). In the context of ESM, this study extends this intention to stop knowledge acquisition. This study hypothesizes that emotional interruptions and emotional exhaustion will lead to the discontinuation of knowledge acquisition.

H7 & H8: Emotion interruption (H7) and Emotional exhaustion (H8) positively affect discontinuation of knowledge acquisition.

On the other hand, although the use of ESM and employees' FoMO may negatively affect enterprise employees and their organizations, their impact on work-related attitudes (particularly turnover intentions) has not yet been thoroughly explored (Tang et al., 2019). Since employee turnover is a big disadvantage for organizations, such as causing losses of human resources and spreading turnover intentions to other organizational members, employee turnover behavior has long been a focus of organization-related studies (Tang et al., 2019).

Prior research suggests that emotional exhaustion leads to individuals' intention to quit the job (Tang et al., 2019). When using ESM, emotionally exhausted employees constantly deplete their psychological and physical resources. Such a state causes employees to experience very low satisfaction and attempt to copy some countermeasures to alleviate their psychological fatigue, such as resigning (Tang et al., 2019). Therefore, this study proposes that employees' emotion interruption and emotional exhaustion contribute to their turnover intentions.

H9 & H10: Emotion interruption (H9) and emotional exhaustion (H10) positively affect turnover intention.

Given the aforementioned, this study proposes the following research model (see Figure 1).

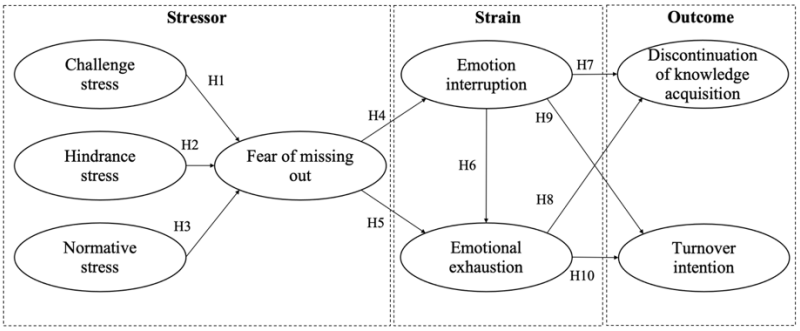

Figure 1: Research model

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

An online survey was conducted with the help of the online survey firm called Credamo in December 2024. At the beginning of the questionnaire, to ensure that participants were indeed ESM users, they were asked a series of quality control questions. These questions included whether the participants were enterprise employees and whether they used ESM in their daily work. Respondents were further required to inform ESM or ESMs they primarily use in their work. Considering that some organizations are also using personal social media as an alternative to ESM (Sun et al., 2021), options also include some commonly used personal social media. Moreover, respondents were prompted to indicate the frequency with which they acted on ESM(s), using a scale ranging from (1) less than once a day to (6) multiple times per hour.

As shown in Table 1, the measurement items were adapted from existing literature. Following the precedent set by previous studies, six items with a semantic differential scale: '1' = 'no stress' and '7' = 'a great deal of stress' were employed to measure the challenge stress and hindrance stress (Ding et al., 2019). A 7-point Likert scale ('1' = 'Strongly disagree' and '7' = 'Strongly agree') was employed to measure other constructs. All the measurement items and sources are shown in Table 1. This study also gathered information regarding demographic details such as gender, age, education, and work-related personal information. To safeguard the integrity of the survey, attention checks and control questions were interspersed throughout. Responses that did not pass these checks were marked as invalid sample.

In addition, we excluded responses that took less than 3 minutes to complete, responses that had identical or highly similar answers for all questions, and responses that did not match the answers to our screening questions.

