




Constructive Cyberloafing: (How) Is It Possible?

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Abstract: Cyberloafing is the behaviour of using workplace internet access during work hours uses unrelated to the works specified by the organisation. Therefore, cyberloafing is considered a counterproductive work behaviour. Cyberloafing has been studied with various scientific approaches. Different definitions and terminologies with similar meanings of cyberloafing have been proposed. The inconsistency in the use of terminologies referring to cyberloafing is because it is a construct that is multidimensional in nature. However, these various views and terminologies have something in common, namely that cyberloafing is a behaviour that is negative, or at least deconstructive, to the interests of workers and the achievement of organisational goals. In line with some experts who view cyberloafing as a constructive behaviour, the purpose of this study investigated the possibility that cyberloafing benefits individuals and organisations. This research was a preliminary study that used the descriptive method. The study found that cyberloafing leads to more positive than negative results, including relaxing, overcoming boredom, and increasing work motivation. This research also showed that up to 90% of employees engage in social media activities, followed by reading online newspapers. The implications for future research directions are discussed in this paper.


1 INTRODUCTION


Organisational behaviour is a cross-disciplinary science that studies individual and group behaviour in an organisational context. Most organisational behaviour research is focused on the individual level, primarily to examine the influence of culture and the environment on individual behaviours. In general, studies have been focused on positive-normative behaviours, such as job satisfaction, closeness, motivation, leadership, development and enrichment rather than issues related to differences, violence, exploitation, manipulation, sabotage and the like. Against this trend, Weitz and Vardi (2004) state that research that pays attention to positive-normative behaviours has reached a saturation point. On the other hand, according to (Kidwell & Martin, 2005), there has been no construct that satisfactorily describes the complex reality of work in organisations, including counterproductive work behaviours.

Organizational misbehaviour (OMB) is nothing new. The research was started by Quinney in 1963, who examined the effect of job structure on employee criminal behaviour, followed by Mangione and Quinn in 1975, who categorized deviance into counterproductive deviance and doing little on the job (Weitz & Vardi, 2004). OMB research is organised to improve research on positive behaviours in organisations that focuses on the micro-level, and emphasizes positive-normative individual behaviour patterns at work, and fails to pay attention to the micro-level (person and job) of unconventional organisational behaviour (Weitz & Vardi, 2004). Finally, the context of OMB encompasses all individual behaviours in the organisational context which can ultimately increase positive outcomes in work life.

This behaviour covers a spectrum from relatively minor to very serious, ranging from breach of contract, minor rudeness in the workplace,

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derogatory behaviour, workplace social undermining, theft of company assets, destructive actions to substance abuse and addiction at work (Weitz & Vardi, 2004). OMB has become a major topic in organisational behaviour research to investigate how it affects performance at the organisational level, group level and individual level. This behaviour not only resulted in corporate losses, such as losses due to theft in the United States which reached \$200 billion (Weitz & Vardi, 2007), but also resulted in a decrease in individual performance (Uii, 2011). This topic has been extensively researched in the last decade using the terms dysfunctional behaviour (Griffin et al., 1998), workplace deviance (Robinson & Bennet, 1995) and counterproductive behaviour (Fox et al., 2001; Capitano & Cunningham, 2018), and this behaviour is found in employees at all levels of office, both supervisory and managerial (Weitz & Vardi, 2004).

Various perspectives have been applied to understand deviant behaviour in the workplace. According to Robinson and Bennet (1995), one of the deviant behaviours addressed to the organisation is production deviance. This production deviation is related to the minimum quality and quantity that must be reached by employees (Agwa, 2017). Examples include ignoring management instructions, deliberately slowing down the work cycle, arriving late, excessive sick attendance, petty theft and not treating co-workers with respect (Galperin & Burke, 2006). This behaviour is considered counterproductive work behaviour (CWB) at a minor level.

