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STUDY ON PERSONAL INTERNET USE AND CYBERLOAFING ACTIVITIES IN WORKPLACE

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Abstract

Internet has become part of organisations' operations and is valuable to organisations in terms of rapidity of workers, the development of productivity, and more advanced communication. Many people use the power of the Internet in facilitating communication. It is clear that the sophistication and charm of this virtual world has led to the growth of the Internet among other communication. But, nowadays in digital era, employer faced seriousness problem in handling employees who use the internet/social media activities during working hours. This issue becoming more serious because they hardly differentiate is either work-related or not; surprisingly few of them may not know that they are actually committed with cyberloafing activities. Other than that, usage of smartphones or tablets during working hours is uncontrollable and can increase the cyberloafing activities among employees. Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission reported approximately in 2018, there were 28.7 million Internet users, an increase from 24.5 million in 2016 and the usage of Internet at workplace raised at 56.4%. This research aimed to bring to the light an overview on the impact of cyberloafing activities in workplace.

Keywords: Cyberloafing, activities, impact, performance.

1. Introduction

According to Blanchard and Henle (2008), cyberloafing is referred to "employee voluntary non-work related which using company provided email and Internet while working". Cyberloafing is also known as personal Internet use (Liberman, 2011) or cyber slacking (O'Neill et al., 2014; Runing Sawitria, 2012) or counterproductive work behavior (CWB) (Lim, 2002).

Bock and Ho (2009) named the use of Internet during working hours for individual purposes as "Non-Work Related Computing (NWRC)". The term NWRC is "a collective term and contains Junk Computing and Cyberloafing". Web-based shopping, web surfing, taking part in web-based social media networking (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, downloading music, etc.), searching for jobs, sending and receiving emails that are not related to work, and transferring some unrelated materials are some examples of cyberloafing behaviours.

Blanchard and Henle (2008) had divided cyberloafing into two categories which are serious and minor. Receiving and sending an email, surfing an internet, online shopping are an example of minor category of cyberloafing. Differently with serious cyberloafing which contains of online games, downloading music or movie, blogs, chat room, interacting with other person's online, visit adult web sites, and maintaining own websites.

This level will determine the seriousness of cyberloafing activities. Lim and Chen (2009) state the classification of cyberloafing is browsing activities and emailing activities. Whereby, Li and Chung (2006) defined four functions of cyberloafing which stated as 1) social function 2) informational function 3) leisure function 4) virtual emotional function. Social function is referring to communication with friends online, informational function is when persons gain information via internet. Meanwhile leisure function is for entertainment, and virtual function is when the person using internet for gambling or online dating.

The other scholar like Mahatanankoon et al. (2004) distinguish five different functions cyberloafing activities which stated as 1) buying online and personal business; 2) gathering information; 3) interactive communication; 4) interactive entertainment, and 5) personal downloading. Therefore, according to Ramayah (2010), he differentiate FOUR (4) activities of Cyberloafing which states as 1) Individual communication; 2) Individual information research; 3) Individual downloading; 4)Individual e-commerce.

Based on the above definition and differentiate by several scholars, it showed the similarity between Mahatanankoon et al. (2004) Li and Chung (2006), and Ramayah (2010), therefore Blanchard and Henle (2008) have own and different meaning if compared with other scholar.

2. Problem Statement

MCMC (2018) reported approximately in 2018, there were 28.7 million Internet users, an increase from 24.5 million in 2016 and the usage of Internet at workplace raised at 56.4%. According to Ramayah (2010), employees in one of the companies in Malaysia, spent 25% of their daily working hours to access Internet materials for personal use. The survey by MCMC (2018) also revealed that, Internet was used by 61.9% of its users to assist and complete their work-related tasks. However, there are employees who misuse the Internet for non-related work matters. This kind of activities, according to Professor Datuk Seri

Dr Ashgar Ali Ali Mohamed, can have negative impact on productivity when it done excessively (The Star, 2018).

3. Research Questions

What are the impacts of Cyberloafing activities at workplace?

4. Purpose of the Study

This study aimed to examine the impacts of Cyberloafing activities at workplace

5. Research Methods

In preparation of this study, the researcher gathered data from journals, articles, reference book and newspaper cutting periodically

6. Findings

There are several debates and argument on cyberloafing activities at workplace among employees. Basically, there are two views based on past research, which are the positive and negative impact of cyberloafing. Fine et al. (2010) stated cyberloafing can increase the productivity. The positive impact and effect of cyberloafing activities are the information gathered can be useful and apply in work-related activities, reduce work stress, and retrieval release from work (Vitak et al., 2011) and enhanced comprehension of existing information (Oravec, 2002).