Table 1: Measurement items of the questionnaire

Measurement	Loading	Mean	SD
Challenge stress (CS) (Ding et al., 2019) (Cronbach's α = 0.922, CR = 0.939, AVE = 0.719)			
Please rate all items using the semantic differential scale: '1' means 'no stress' and '7' means 'a great deal of stress.'			
CS1: The number of projects and or assignments I have.	0.877	3.990	1.198
CS2: The amount of time I spend at work.	0.876	3.748	1.435
CS3: The volume of work that must be accomplished in the allotted time.	0.866	4.062	1.445
CS4: Time pressures I experience.	0.878	3.928	1.411
CS5: The amount of responsibility I have.	0.809	4.160	1.428
CS6: The scope of responsibility my position entails.	0.777	4.115	1.337
Hindrance stress (HS) (Ding et al., 2019) (Cronbach's α = 0.821, CR = 0.880, AVE = 0.647)			
Please rate all items using the semantic differential scale: '1' means 'no stress' and '7' means 'a great deal of stress.'			
HS1: The inability to understand clearly what is expected of me on the job.	0.750	2.930	1.349
HS2: The amount of red tape I need to go through to get my job done.	0.834	3.473	1.339
HS3: The lack of job security I have.	0.808	3.020	1.463
HS4: The degree to which my career seems "stalled."	0.823	3.600	1.600
Normative stress (NS) (Pirkkalainen et al., 2020) (Cronbach's α = 0.662, CR = 0.805, AVE = 0.582)			
NS1: People important to me think I should have a positive attitude to using ESM at work.	0.845	5.665	0.918
NS2: It is expected that people like me react positively to using ESM at work.	0.753	5.697	0.960
NS3: People I look up to expect me to react positively to using ESM at work.	0.680	5.628	0.966

Fear of missing out (FOMO) (Bodhi et al., 2023) (Cronbach's α = 0.879, CR = 0.916, AVE = 0.735)			
FoMO1: I get worried when I might miss important work-related updates.	0.899	4.753	1.551
FoMO2: I get anxious when I miss out an opportunity to make important business connections.	0.904	4.402	1.628
FoMO3: When I have a good time, it is important for me to share the details online.	/	5.000	1.325
FoMO4: When I go on vacation, I continue to keep tabs on what is happening at work.	0.677	4.695	1.438
FoMO5: I worry that I will miss out on important work-related news.	0.925	4.582	1.629
Emotion interruption (EI) (Shi et al., 2024) (Cronbach's α = 0.900, CR = 0.931, AVE = 0.770)			
EI1: My emotion is constantly interrupted by ESM while I am working.	0.847	3.527	1.400
EI2: During work hours, I frequently stop what I am doing to respond to message on ESM that may interrupt my emotion.	0.894	3.550	1.655
EI3: During my work time, dealing with emotion interruptions initiated by others on ESM is time-consuming.	0.900	3.380	1.567
EI4: During my work time, recovering my emotion after being interrupted by the message on ESM is time-consuming.	0.868	3.180	1.522
Emotional exhaustion (EE) (Tang et al., 2019) (Cronbach's α = 0.921, CR = 0.950, AVE = 0.864)			
EE1: I feel emotionally drained from my work.	0.927	2.730	1.599
EE2: I feel burned out from my work.	0.934	2.908	1.706
EE3: I feel used up at the end of the workday.	0.928	3.045	1.667
Discontinuation of knowledge acquisition (DKA) (Sun, Wang et al., 2020) (Cronbach's α = 0.706, CR = 0.819, AVE = 0.532)			
DKA1: I intend to continue receiving knowledge from colleagues on the projects I worked on through ESM. (R)	0.759	5.735	0.768
DKA2: I'm going to continue using knowledge provided by colleagues on the projects I worked on through ESM. (R)	0.634	5.840	0.930
DKA3: I'm going to continue receiving knowledge from colleagues on other projects through ESM. (R)	0.720	5.770	0.901
DKA4: I intend to continue using knowledge provided by colleagues on other projects through ESM. (R)	0.795	5.747	0.953
Turnover intention (TI) (Tang et al., 2019) (Cronbach's α = 0.845, CR = 0.906, AVE = 0.763)			
TI1: I often think about quitting this job.	0.896	2.368	1.266
TI2: I will probably look for a new job during the next year.	0.894	2.428	1.343
TI3: I am actively looking for another job.	0.829	2.200	1.277

Note: 'R' = Reverse coded items. '/' = Deleted items (Low outer loadings). CR = composite reliability, AVE = average variance extracted.