Included in deviant behaviour in the workplace is technology-mediated abuse (Lim, 2002; Koay, 2018) known as cyberloafing (Lim, 2002; Lim & Teo, 2005; Lim et al., 2002). Until now, there is still inconsistency among researchers regarding the construct of positive cyberloafing referred to as constructive cyberloafing. We propose the definition of constructive cyberloafing as an activity of using the internet to complete tasks outside of work during office hours, but the reason for doing so is to deal with the organisational challenges in the future, therefore, in this paper, we highlight the possibility of developing this positive construct. Along with the rapid development of information and communication technology, the use of the internet in the workplace is also increasing. Commonly, organisations take advantage of this by providing internet access with supporting tools such as desktop computers, laptops and the like to improve the work productivity of their employees. However, other than offering benefits, the internet also opens the

way for the employees to do personal activities unrelated to completing work, such as shopping, chatting, browsing, and so on. In the last decade, employee access to the internet has become commonplace, employees may find it pleasurable to use it for non-work-related purposes (Blanchard & Henle, 2008), and this is referred to as cyberloafing. Cyberloafing is a term used to describe the misuse of the internet by employees in the workplace while pretending to be doing legitimate work (Lim, 2002).

The development of technology is a necessity for its users. Based on a survey released (APJII, 2020). The development of devices to access the internet is increasing rapidly, including Mobile Information and Communication Technology (ICT) devices such as smartphones. Based on data from Kominfo (Ministry of Communication and Information), in 2021, the number of smartphone users reached 89% of the total population of Indonesia, which is equal to approximately 167 million people (Hanum, 2021). In the workplace, employees engage in cyberloafing by engaging in activities such as sending emails, online shopping, social networking, and visiting online media (Blanchard & Henle, 2008; Ugrin & Pearson, 2008).

Loafing on the job has existed in organisations since time immemorial, and—the advent of the internet leads cyberloafing to replace behaviours that represented laziness in the past. The easiness to access the internet seems to exacerbate the problem of loafing in the workplace (Phillips & Reddie, 2007). Cyberloafing is a behaviour that is difficult to monitor because individuals do so while sitting in a chair or connected to a computer system (Lim, 2002). The internet makes the boundaries between work life and personal life increasingly blurred and, in a broad sense, individuals no longer separate the two (Nolan & Weiss, 2002; Lim & Chen, 2012). This phenomenon makes organisations lose as much as \$1 billion per year (Anandarajan et al., 2000). In addition, cyberloafing results in loss of work productivity, network congestion, vulnerability to malware, and potential risks through legal obligations and information security violations (Restubog et al., 2011; Hu et al., 2011).

The concept of cyberloafing has a long historical background. The increasing trend of cyberloafing in the modern workplace has made it a problem for organisations as too much time is wasted on non-work-related online activities (Koay et al., 2017). Many studies have investigated the reasons and consequences. Cyberloafing behaviour is influenced by various factors, including personality (Sheikh et al., 2019), organisational roles (Moody, 2011), job

burnout (Aghaz & Sheikh, 2016), organisational control (De-Lara et al., 2006), perceived overqualification (Cheng, 2020), and internet addiction (Chen et al., 2008). In addition, cyberloafing activities can also trigger negative emotions (Lim & Chen, 2012), decreased performance (Baard et al., 2004), and reduced job involvement (Lieberman et al., 2011; O'Neill et al., 2014). Although most research on cyberloafing has concentrated on its negative consequences for employees and organisations, research to explore its positive potentials began by the end of the previous decade. Accordingly, there exists a research gap in terms of the reason and consequences of cyberloafing. More specifically, this research is to understand cyberloafing activity that may be innocuous.