Therefore, other researcher also stated that internet accessibility while working can help employees to get information literacy and access and achieving a balance between the personal and work life, and add variety everyday activities (Coker, 2011; Lim & Chen, 2012; Seymour & Nadasen, 2007). Several scholars gave suggestion that cyberloafing activities can give and help in terms of work diversion possibly encourage and assist employees to expand creativity, produce great ideas, release job stress, and recovery mental position (Askew et al., 2014; Oravec, 2002) and restore the energy (Chen & Lim, 2011, which can be increased creativity and work performance. Internet leisure surfing also can help refresh employee's engagement (Coker, 2013) and it can accomplish work-life balance (Anandarajan et al., 2006).

A study by Derin and Gökçe (2016) found out that there is a positive effects of informational and social cyberloafing such as it can increase the innovative work behavior. They stated that the leaders should considered cyberloafing as a break for employees to think creatively. The other researcher also found that cyberloafing have a positive relationship between informational and social innovative work behavior (Van Doorn, 2011). According to Ghani et al. (2018), found out job stress has impact on employees' cyberloafing behaviour. Employees chose to cyberloaf in order to lessen their stress.

Another view said cyberloafing can effect and decrease the productivity of employees. Some scholar said employees cannot complete their job due to exceed usage of cyberloafing activities and reduces work efficiency (Lim & Chen, 2012). As mentioned by other researcher stated, it can reduce work performance as it disperses employee's concentration, energy, and time at workplace (Block, 2001; Galletta & Polak,

2003; Young, 2004). Malachowski (2005) had opinion employee's waste time and less occupied with their work where 59% of the utilization of the web is not applicable to work matters (Griffiths, 2003)

Non-work related usage likes online while working, can give major impact to the companies. Meanwhile, this kind of employee's behaviour can contribute the deviance of work and production activities as well as towards the security threats (Henle & Blanchard, 2008). Cyberloafing can give negative impacts to the organizations and play a factor of deviant behavior (Ahmad & Omar, 2017; Jandaghi et al., 2015).

As mentioned by Newswise (2013) the numbers of employees' usage of internet during working hours are about 60% to 80% percent, and as stated by Greengard (2000) which is more than 50% internet activities are not work-related within companies. Based on this numbers, it shown huge percentage of employees using internet for their not related job activities. Meanwhile, according to Henle et al. (2009) it was found out in United States of America, the productivity of employees are decreases 30% to 40% due to cyberloafing activities which amounted to $ 750 million per year.

Besides that, based on Young (2004) states that almost 54 billion per year lost by the impact of non-productivity of employees. As stated by several scholars, approximations of cyberloafing activities daily are same around two to two and half hours (Blanchard & Henle, 2008; Johnson & Indvik, 2003: Lim & Chen, 2009; Ramayah, 2010).

Meanwhile, to reduce the numbers of cyberloafing, companies need to apply several approaches such as applying online practice policies, install online observing system or filtering system or alternatively impose warning letter or punishments (Glassman et al., 2015; Kimberly, 2010). Therefore, there are companies have conduct internet use policies and intense control methods, or conducted management trainings (Cheng et al., 2014). Internet use policy and management training were found to be moderately effective approaches to deter potential employee online abuse based on a survey on measures taken by management in order to curb cyberloafing include internet use policies (50%), management training (20%) and rehabilitation of employees suspected of internet addiction was the least utilised (2%) (Young, 2004). Anandarajan (2002) maintained that creating internet usage policies is inadequate without proper monitoring of Internet activity to ensure compliance with such policies.

7. Conclusion

Despite all of above arguments, cyberloafing give positive and negative impact on employees. Therefore, employer can take an action to control the cyberloafing activities during working hours by adopt several ways such as installing Internet monitoring system, implementing Internet usage policies or/and Internet-filtering systems. But at one side, employer must have mutual trust and confidence on their employees to maintain the work engagements at workplace. Cyberloafing can be said as work relief that can potentially help employees to be more creative, produce ideas, release job stress and assist mental recovery. But employees must know their limit, and time and use Cyberloafing platform to enhance and doing better at workplace and especially to avoid procrastination.

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