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

A total of 400 valid samples were obtained. Regarding the gender distribution, as presented in Table 2, the ratio of males to females was close to 2:3. Respondents were primarily in the range of 20 to 40 years old (about 92.25% of the total respondents). Over 93% of the respondents held a bachelor's degree or higher. Most of the respondents had 5-10 years of work experience, followed by 3-5 years, and mainly held middle-level manager positions or lower in their enterprises. The top three industries of the respondents were manufacturing, IT-related services, and finance. Additionally, the primary ESM used in daily work by the participants was Enterprise WeChat, followed by Dingtalk. Approximately 65.5% of the participants use ESM a few times a day, followed by 21.25% who use it multiple times per hour. The attributes of the respondents are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: The attributes of the respondents (N = 400)

Characteristics		n	%	Characteristics		n	%
Gender	Male	170	42.5	Tenure	< 1 year	2	0.5
	Female	230	57.5		1–3 years	67	16.75
	Others	0	0		3–5 years	122	30.5
Age	<=30 years old	145	36.25		5–10 years	162	40.5
	31–40 years old	224	56		>10 years	47	11.75
	41–50 years old	24	6	Position	Frontline staff	110	27.5
	>50 years old	7	1.75		First-line managers	103	25.75
Education	Junior high school or below	1	0.25		Middle-level managers	147	36.75
	High school	3	0.75		Upper-level managers	37	9.25
	College	21	5.25		Others	3	0.75
	Bachelor's degree	266	66.5	Industry	Manufacturing	152	38
	Masters/MBA	104	26		IT related services	70	17.5
	Doctorate	5	1.25		Wholesale, retail trade	17	4.25
ESM	Chatter	54	13.5		Financial industry	34	8.5

frequently used	Jive	3	0.75		Culture, sports, entertainment	8	2
	Workplace	32	8		Leasing and business services	12	3
	Yammer	5	1.25		Accommodation and catering services	22	5.5
	Dingtalk	303	75.75		Building industry	22	5.5
	Enterprise WeChat	369	92.25		Education	33	8.25
	WeChat	264	66		Others	30	7.5
	Tencent QQ	112	28	ESM use frequency	A few times a week	26	6.5
	Cloudhub	11	2.75		Once a day	27	6.75
	Qiming Chuangxiang	14	3.5		A few times a day	262	65.5
	Others	8	2		Multiple times per hour	85	21.25

Table 3: Results of discriminant validity (HTMT.85)

	CS	HS	NS	FoMO	EI	EE	DKA	TI
Challenge stress	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hindrance stress	0.750	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Normative stress	0.055	0.072	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fear of missing out	0.544	0.511	0.130	-	-	-	-	-
Emotion interruption	0.554	0.575	0.233	0.548	-	-	-	-
Emotional exhaustion	0.545	0.573	0.347	0.408	0.742	-	-	-
Discontinuation of knowledge acquisition	0.085	0.098	0.648	0.172	0.265	0.378	-	-
Turnover intention	0.337	0.527	0.329	0.279	0.554	0.697	0.255	-

Note: CS = Challenge stress, HS = Hindrance stress, NS = Normative stress, FoMO = Fear of missing out, EI = Emotion interruption, EE = Emotional exhaustion, DKA = Discontinuation of knowledge acquisition, TI = Turnover intention.

Table 4: Results of variance inflation factor (VIF)

Paths	VIF (Inner model)
CS → FoMO	1.806
HS → FoMO	1.806
NS → FoMO	1.000
FoMO → EI	1.000
FoMO → EE	1.347
EI → EE	1.347
EI → DKA	1.849
EE → DKA	1.849
EI → TI	1.849
EE → TI	1.849

Note: CS = Challenge stress, HS = Hindrance stress, NS = Normative stress, FoMO = Fear of missing out, EI = Emotion interruption, EE = Emotional exhaustion, DKA = Discontinuation of knowledge acquisition, TI = Turnover intention.

