Consequences Of Cyberloafing –A Literature Review

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Abstract: The study explores Cyberloafing which is a multidimensional construct. Initiated as usage of workplace web resources for personal use by employees, in the current scenario it has shifted to usage of internet on mobile technologies viz. smart phones, tabs, laptops at work for personal use. Consequently our study investigated researches which present Cyberloafing as a construct that hampers the workplace performance, is a mode of distraction and rob organizational working hours. However according to some other researches Cyberloafing has positive impact on behavioural patterns of employees and is mentioned as enjoyable break leading to recovery from monotony and stress at work.

Keywords: Cyberloafing, Personal Web Usage, Cyber Slacking

1. INTRODUCTION

Communication technologies have widened all venues of our lives by influencing our social structures, personal behaviors and cultural products. With the advent of communication technology our workplaces have become internet dependent. The scenario of our workplaces has become more flexible, open, and autonomous due to Internet. ICT has revolutionized the working styles of employees in all sectors and improving their productivity and efficiency. But technology is also leading people to misbehave or indulge into counter work productive behaviour. Internet is now not only available for usage at workplace but also in our pockets in form of hand held computer i.e. mobiles. So the boundary between legitimate usage and personal usage of internet while postponing one's duties in hand at workplace is issue of the present era. When duties are postponed for personal work then the behaviour of employee becomes production deviant and delineates the quantity and quality of work.

Personal usage of web resources is referred as 'Cyberloafing' (Lim 2002). Personal use of Internet at work have been proposed by researchers by different terms such as 'Cyberslacking' (Marron 2000; Vitak et.al , 2011), 'Personal web usage' (Anandarajan and Simmers, 2005), and even more serious terms of 'Problematic Internet Use' (Davis, Flett, and Besser, 2002), 'Internet Addiction' (Griffiths, 1996; Young, 2004). One of the old terms given by Guthrie and Gray (1996) related to personal use of internet at work is 'Junk Computing' which means using the internet in such a way that it does not leads to achievement of organizational goals.

The term Cyberloafing when coined by Lim(2002) was referred in context of usage of organization or companies internet for personal work but with advent of communication technology and availability of mobiles in our hand the scope of personal internet usage has expanded from office internet to usage of internet on any computing device during our

working hours. Hence Cyberloafing activities can be performed both by using computers and with personal mobile.

Table -1 Typologies of Cyberloafing Behaviour

Term	Description	Authors
Junk Computing	"Junk computing is the use of information systems in a way that does not directly advance organizational goals"	Guthrie and Gray (1996)
Cyberloafing	"Any voluntary act of employees using their companies' Internet access during office hours to surf non work related Web sites for non work purposes, and access (including receiving and sending) non work related email" Cyberloafing describes online behaviour engaged by an employee that is not job-related "	Lim, Teo & Loo(2002) Askew, *et al;(2014)*
Personal web Usage	"voluntary online Web behaviours during work time using any of the organization's resources for activities outside current customary job/work requirements"	Anandarajan & Simmers, (2005)
Non Work Related Computing	"Use of Internet during work for private purposes"	Back and Ho (2009)
Cyber Slacking	"Cyberslacking, typically defined as the use of Internet and mobile technology during work hours for personal purpose"	Vitaketal;(2011)
Goldbricking	"Goldbricking is the practice of doing less work than one is able to, while maintaining the appearance of working. Goldbricking online is referred to as Cyberslacking or Cyberloafing."	Wikipedia

Some indicators or activities involved in Cyberloafing at Workplace are like Chatting with friends and relatives, use Messenger, shopping online, online gambling, watch live sports events , playing games , doing personal financial transactions, browsing investment sites, following stock exchanges, pornography, writing comments on products and services. Cyberloafing also includes sharing views in discussion forums, joining virtual communities, searching and applying for jobs, following personalities , downloading and listening to favorite music, watching movies, blogging, sharing photos, viewing popular videos, reviewing advertisements, tweeting, and communicating with friends on facebook, instagram, and other social networking sites etc while at workplace.

Different researches since Lim coined the term 'Cyberloafing' have been done to study the consequences of Cyberloafing. These studies have reported or conclude on both positive and negative consequences of Cyberloafing at different workplaces.

2. NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF CYBERLOAFING

Greengard (2002) in his article mentioned that gains from internet are accompanied by pains as internet has emerged as a playfield for workers using it for trading, playing games, listening music, studying e-cards and sharing jokes. John and Indvik (2003) while discussing organizational benefits of reducing Cyberslacking in the workplace should deliberated that Cyberloafing leads to misuse of time which is big asset. So companies should be concerned about loss of productivity, legal liabilities and network crashes.

Macklem (2006) researched on email activities and found that Emailing has negative impact on employee's work and responding to mails reduces energy required for other jobs at workplace. Blanchard and Henle (2008) identified two forms of Cyberloafing viz. minor and serious Cyberloafing. Minor Cyberloafing refers to sending and receiving email at work, listening to news and visiting financial websites. Serious Cyberloafing consists of visiting adult sites, chatting, blogging, downloading music and gambling .

Barlow et al., (2003) and Blau, Yang, Ward-Cook (2006) and Jandaghi et al., (2015) in their studies elaborated the same negative association of cyber loafing with task performance because the time spent on internet is not devoted for productivity. Lim and Chen (2009) is of the view that that social attitude and relationship building behavior of employees require more time, cognitive resources and energy and is harmful for productivity of the organization.

Lim, V.K.G., Chen, & D.J.Q. (2012) found that browsing activities have positive impact on employees while emailing. Women took longer than men to switch over to work then men. Employees in their study spent on an average fifty one minutes on Cyberloafing at workplace. Further their findings are in tune with findings of Lim and Teo (2005) and Blanchard and Henle (2008) that most of those employees are more involved in communication activities than in serious Cyberloafing.

An article published in Debt Cubed in 2006 found that about thirty four million employees in the United States Cyberloaf involved in Cyberloafing which lead to productivity loss amounting to 200.6 million hours per week. Bock & Ho (2009) , Li & Chung (2006) found that Email and Chatting demand a lot of attention and are inversely related to performance. Weatherbee (2010) deliberates on Cyberloafing as deviant behaviour or unwanted behaviour aimed against organization. This type of behaviour leads to decreased productivity of organizations. Ramayah (2010) found personal use of internet i.e. done by downloading and ecommerce are strong predictors of workplace inefficiency. He further found that there is no relation between communication and work inefficiency. This implies that different activities done on internet at workplace have varied effect on job performance. Askew(2012) found that Cyberloafing on computer is different from Cyberloafing on mobile phones in their relation to employee satisfaction. Cyberloafing on mobile is negatively correlated to employee satisfaction. This implies that employees with low employee satisfaction seek for their phone for entertainment and to forget workplace stressors.

In a survey done by Gouveia (2013) on thirty two hundred employees in America it was found that fifty percent of them wasted more than two hours daily on Cyberloafing costing $4500 per employee on daily basis. MySammy a software company in year 2013 referred Cyberloafing as hidden epidemic killing business productivity. They prepared software to find the usage of computers personally by employees. But the software can be used on PC's and Cyberloafing at personal smart phones makes difficult for employers to calculate actual work hours of employees. Corgnet et.al (2015) found that employers should not follow autocratic policy to restrict internet but let employees decide on policy of their own to restrict their internet usage and hence increase their work performance.

Hadlington and Parsons (2017) in his article referred to research in Leicester-based De Monfort University through a survey of 338 part-time and full-time workers aged 26-65 years concluded that more the employees surf web during office hours , the less likely they are to follow their firms' IT security protocols. Kim, Triana, Chung, & Oh (2015) reported that five hours per week are wasted in Cyberloafing activities per week.

