

# Cyberloafing among the Civil Servants: Evidence from Malaysia



Cheah Chew Sze, Cheah Yeh Ying, Yeo Sook Fern, Nur Alia Atiqa

**Abstract:** *Workplace cyberloafing among government servants has become one of the most challenging issues facing by Malaysian governmental organisations and administrations. The phenomenon of cyberloafing among government servants in the governmental service context calls for an effort to determine the factors that influence the related cyberloafing. This research has identified four factors which predict cyberloafing behaviour namely job satisfaction, internet usage policy, job stress and work procrastination. A total 150 government servants in Putrajaya were targeted as respondents and the self-administered questionnaires were employed as the main method of primary data collection. Smart PLS 3.0 was employed to access the constructs' structural model and measurement model. The findings reveal that only internet usage policy and work procrastinations are predicting cyberloafing behaviour predominantly. This study also emphasizes the need to perceive cyberloafing positively while imposing the correct amount of control on it.*

**Keywords :** *Cyberloafing, Internet usage policy, Job stress, Work procrastination*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The presence of Information Technology in companies has increased productivity, but the convenience of it has also derived a new way as well as opened up an opportunity in which a worker can loaf on the job [1]. In other words, workers are lack of concentration on works than ever before due to the Internet can be accessed from many devices not only from company's computer, but also from personal laptop, smartphone, tablet and iPad [2]. Unfortunately, it provides a convenient way for workers to avoid or shirk their work duties and responsibilities by using Internet [3]. Therefore, action to use the internet for the non-work related purpose during working hours, is termed as cyberloafing [4].

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In today's world, cyberloafing is becoming more and more of a problem as it is not only lead to decreases in productivity, but also lead to problems in information systems and data security [5],[6],[7]. For example, using illegal software to download and browse unsafe websites will cause network bandwidth overload, spyware infections and virus malware.

By the fixed development of web advances and introduction e-government in the public sector a few issues have raised in this setting has pulled in the consideration of researchers around the world. One of the primary issues is the cyberloafing by government servant's hirings that can caused significant negative outcomes for the administrations government and countries [8]. Finding showed cyberloafing activities of government servants are both costly and time consuming for the government. [9] reiterated that internet misuse among government servants can lead to serious drawbacks and deficiencies in the overall performance of the government. Cyberloafing significantly influences the governmental service's organisational performance and development as it can lead to dissatisfaction, distrust among government servants and public therefore inversely influencing the development of the governmental sectors [10]. According to [11], conceptualized cyberloafing as a voluntary act disrupts significant governmental and organisational standards and undermines the well-being of governmental organisations and employees within the government sectors. As a result, researchers emphasized that cyberloafing is one of the most projecting issues facing governmental organisations which is neglected and unreported. [12] conjectured that cyberloafing is higher in the governmental organisations as compared to the private organisations. For instance, a study on cyberloafing among government servants in Malaysia have shown that 71% of employees in governmental organisations have been involved in cyberloafing during the previous five years while 6% of them were reported by the government employers to experience such behaviour several times [13]. The existing literature in the context of cyberloafing among government servants contains a considerably limited especially the influential factors of cyberloafing among government servants [14]. Furthermore, previous studies that have been undertaken on cyberloafing among government servants in Malaysia are very limited and incomprehensive [15],[16]. Therefore, this study has employed both employee related factors such as work-related procrastination variable, stress variable and organisational related factors such as internet usage policy as well as job satisfaction in understanding cyberloafing among government servants.

II. METHOD

A The research framework (Figure1) developed in this study is based on the gaps that were identified in the previous literatures and were supported by empirical findings and conceptualized consideration specifically those associated with understanding of the contributing factors in cyberloafing among government servants.

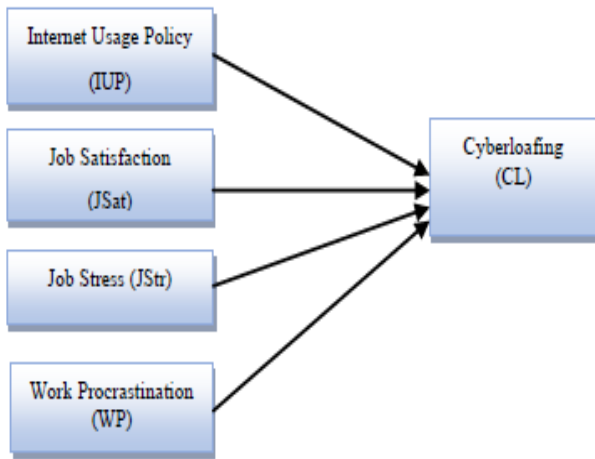


Fig.1: Research Framework

Internet usage policy is a serious act in government that happens to employees as it is a policy that cannot violate rules relationships and factors that are associated with cyberloafing behaviour [17]. A similar study by [18] stated that these factors influence the performance of the organisations whether employees decide to cyberloaf. As mentioned by [19], existing internet usage policies in governmental organisations of Malaysia involves a comprehensive guideline surrounding the topic of suitable and improper implementation of governmental organisations information systems resources that increases the perceived threat of punishment for cyberloafing behaviours among governmental employees. View by [20] suggests that, internet usage policies may inject feeling of suspicion among government servants in an organisation if these policies have been implemented poorly. The author emphasizes that to efficiently manage cyberloafing and internet usage policies in the workplace, the monitoring activities require to be combined with the disciplinary action. Thus, we expect the following:

**H1 Internet usage policy significantly influences cyberloafing behaviour among government servants.**

Job satisfaction is a term which stated that how satisfied and happy a person is with his or her work [21]. The findings of the job satisfaction towards cyberloafing are mixed. For instance, [22] showed that the lack of job satisfaction was not considerably linked with cyberloafing or personal usage of internet in the workplace, [23] suggested that job satisfaction is entirely not related to cyberloafing on a desktop but is associated with cyberloafing on smart phones. [13], however argued that a considerable relationship is found between job satisfaction and cyberloafing through internet abuse. Therefore, we propose:

**H2 Job satisfaction significantly influences cyberloafing behaviour among government servants.**

Reference [24] defined that stress refers to physical and psychological mental disorders that occur in stressful environment, such as resources are not enough to satisfy the demands or needs of an individual. A previous study mentioned an interrelationship between job stressors and strain, especially between organisational constraints and counterproductive work behaviours [25]. Furthermore, [26] stated that when workers’ energy resources are exhausted, they are stimulated to engage in behaviour of cyberloafing. Hence, the workers are more likely to engage in this behaviour as long as their resources are drained. A study conducted by [27] had shown that most of the Malaysian government employee were moderately stressful. Therefore, this leads to the following hypothesis:

**H3 Job stress significantly influences cyberloafing behaviour among government servants.**

Procrastination is a form of avoidance behaviour which can be seen as the avoidance of the execution of work-related assignments that need to be accomplished and performed [28]. According to [29], low levels of conscientiousness that is resulted as a subsequence of cyberloafing is linked with trait procrastination while situational procrastination is associated with experiencing an unpleasant and boring. In addition, it was discovered that staff involved in procrastination were more likely to participate in workplace cyberloafing or personal business [30]. According to [31], procrastination related to internet and computing resources as well as the resulting cyber loafing has increased drastically lately. This is also suggesting that an investigation into the relationship between cyberloafing and procrastination is important and may contribute to scholar’s and people’s understanding of different types of cyber loafing behaviours among employees at workplace. Thus, we suggest:

**H4 Work procrastination significantly influences cyberloafing behaviour among government servants.**

This study implements a quantitative method and has adopted a cross-sectional survey to determine the phenomenon of cyberloafing among support staff in the governmental organisations of Putrajaya, Malaysia. In this study, non-probability convenient sampling technique was used and a total of 150 questionnaires were circulated to staff who works in government organisations. All the five variables in this study were measured using 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. Total 26 validated measurement items were adopted from related previous literatures [22], [32]-[35]. All data collected have been keyed in into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 22 and follow by using Partial Least Square approach through Smart PLS 3.0 software to analyse the generated hypotheses.



The two-step approach was implemented which include measurement model and structural model. Besides that, bootstrapping method with the resample of 5000 was applied to examine the significance levels for loadings and path coefficients of the construct [36].

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Total of 150 complete questionnaires were returned and used in the analysis. Thus, it marks 100 percent response rate in this study. From the collected data majority of the respondents were female (66.7 percent) and 62 percent are at their age of 31-50. Majority of respondents was the Malay which made up of 72 percent followed by the Chinese (14.7 percent) and 10 percent of Indian respondents. A clear majority of the respondents (61 percent) is married and about half of them (55 percent) at their diploma and certificate level. Almost 56 percent of them have been attached to the government bodies for more than 5 years and above. Total of 55 respondents (36.7 percent) were holding non-executive

position (N19-N26) followed by 33 percent of senior executive (M41-M48) and 55 percent of them earning the monthly income at RM1200 to RM3900.

Hence, H1 and H4 are supported with (β=0.509, t=6.358) and (β=0.322, t=4.397) respectively. Effect size f2 was examined to determine impact of an exogenous construct on an endogenous construct [38]. The f2 value reveals that one relationship with large effect sizes (>0.35), and one with medium (>0.15) and another two with small effect sizes (<0.02) (Cohen, 1988). In this study, multi-collinearity is not an issue when the result in Table 2 shows all VIF values are less than 5 (from 1.043 to 1.094) [36]. In summary, the model has an acceptable fit and a highly predictive significance.

Things happen for a reason, thus workers cyberloafing due to some reasons. In this study, internet usage policy has been shown significant influence on cyberloafing behaviour among the government servants.