Table 5: Results of path coefficient significance

Paths	β	f^2	*T* statistics	*P* values	95% C.I.	Results
H1: CS → FoMO	0.348	0.095	5.972	0.000	[0.232, 0.459]	Support H1
H2: HS → FoMO	0.232	0.042	4.393	0.000	[0.126, 0.333]	Reject H2
H3: NS → FoMO	-0.092	0.012	1.623	0.105	[-0.154, 0.141]	Reject H3
H4: FoMO → EI	0.508	0.347	14.695	0.000	[0.436, 0.572]	Support H4
H5: FoMO → EE	0.068	0.006	1.794	0.073	[-0.001, 0.145]	Reject H5
H6: EI → EE	0.643	0.571	16.009	0.000	[0.556, 0.715]	Support H6
H7: EI → DKA	0.014	0.000	0.214	0.830	[-0.109, 0.144]	Reject H7
H8: EE → DKA	0.298	0.053	3.989	0.000	[0.143, 0.433]	Support H8
H9: EI → TI	0.112	0.011	1.692	0.091	[-0.014, 0.251]	Reject H9
H10: EE → TI	0.550	0.272	8.218	0.000	[0.402, 0.667]	Support H10

Note: β = Standardized regression weight. f^2 = effect sizes. 95% C.I. = 95% Confidence Interval, CS = Challenge stress, HS = Hindrance stress, NS = Normative stress, FoMO = Fear of missing out, EI = Emotion interruption, EE = Emotional exhaustion, DKA = Discontinuation of knowledge acquisition, TI = Turnover intention.

4.2. Research Model Validation

PLS-SEM (Smart-PLS) was used to evaluate the research structural model and validate hypotheses. Considering PLS-SEM is more appropriate for exploratory and predictive studies, as well as having lower requirements on sample size (Hair et al., 2013, p. 18, p. 79), this study decided to employ PLS-SEM instead of using covariance-based SEM.

As abovementioned in Table 1, Cronbach's alpha values for all constructs except normative stress exceeded the criterion of 0.7. The composite reliability values were all above the critical value of 0.7 and fell in the range between 0.805 and 0.950. The average variance extracted values were greater than 0.5 and ranged from 0.532 to 0.864. These results provide acceptable evidence for the reliability and validity of the measurement model (Hair et al., 2011; Hair et al., 2013, p. 107).

Regarding the discriminant validity, as shown in Table 3, the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlation (HTMT) for all variables are less than 0.85, which meets the criterion of HTMT.85, presenting sufficient discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015).

The adjusted R square values were 28.7% for FoMO, 25.6% for emotion interruption, 46.0% for emotional exhaustion, 9.0% for discontinuation of knowledge acquisition, and 39.5% for turnover intention. These results show that most of the endogenous variables were substantially explained except for emotion interruption and discontinuation of knowledge acquisition, which were moderately explained by exogenous variables (Cohen, 1988).

The results of Stone-Gaisser's Q-square test were greater than zero, indicating that the exogenous variables' adequate predictive relevance for the endogenous variables within the structural model (Hair et al., 2011). As shown in Table 4, The internal model variance inflation factor (VIF) values for all constructs were range between 1.000 and 1.849 less than the cutoff value of 3.3, which excluded the common method bias and the problem of multicollinearity (Hair et al., 2011; Kock, 2015). Regarding the f square values, although some of the pathways exhibit very small effect sizes (f square lower than 0.01) as shown in Table 5, considering the non-significant results for these paths, the very low effect size is reasonable and acceptable (Khalilzadeh & Tasci, 2017).

The standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) value of 0.062 falls within the criterion of lower than 0.08, showing a sufficient good fit for the overall model (Hu & Bentler, 1998).

Regarding the results of path coefficient significance, normative stress on FoMO, FoMO on emotional exhaustion, and emotion interruption on discontinuation of knowledge acquisition and turnover intention showed non-significant results, rejecting H3, H5, H7, and H9. Although the impact of hindrance stress on FoMO was significant, the result contradicts and rejects H2. Other hypotheses have been supported. The detailed results are displayed in following Table 5 and Figure 2.