In recent years, researchers have shown that cyberloafing has a “bright side” besides the dark side of internet use (Anandarajan & Simmers, 2005), recent research has focused on the positive psychological aspects of personal internet use at work, such as reducing stress and negative emotions (Lim & Chen, 2012), providing preliminary evidence that cyberloafing can serve as a way for employees to cope with job stress. Several researchers tested the relationship between cyberloafing and variables of positive organisational behaviours (POB) developed by Luthans (2002), such as psychological capital (PsyCap), creativity, job satisfaction, self-efficacy, emotional stability, organisational citizenship behaviour, and other positive capacities. Researchers also found that employees engage in cyberloafing as a way to cope with stressful working conditions (Blanchard & Henle, 2008; Pindek et al., 2018). In the context of the Transactional Stress Model, it is argued that when employees are exposed to on-site aggression (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), cyberloafing acts as an emotion-focused coping strategy, focusing on regulating negative emotions in stressful situations (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Andel et al., 2019).

Internet access is a vehicle to increase employee creativity. The internet has been reported to not only enable sabotage activities but also enhance creativity (Mastrangelo et al., 2006). Today, most organisations demand a high level of creativity, but on the other hand, organisations are also limiting the way employees can get new perspectives by not using the internet for activities outside of completing tasks. It is considered a form of organisational responsibility shift because the use of the internet for non-work purposes known as constructive recreation can equip employees to deal with difficult situations,

work long hours, or face future assignments that require a broad perspective and increase confidence in between team members (Oravec, 2002).

Previous researchers have tried to examine the different consequences of cyberloafing to understand the phenomenon. Cyberloafing was found to be associated with an increase in employee knowledge and skills (Simmer et al., 2008) and work-related knowledge (Ivarsson & Larsson, 2011) and Cooker (2013) showed a relationship between cyberloafing and higher recovery rates (Coker, 2013), and more commitment to future work (Syrek et al., 2017). These positive potentials can help employees to perform better in subsequent work-related tasks, as a way to fulfil their personal needs during working hours. It takes appropriate management to balance the work and nonwork demands because the context outside of work can substantially affect the emotions and behaviour of employees at work (Koay et al., 2017). The concept of cyberloafing from the positive side, referred to as—constructive cyberloafing, has been studied by several researchers through the following theories:

- The Social Exchange Theory (Gouldner, 1960; Blau, 1964), explains that both organisations and employees have unspecified obligations in social exchange, but organisations and employees are expected to conform to the norm of reciprocity in carrying out their obligations in the future. This theory is the basis for many cyberloafing research. Organisational interventions that can increase employees' intrinsic involvement, either through job design, job analysis, or training should reduce the employees' likelihood to engage in cyberloafing because workplace deviance is an emotional response to low intrinsic involvement (Robinson & Bennett, 1995).
- The Social Bonding Theory (Hirschi, 1969). According to this theory, when people attach themselves to groups with conventional moral values, they are more likely to use their time productively and are less likely to engage in deviant actions (Hirschi, 1969). Furthermore, Hollinger (1986) found that social bonding resulted in conformity in the workplace, reducing deviant behaviour. Previous research has argued that individuals are more likely to engage in cyberloafing if they are in a detrimental environment and seek sources of stress relief or entertainment (Lavoie & Pychyl, 2001; Reinecke, 2009).