	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted	1	2	3	4	5
Cyber loafing	0.837	0.520	<b>0.721</b>				
Internet Usage Policy	0.884	0.605	0.528	<b>0.778</b>			
Job Satisfaction	0.866	0.521	0.168	0.150	<b>0.722</b>		
Job Stress	0.868	0.696	0.117	0.150	0.147	<b>0.834</b>	
Work Procrastination	0.952	0.834	0.352	0.080	0.169	0.237	<b>0.913</b>

TABLE-I: Measurement Model

TABLE-II: Structural Model

Hypothesis	Standard Beta	Standard Error	t-value	p-value	Decision	R <sup>2</sup>	f <sup>2</sup>	VIF
H1: IUP -> CL	0.509	0.080	6.358	0.000	Supported	0.393	0.409	1.043
H2: JSat -> CL	0.055	0.074	0.746	0.456	Not support		0.005	1.063
H3: JStr -> CL	-0.054	0.109	0.493	0.622	Not support		0.004	1.094
H4: WP -> CL	0.322	0.073	4.397	0.000	Supported		0.157	1.087

In a measurement model, the convergent validity was first assessed and followed by the discriminant validity. The result of indicator loadings, average variance extracted (AVE) and the composite reliability (CR) were used to ascertain the convergent validity of the measurement in the study [36]. As result shown in Table-I, all loadings and AVE of the construct are exceeding 0.5 and CR are above 0.7. Follow the basis of [37] criterion, the measures were deemed discriminant when all the values on the diagonals were greater than the value in corresponding rows and columns.

The R<sup>2</sup> value shown in Table-II was 0.393, indicating that independent variables of 'Internet Usage Policy', 'Job Satisfaction', 'Job Stress', and 'Work Procrastination' can explain 39.3 percent of the variance in the extent of 'Cyberloafing behaviour'. Referring to the structural model in Table-II, internet usage policy and work procrastination are significantly predicting cyberloafing behaviour.

[20] suggests that, internet usage policies might inject feeling of suspicion among government servants in an organisation if these policies have been implemented poorly. Similarly, [39] agreed on this by suggesting that internet usage policies are only effective in deterring cyberloafing if employees consider them as causation of punitive subsequences. As a result, an effective internet usage policy is more helpful particularly if it focuses on punishment for employees who cyberloaf at the work place. [1] have shown that employees will become more reluctant to perform cyberloafing behaviour in the condition when they assume that there are serious sanctions being imposed against those who cyberloaf at workplace. Nevertheless, this approach may have adverse influences in the workplace and may even lead to decrease in employee's morale.

Besides that, work procrastination also found to be one of the significant predictor to cyberloafing behaviour. The finding is consistent with [40] who have identified the differences between behavioural and indecision procrastination and found that the procrastination is positively related to the measures of cyberloafing at the workplace as well as inattention, impulsivity, disorganisation and emotional difficulty. Despite most of the studies that view procrastination as a negative behaviour, there were some studies that have shown positive sides of procrastination and cyberloafing at work. For instance, [26] proposed that active procrastinators can procrastinate at workplace purposely to cope with work stress and time pressure from the assigned tasks to be completed before deadlines and acquire satisfaction results. Nevertheless, this constructive recreation enables the employees to escape from the boring regular tasks and served as a boredom coping mechanism for employees [41].

The result showed that job satisfaction and job stress were not influence the cyberloafing behaviour significantly. This has aligned with the study of [22] where lack of job satisfaction was not considerably linked with cyberloafing. Moreover, majority of the respondents (66 percent) are from low to middle rank position compared to higher position therefore they have experience lower level of job stress comparatively. A study by [42] has indicated that managers had higher tendency to cyberloaf at the workplace since higher job status positions have more stressful tasks and are therefore prone to be online to free up minds from their current stressful work situation. Finally, we would like to propose longitudinal method to be employed in future study in order to capture and provide a robust result on the changes of workers' factors and views at more than one point of time. Furthermore, future study can adopt alternative data collection methods for avoiding biases arising from employing common source.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

In order to maintain the public confidence and preserve the integrity and performance of Malaysian government servants, workplace cyberloafing needs to be treated and studied from multiple dimensions [43]. Undoubtedly the findings of this study added a voice in cyberloafing literature in response to the call by some researchers for a more sophisticated understanding of cyberloafing. Since employees will struggle in meeting the obligations at work, governmental organisations need to understand that certain personal business might require to be conducted during working hours [44]. In the right situation, a controlled amount of cyberloafing can lead to learning that may benefit the governmental organisations in a good manner. When employees in an organisation engage in pleasant web surfing, they are able to learn through an enhanced understanding of the organisation and the current existing knowledge or increased amount of precision of knowledge [45]. Furthermore, if the employer unable to prevent cyberloafing by employees therefore they should design ways to allow employees to cyberloaf and use the internet in a more constructive manner. Anyhow such recreational allowance of cyberloafing will help increasing employee's creativity,

decrease anxiety and enhance the employee's overall wellbeing [22].

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