Given that the results for some paths were not statistically significant, an additional indirect effects analysis was applied. As shown in Table 5, the results confirmed that the path from FoMO to emotional exhaustion was significantly mediated by emotion interruption, while the path from the emotion interruption to discontinuation of knowledge acquisition and turnover intention was mediated by emotional exhaustion. Additionally, the results of the indirect effects also reveal the pathways through which challenge stress and hindrance stress influence two outcome variables.

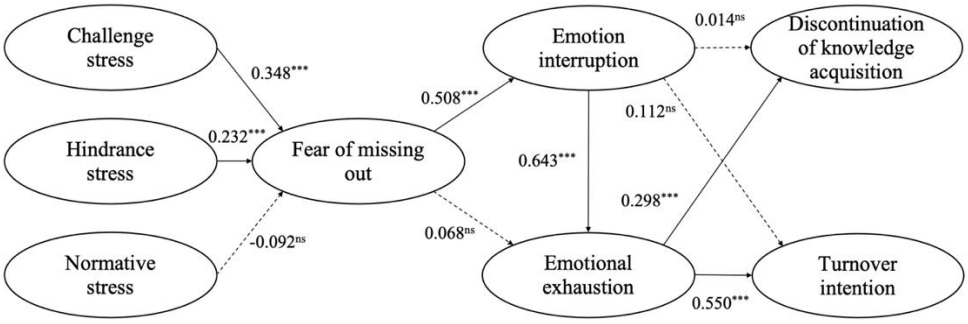

Figure 2: Results of path coefficient significance

5. Conclusions

5.1. General Discussion and Conclusion

This study presents the following main findings:

The drivers of FoMO

First, both challenge stress and hindrance stress can lead stressed employees to worry about missing valuable opportunities or information. The significant increase in FoMO caused by challenge stress aligns with the hypothesis of this study. As positive stress, challenge stress prompts employees to keep themselves connected online through

ESM, actively participating in information exchanges to acquire resources relevant to addressing the challenge stress.

Although the significant impact of hindrance stress on FoMO is contrary to the hypothesis proposed by this study, such a result is considered reasonable, considering that one of the main sources of hindrance stress involves job insecurity (Ding et al., 2019). Job insecurity refers to a perceived threat to the stability and sustainability of one's job (Yin et al., 2024). For the purpose of effectively coping with job insecurity, employees experiencing hindrance stress are likely to actively keep up with online at ESM to demonstrate that they are focusing and working hard so as to alleviate the hindrance stress. Additionally, prior studies suggest that employees under hindrance stress are more willing to use online methods to engage in discussions with colleagues to clarify and figure out work-related issues (Hameed, 2024). In addition, the use of ESM facilitates work management mechanisms, which can mitigate the negative effects of perceived hindrance stress (Hameed, 2024). These may also explain the reason why employees under hindrance stress are motivated to actively stay online and make efforts to use ESM to gather information.

On the other hand, the influence of normative stress on FoMO was not proven to be statistically significant, which rejects one of the hypotheses of this study. Generally, social media users are widely believed to shape their own behavior by observing other people's actions and referring to behaviors they perceive as appropriate in the eyes of others (Masur et al., 2023; Zillich & Müller, 2019). Particularly in the context of ESM, the high transparency of information and interpersonal networks among organizational members are considered to exert normative stress from peers on individuals in organizations, encouraging them to comply with and mimic their colleagues' behavior (Chen & Wei, 2019). However, as indicated by Budnick et al. (2020) and Van Zoonen et al. (2022), FoMO is an intrinsic motivation that motivates behavior. FoMO is a complex cognitive and psychological mechanism rather than a superficial behavioral. This differentiates FoMO from purely imitative behavior within organizations. When employees actively use enterprise social media under normative pressure, they may be doing so simply to align themselves with others as much as possible. This is driven by external incentives (i.e., normative stress), with the goal of fulfilling external demands. In such cases, employees may not engage in complex psychological processing. In other words, organizational employees may comply with the active use of ESM under normative pressure from their colleagues, but they may not perceive the FoMO. It is possibly for this reason that normative stress shows non-significant results on FoMO.