- The Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 2002). This theory has been widely used to explain how cyberloafing activity is influenced by one's environment (Weissenfeld et al., 2019). Previous research has also consistently shown that coworkers act as referrals for cyberloafing (Askew et al., 2018; Leasure & Zhang, 2018).
- The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989). COR theory is known to have been widely adopted in other research studies related to cyberloafing. Employees attempt to invest their resources (e.g. Psycap) as a coping strategy against stressful conditions and avoid negative situations, as well as to prevent themselves from potential loss of resources (Argawal & Avey, 2020).
- The Border Theory (Clark, 2000). This theory postulates that humans are constantly switching between work and non-work domains and try to meet their needs from both domains proactively (Clark, 2000). Employees who engage in such circumstances have more personal demands and are more likely to mitigate those needs by cyberloafing during working hours to deal with the transition from work to non-work domains (Clark, 2000; Lim & Teo, 2005).
- The Theory of Interpersonal Behaviour (TIB) was proposed by Triandis in 1977. This theory explains the key role of habits and emotions in shaping the intention to perform a behaviour (Triandis, 1980). Koay (2018) shows the moderating role of a constructive work environment on cyberloafing because such an environment provides unfavourable conditions for the occurrence of deviant behaviours.
- The Motivation Theory from Kanfer and Heggstad (1997). This theory argued that personality traits are related to employee performance through motivational intentions related to goal setting. Employees direct their attention, time, and energy to complete their work and are not distracted by their emotional state (Barrick et al., 2002). Further, awareness and emotional stability can effectively predict counterproductive behaviour (CWB), especially cyberloafing (Kim et al., 2015).
- The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory. Theoretically, the key in the JD-R model is that job demands are primarily responsible for burnout, and that job resources affect enthusiasm. The results of a study using the JD-R model found that job resources significantly

increased work engagement while reducing cyberloafing behaviour (Elrehail, et al., 2021).

The summary of previous study reviewed the antecedents used to constructively predict cyberloafing as described in Table 1. It can be seen that variables of positive organisational behaviours (POB) are commonly used in explaining employee's cyberloafing behavior. Furthermore, this variables also plays a decisive role in reducing cyberloafing, achieved the organization's effectiveness and work-life balance over the internet. Based on the information above, we suspect that cyberloafing has a constructive role. Therefore, this study examined the activities carried out in cyberloafing and their impact on employees' emotions.

2 METHODS

In this descriptive study, we investigated the activity and duration of cyberloafing in 30 subjects who worked as employees of government agency X and was analyzed using the frequency analysis method. They were selected through convenience sampling. The employees were chosen because their works relate to the implementation of e-government applications the completion of which requires them to use the internet. This research collect the quantitative data by using the close-ended questionnaires. The questions are structured referring to the scale compiled by Lim (2002) and extended by Blanchard and Henle (2008).

Cyberloafing was measured with 9 questions, including "How much time do you usually spend in one working day to run applications, including social media or browse the internet for personal purposes unrelated to work?", "What are some internet-based activities do you engage in for personal purposes unrelated to work during working hours?", "How do you feel when you access the internet for personal purposes unrelated to work?" and "Do you think that running applications, including social media, or browsing the internet for personal purposes will reduce your performance?". Before the survey questionnaire was distributed, the questionnaire was pre-tested on three employees to get feedback for improving the questionnaire. A pre-test is useful for improving the understanding of questionnaire questions, ensuring a flow of coherent questions, and establishing content validity (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

Table 1: Antecedents and Theoretical Bases of Constructive Cyberloafing.