According to a blog by Inter Gurad (2018) on 'Minimize Employee Time Theft While Maintaining a Motivated Workforce', an objectionable environment is created by Cyberloafing as employees get distracted and lead to behavioural patterns like being manipulative, narcissism and self-interest. Unknowingly most of the employees in the organizations Cyberloaf in one or the other way. Olajide (2018) found in their study the relationship between Informational and Employee performance and concluded that as employee becomes more addicted to using the internet searching for information not relevant to his work during the work hours, his/her performance decreases. This finding is supported by (Askew, 2012; Yogun, 2015) and reasoned well that employees involved in informational searching are carried away by other sites which affects their performance. They further concluded the significant negative effect of social loafing on the performance of the employees (Derin & Güravşar, 2016; Sara & Santos, 2016; Yogun, 2015). Face book, Twitter and other online social networking is commonly used at work and constitute work place deviant behavior that negatively affects the performance of employees.

3. POSITIVE CONSEQUENCES OF CYBERLOAFING

 Belanger and Van Slyke, (2002) found that Cyberloafing provide a break from work and thus promotes performance of employees when they return back to job after the break. They further explored that intellectual resources that are exhausted in task performance are restored by Cyberloafing as it is assumed to be productivity break that enhances creativity and problem solving. It helps in employees bearing the long working hours by providing them an enjoyable break. This is in tune with findings of Oravec (2002); Eastin, Glynn and Griffiths (2007) that indicate that Cyberloafing activities helps in overcoming monotony in tasks. It helps in changing psychological mood and reducing stress.

Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke (2004) concluded jobs where employees are demanded more of their inputs and their job resources are few there exhaustion of employees can be prevented through recovery process. Bridegan (2008) deliberated through his study that Cyberloafing can act as recovery behaviour by acting as short break. The exhaustion of the employee therefore could be related to the recovery process which Cyberloafing could provide. Henle & Blanchard (2008) in their study report that Cyberloafing provides change in working environment and leads to development of creativity, and fostering   learning environment.

Askew (2012) and Kim, Triana, Chung, & Oh (2016) found that the persons who are less satisfied in their jobs get involved in Cyberloafing activities more often for entertaining themselves and shun negative feelings at work. Page (2014) in his online survey on teachers also pointed upon personal web usage by teachers . He reported that teachers use internet for sending mails, banking and social networking and reasons of such behaviour included coping up with work life balance. The findings also suggest usage of web at workplace leads to digital literacy of teachers and more productivity Quoquab, Salam and Halimah (2015) found the workplace Internet leisure practiced by employees in banks contributes to enhance their productivity. Olajide (2018) studied Cyberloafing among employees of deposit money banks in Kaduna metropolis and found that leisure loafing does not significantly effects performance of employees. Askew (2012), Hussain & Parida (2017) have similar kind of

findings. The reason behind this is that leisure time loafing have not much impact on the task performance of the employees.

Farqooq & Tufail (2019) in his study mentioned that employees incline to Cyberloafing more during working hours as now mobile technologies have are part and parcel of social and learning environments. The study was done amongst 199 doctors and 25 supervisors which revealed that Cyberloafing has significant relation with task performance where self- efficacy plays a mediating role. His results are in tune with findings of Prasad et al., (2010) that employees who cannot regulate and control their consideration predict more counterproductive behaviors.A positive significance was found between Cyberloafing activities and Behavioral Factors by Sao et.al (2020). They concluded that Cyberloafing has positive impact on employee's behaviour depicted in learning of skills, recovery from workplace stress, generation of ideas, developing interest at work and reviving span of attention.

4. DISCUSSION

As review presented Cyberloafing has both negative and positive consequences. Negative effects of Cyberloafing include termination of employees, time wastage, loss of productivity, reduced performance, work inefficiency, breaching confidentiality, procrastination, malware in computers as well as mobiles, clogging of mobiles and Personal Computer. Deterioration in job performance leads to loss in productivity in organizations. On the other hand some other researchers have reported positive impacts of Cyberloafing as recreation, recovery behaviour, work life balance, fostering digital learning, enhancing creativity, entertainment, relieving boredom and exhaustion. Recovery behaviour is reported to enhance productivity. Research is further required relating usage of hours and type of Cyberloafing activity with job/task performance and its further impact on productivity to find actual trend towards of Cyberloafing towards positive or negative effects. Determinants of Cyberloafing like work place stressors, personality traits, role conflicts, job satisfaction can also be studied to find whether Cyberloafing interacts with these factors to cast impact on job performance or productivity.

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