FoMO- Interruption- Exhaustion framework

Firstly, FoMO indirectly leads to employees' emotional exhaustion. Emotion interruption serves as a key factor mediating the impact of FoMO on employees' emotional exhaustion. This result also seems to be explained by findings from prior studies. FoMO has been identified as being associated with compulsive or problematic social media use (Budnick et al., 2020; Tandon, Dhir, Almugren et al., 2021; Van Zoonen et al., 2022). Individuals with FoMO alleviate their psychological fears through problematic use of social media (Bodhi et al., 2023). On the other hand, emotion interruption is often accompanied by problematic social media use. Employees' FoMO drives them to spend extra effort and time frequently using ESM and making information processing and related decisions. The frequent interruptions caused by the intermittent use of ESM may lead to employees' emotional or attentional disruptions in the workplace (Shi et al., 2024). When such disruptions become overwhelming, they may lead to individuals' emotional exhaustion (Tang et al., 2019).

Secondly, emotion interruption indirectly causes negative outcomes (discontinuation of knowledge acquisition and the formation of turnover intention). Emotion interruptions indirectly influence users' negative behavioral intentions toward work through emotional exhaustion. Although emotion interruptions caused by ESM usage may distract employees and even impair their work mood (Shi et al., 2024; Sonnentag et al., 2018), such interruptions have a limited impact before reaching certain quantities, and at most lead to irritability and reduced productivity (Shi et al., 2024). Employees generally perceive such work interruptions as a form of work hindrance (Shi et al., 2024), but this type of hindrance is insufficient to prompt employees to give up or even consider quitting their jobs. It is not until the sense of mental fatigue becomes overwhelming and unbearable that burnout or even the intention to quit the job may occur. In other words, emotional exhaustion may be influenced more by the cumulative effect of prolonged emotion interruption within an organizational environment, rather than by short-term emotion interruption.

Negative effects of challenge and hindrance stress on employee performance

From the results of the indirect effects, both challenge stress and hindrance stress indirectly lead to employees' dissatisfaction with their work and ESM use. Specifically, challenge stress and hindrance stress indirectly hinder employees from continuing to obtain information through ESM and increase employees' turnover intentions. The outcome of hindrance stress is consistent with our expectations and aligns with the findings of prior research. Hindrance stress causes employees to feel frustrated with

their career goals and undermines their work motivation and attitudes (Yin et al., 2024).

However, the results of the challenge stressor's impacts are somewhat surprising. Existing studies regard challenge stress as a kind of positive stress (Ding et al., 2019; Hameed, 2024). Challenge stress has also been noted to motivate employees to make efforts to gather resources, fully engage, and consistently focus on their work tasks (Ding et al., 2019). Although the existing literature mentions the positive effects of challenge stressors, it also highlights the prerequisite conditions for these positive effects, namely, meeting the demands and overcoming these stressors (Ding et al., 2019; Hameed, 2024). Otherwise, whether it is positive stress or negative stress, both will trigger stress mechanisms and lead to individuals' adaptive and negative responses to cope with the stress.

5.2. Theoretical Implications

This study extends the SSO framework by applying the FoMO theory to the context of ESM, further exploring the antecedents and consequences of FoMO in the context of workplace. Firstly, from the perspective of stressors, this study examines the impact of stress experienced by employees during their use of ESM on FoMO. As stressors, the study not only considers two major work stressors, challenge stress and hindrance stress but also included normative stress as a stressor leading to FoMO. The findings reveal that both challenge stress and hindrance stress contribute to the formation of FoMO, while normative stress does not foster employees' fear of missing out on information and opportunities. These results expand the existing literature on FoMO within the context of ESM use and provide empirical supplementation to existing research gaps. Moreover, the results show that both challenge stress and hindrance stress lead to employees' negative reactions, which include burnout, avoidance of ESM usage, and even leaving the organization by fostering FoMO. This finding offers alternative insights into existing research on employees' workplace stressors, especially challenge stress.