Authors	Predictor (s)	Type of Variable	Method	Theory	Findings
Restubog et al. (2011)	Perceived procedural justice	Independent	Survey	Social Exchange Theory (Gouldner, 1960; Blau, 1964)	Procedural justice negatively correlates with self-reported cyberloafing in individuals with higher self-control.
Usman et al. (2021)	LMX	Moderator	Survey	Social Exchange Theory (Gouldner, 1960; Blau, 1964)	LMX moderates the negative correlation between meaningful work and cyberloafing
Etodike e al. (2020)	Organizational identification, proactive work behaviour	Independent	Survey	Social Exchange Theory (Gouldner, 1960; Blau, 1964)	Cyberloafing negatively correlates with organizational identification dan proactive work behaviour
Nivedhitha & A.K (2020)	Enterprise social media (e.g., profiles, microblogs, PDAs and forums)	Independent	Survey	Theory of Social Bonding (Hirschi, 1969)	Workplace social bonding mediates the relationship of ESM and cyberslacking
Lukman & Masood (2020)	Workplace bonding	Independent	Survey	Theory of Social Bonding (Hirschi, 1969)	Workplace bonding negatively correlates with cyberloafing
Lim & Chen (2012)	Browsing, Emailing	Independent	Survey	COR Theory (Hobfoll, 1989)	Browsing activities positively affect work facilitation. Work facilitation, in turn, affects job satisfaction and organizational commitment
Mazidi et al. (2020)	Job embeddedness	Independent	Survey	COR Theory (Hobfoll, 1989)	Job embeddedness positively correlates with cyberloafing
Argawal & Avey (2020)	Psychology Capital (psyCap)	Mediator	Survey	COR Theory (Hobfoll, 1989)	PsyCap partly mediates the positive correlation between abusive supervisors and cyberloafing
Cheng (2018)	Harmonious passion	Mediator	Survey	Equity Theory (Adams 1965; Huseman et al. 1987)	Harmonious passion mediates the relationship of perceived overqualified (POQ) and cyberloafing.
Koay et al. (2017)	Privat demands	Independent	Survey	The Border Theory (Clark, 2000).	Cyberloafing balances work and personal lives border
Huma & Hussain (2017)	Social factor, Affect	Independent	Survey	The Border Theory (Clark, 2000).	Social factors and affect do not influence the intention toward cyberloafing behaviour
Elciyar & Simsek (2021)	Norm, Role, Self-concept	Independent	Mixed research	TIB (Triandis, 1977)	Norms, roles, and self-concept positively correlate with social factors. Social factors positively influence cyberloafing
Alshuaibi et al. (2014)	Job Resources	Independent	Theory review	JDR Theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007)	Job resources (e.g., varied skills, task identification, task significance, and creativity) arise employees' enthusiasm and reduce their tendency to engage in cyberloafing.
Kim et al. (2015)	Conscientiousness, Emotional stability	Independent	Survey	Motivation Theory (Kanfer & Heggstad, 1997).	Conscientiousness and emotional stability negatively correlate with cyberloafing
Stoddart (2016)	Mindfulness	Moderator	Survey	Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 2002)	Together, cyberloafing and mindfulness have been examined in parallel as coping strategies.
Sanghangpour et al. (2017)	Mastery goal orientation	Mediator	Survey	Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 2002)	Need for survival can predict cyberloafing through mastery goal orientation.

3 RESULTS

Based on the analysis results of the questionnaire given to 48 subjects and only 30 of which could be analysed further, it was found that 53% of jobs are completed using the internet, while 47% are not. The

demographic data of the subjects can be seen in Table 2. The findings showed that personal devices, namely smartphones, were more widely used to engage in cyberloafing (77%) than office computers. On average, employees use a smartphone to engage in cyberloafing for 57 minutes per day.

Table 2: Demographic Statistics of the Sample (N=30).

Variable	Item	F	%	Variable	Item	F	%
Gender	Male	18	60.00	Time spent to cyberloaf (mins)	≤ 30	15	50.00
	Female	12	40.00		31– 60	8	26.67
Age	≤ 30	4	13.33		61–120	5	16.67
	31–40	10	33.33		> 120	2	6.67
	41–50	8	26.67	Tenure	1– 10	12	40.00
	> 50	8	26.67		11–20	10	33.33
High school	5	16.67	21–30		7	23.33	
Level of education	Diploma	3	10.00	31–40	1	3.33	
	Bachelor	19	63.33	Electronic devices	PC computers	7	23.33
	Master	3	10.00		Smartphone	23	76.67
Types of employee	Civil servant (PNS)	21	70.00	Wireless office	Have access	22	73.33
	Contractual	8	26.67		No access	8	26.67
	Permanent	1	3.33	Mobile phone brands	Samsung	11	36.67
Marital status	Unmarried	6	20.00		Vivo	4	13.33
	Married	24	80.00		Xiaomi	8	26.67
				Others	7	23.33	

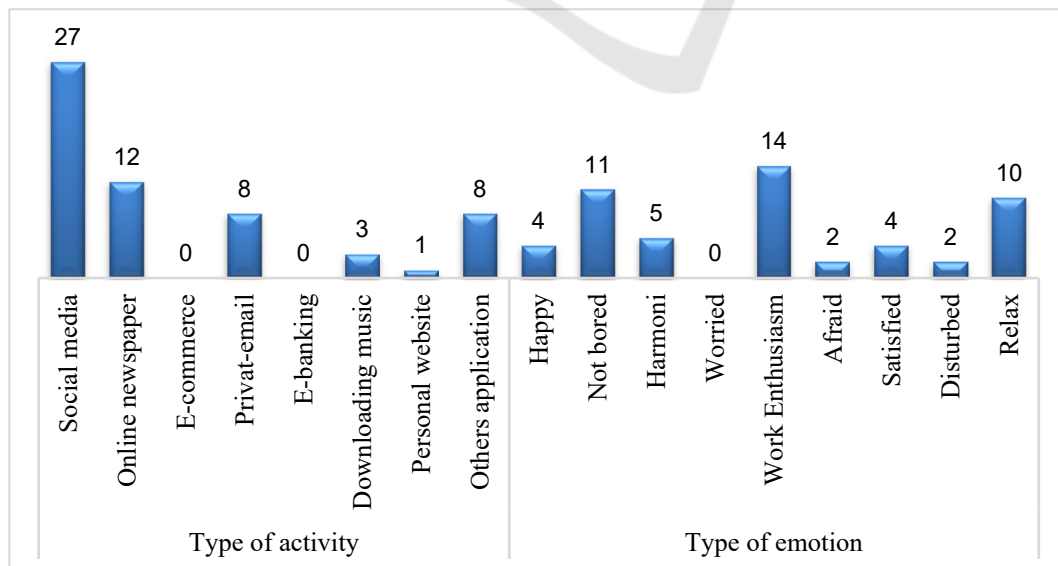


Figure 1: Types of Activities and Emotions Associated With Cyberloafing.

The results (see Figure 1) indicated that accessing social media (including WhatsApp, Line, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Telegram) is the cyberloafing activity most employees engage in (90%), followed by reading online newspapers (including *kumparan*, *detikcom*, *line today*) (40%). Some employees (27%) access various internet-based applications, including YouTube ($n=4$), hangouts ($n=1$), engage in online trading ($n=1$), manage personal websites ($n=1$), and access other applications ($n=1$). Our findings showed that cyberloafing increases employee motivation (47%), and no employee reported feeling anxious as an effect of doing personal things unrelated to work completion.

Another finding from the study reveals that cyberloafing is commonplace in the workplace. The majority of respondents stated that internet access is provided (73%) with a strong internet connection (64%), the use of which to access certain sites is restricted (64%). Regarding the use of the office internet facility, most of the employees stated that the supervision of internet use for non-work activities can reduce their performance (59%) and, on the other hand, reduces cyberloafing activities (63%).

4 DISCUSSION

The rapid technological development is accompanied by the introduction of personal electronic devices, including smartphones, where the internet and telephone are integrated into a common technical platform (Ivarsson et al., 2011) that allows employees to surf the internet at work not limited to a desk or office space. Employees are connected to the internet all the time with personal electronic devices they bring in their bags or pockets, and it has changed the way they live and work. The trend of using personal devices for work (Bring Your Own Device/BYOD) in companies is considered to be growing in line with the increase in mobile and cloud computing technology (Bullock, 2019). According to Sheikh et al. (2015), the trend of smartphone use in cyberloafing behaviour is referred to as "m-loafing". Understanding technology from a positive perspective is a must for organisations in influencing the adoption, diffusion, and use of new technologies by employees within the organisation.