On the other hand, this study examines the negative impact of FoMO on employees from the perspective of emotion interruption. The findings reveal that the higher the level of FoMO, the more likely employees' emotions and attention are disrupted by information interference on ESM. Moreover, the extent of such emotion interruption is closely related to employees' emotional exhaustion. In addition, the results indicate that FoMO further influences employees by hindering their ESM use for knowledge collection and turnover intention through emotion interruption and emotional exhaustion. These findings provide empirical evidence of the negative effects of FoMO and FoMO-Interruption-Exhaustion framework in the context of ESM. Furthermore, this study connects FoMO with important concepts in organizational research, knowledge acquisition, and turnover intention, within the context of ESM usage, bridging gaps in existing research.

5.3. Practical Implications

This study provides practical implications for enterprise managers and policymakers. The widespread adoption of ESM has transformed the way of communication and coordination in the workplace, bringing positive impacts to organizations and their employees. However, the potential double-edged sword effect also warrants greater attention.

First, considering that both types of stress can lead to employees' FoMO and trigger a series of negative chain reactions, including emotion interruption and emotional exhaustion, abating employees' work stress is an urgent priority. Although some existing research suggests that challenge stress differs from hindrance stress and is a manageable type of stress (Ding et al., 2019). In prior studies, challenge stress is considered beneficial to employees and enhances their job performance, thus it is recommended that organizational members actively adopt ESM to cope with challenging work (Hameed, 2024). However, in information technology environments like ESM, challenge stress may not always play an ideal role, as evidenced by the results of this study. Enterprise managers should actively seek solutions to balance and reasonably control employees' work stress, ensuring they are in a healthy work state while leveraging the positive effects of challenge stress to improve their job performance. To address the negative effects of hindrance stress, it is recommended that enterprise managers should regularly keep track of their employees, encourage them to seek help, guidance, and motivation from their supervisors or managers, and provide them with work-related and psychological support through encouragement and recognition to minimize employees' tension, fear, and job insecurity.

Secondly, considering FOMO and its negative effects caused by emotion interruption, business managers and employees are recommended to reduce the impact of FOMO through regulation. The ease of use and accessibility of ESM create conditions for employees to enter work mode without being constrained by time and space (Tang et al., 2019). However, this also provides the prerequisites for employees to use ESM problematically to respond to the potential invisible expectations from enterprise managers. As a countermeasure, enterprise managers and policymakers should find ways to establish clear work-life boundaries through the implementation of internal company policies. Additionally, enterprise managers may consider partially and appropriately restricting employees' ESM access to prevent its intrusion into employees' daily work. For

example, categorizing tasks based on the priority of daily work and managing ESM group members based on task categorization.

Then, considering the direct impact of emotional exhaustion on knowledge acquisition and turnover intention, enterprise administrators are recommended to focus on preventing employees from falling into the predicament of emotional exhaustion. Existing research suggests that emotional exhaustion may be caused by an overload state when individuals handle too much information or tasks (Tang et al., 2019). The results of this study also indicate that emotion interruption caused by ESM information can trigger this physical fatigue and a prolonged mental exhaustion state. ESM is considered an effective tool for employees to share task plans, schedules, and progress (Hameed, 2024). This study recommends that enterprise managers effectively utilize this feature of ESM to actively keep in touch with employees to understand their workloads, provide support for excessive tasks, and encourage employees to seek help from their supervisors to reassign a moderate amount of tasks. By doing so, the potential for emotional exhaustion caused by employees simultaneously handling too many tasks can be avoided.

5.4. Limitations and Future Research

Several issues remain for future research.

First, the same technology may be used in different ways by individuals in different organizations or by the same team within the same organization (Sun, Mengyi et al., 2023). Different ways of using ESM may lead to different outcomes for people (Ding et al., 2019). Moreover, varying levels of compressive ability of employees may also result in their different perceptions of threats and stress (Tarafdar et al., 2019). Therefore, future research should further analyze the different attributes and characteristics of various populations to develop strategies through segmentation.

Second, one of the results of this study revealed that both challenge stress and hindrance stress point toward FoMO. Based on this result, we speculate that FoMO could potentially be further categorized according to different types of stress, such as positive/ negative FoMO, challenge/ hindrance FoMO, or proactive/ passive FoMO. Future research categorizing the types of FoMO may assist managers and policymakers in better and more effectively developing strategies to reduce FoMO and its negative impact on employees.

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