Li and Chung (2016) state that cyberloafing is a multi-dimensional construct. Various approaches and definitions have been proposed for non-work-related internet use in organisations. Different

approaches have resulted in wide and inconsistent use of terminologies, definitions, and labels (Weatherbee, 2010). Various concepts and terms have been used to describe this phenomenon, such as cyberloafing, cyberslacking, cyberbludging, internet addiction, and internet addiction disorder (Kim & Bryne, 2011). These terms imply unproductive internet use in the workplace (Ugrin et al, 2008). However, several studies have recognized the recreational use of the Internet in the workplace which allows individuals to spend time outside the demands of the workplace as well as a way to equip them to face future tasks that require greater energy (Oravec, 2002). Beugré and Kim (2006) stated that when employees intend to escape from routine work and to release anxiety, cyberloafing becomes a form of constructive behaviour.

Cyberloafing research concentrates on two perspectives, namely positive and negative perspectives. This present research adds empirical support to cyberloafing research in a positive perspective, the results of which show that cyberloafing activities produce more positive emotions than negative emotions and thus relaxing, overcoming boredom, and increasing work motivation. Although previous research has mostly examined the negative impact of cyberloafing, this present study found that using company internet resources for non-work purposes does have a positive impact on individuals and jobs. Previous research, by Coker (2013) supports the idea that there is a relationship between cyberloafing and higher rates of recovery, which in turn results in positive emotions. This positive emotional impact is in line with the results of research by Lim and Chen (2012) that website browsing produces positive emotions.

Interestingly, the study found that employees spend an average of 57 minutes per workday for cyberloafing. Previous research revealed minor internet lapses with a low duration of about 15 to 30 minutes a day (Hartijasti, 2016), while other studies reported that the time spent was about 51 minutes per working day for cyberloafing (Lim & Chen, 2012). It seems that employees spend more and more time on cyberloafing. Although the internet has a positive impact by making individuals feel more relaxed and increasing morale, for example, as many as 77.2% of employees state that there is no supervision in its use.

Thus, further research is needed to investigate whether supervision of internet use can reduce the negative impact of cyberloafing to improve work effectiveness. Adequate oversight policies would

depend on the organization's ability to maintain justice. Stanton (2002) argues that perceived organizational justice is the main source of employee satisfaction with the organization's monitoring system, including feedback on monitoring, clarity of assessment criteria, and supervisor's expertise in monitoring. On the other hand, the use of the internet for personal settlement can be used as a way to restore justice in the organization when employees feel they have been treated unfairly (De-Lara & Melián-González, 2009).

Finally, it is important to conduct further research on cyberloafing considering nowadays employees can access the internet on their personal devices in the office throughout working hours and effective supervision is thus needed. The implementation of effective supervision reflects the managerial effectiveness of a leader. Strategies that can be done include, in addition to being firm with employees who engage in excessive cyberloafing, leaders set an example by refraining from cyberloafing (Koay, 2017).

5 CONCLUSION

The internet will always be a part of employees' lives at work. The study of cyberloafing from a constructive perspective is aimed, at a minimum, to reduce the negative behavioural and psychological impact of cyberloafing. Employees engage in cyberloafing to balance work and personal lives. Such balancing requires the ability to manage time. Time management requires the effective use of resources in prioritizing and scheduling to meet individual responsibilities that include activities unrelated to work (Seaward, 2002). In addition, engaging in cyberloafing is also influenced by employees' intention to comply with organizational policies, and such an intention has to do with the personal norms they uphold (Li et al., 2010). The way individuals manage roles between work and family can have implications on their job performance (Kreiner, 2006). Regardless of the various efforts organizations have made to reduce the negative impacts of cyberloafing, research has found sufficient evidence that we can look on the bright side. Thus, this research contributes to the development of today's organizational behaviour by promoting a new perspective of constructive cyberloafing.

However, this method of analysis has a number of limitations. The small sample size of the study

was not possible to generalize beyond the results of this study, future researcher may use adequate number of appropriate participants. Finally, for researchers interested in scrutinizing the bright side of cyberloafing, it is highly encouraged to use mixed or multiple method research designs.

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