ORIGINAL RESEARCH

Cyberslacking for Coping Stress? Exploring the Role of Mindfulness as Personal Resource

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Abstract

There is no doubt that the Internet has made a positive impact on people's lives by enabling connectivity and access to a wealth of information. It has also given rise to cyberslacking behaviours in organisations which influence employees' behaviours. However, sometimes cyberslacking may become a coping process that may be considered as a way to detach from a stress situation. Thus, cyberslacking rather than being viewed as counterproductive work behaviour may become a means to 'de-stress'. The current work attempts to explore the relationship between job stress and cyberslacking and how this relationship is affected by mindfulness as a personal resource. To test the relationships, data were collected from employees working in the private sector using a standardised survey instrument. A total of 392 participants took part. Structural equation modelling was used to analyse the interlinks and the result indicated that there was a significant positive association between job stress and cyberslacking, and mindfulness acted as a catalyst in mitigating the direct effects of job stress on employees' cyberslacking tendencies. In conclusion, mindful cyberslacking helps in coping with job stress amongst employees. The study is first amongst a few which represents cyberslacking as a coping mechanism for dealing with a stressful work environment. The outcomes provide significant implications for managing employees in digital workspace, and how mindfulness invokes the ability to regulate cyberslacking tendencies arising out of job stress leading to sustainable technology usage.

Keywords Cyberslacking · Cyberloafing · Mindfulness · Job stress · Coping theory

Introduction

Volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA) are the characteristics of today's business environments. Given such environment, stress is inevitable. Employees in all the industries are struggling to establish a balance between personal and professional life. Managers are also looking for new strategies for holistic management of employees' growth. It is well noted by the industry experts that employees' well-being should be one of the several priorities. However, this challenge of finding equilibrium between job fulfilment and personal well-being seems to

only increase. COVID-19 added to the challenge, as it transformed home into the workplace. Internet and IT have made remote work feasible. Cyberslacking is one of the several outcomes of increased information technology penetration and digitisation of work life (Tandon et al., 2021). It is defined as the use of the Internet by employees for personal and non-business purposes during working hours. The research on cyberslacking has been rising since the year 2019. It has been studied as a consequence of various job-related phenomena such as unfavorable work conditions, stress, and burnout (Koay et al., 2017). With past studies being saturated towards the negative effects it produces on the employee, company and its stakeholders (Sandhu & Gautam, 2022; Sheikh et al., 2019), the negative hazards associated with cyberslacking have overpowered the positives.

Some research studies regard cyberslacking to be positively associated with employee satisfaction, work motivation and increased communication among employees (Janicke-Bowles, et al., 2019; Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara et al., 2019). Thus, considering cyberslacking as an act of distraction (Lim & Chen, 2012), its association with job stress and related phenomenon are areas that are unexplored

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in literature. Moreover, the role of such interventions should be considered in reducing employee stress and enhancing mental well-being.

Mindfulness is one of the tools that has been suggested as a catalyst in controlling employee stress at work. Studies on mindfulness show that practising mindfulness helps people see and acknowledge events in their surroundings without reacting to them, which reduces discomfort (Grover et al., 2017). According to the Job-Demands-Resources model, mindfulness has been recognised as a personal resource that lowers work-related stress. Thus, mindfulness training reduces work–life conflict and enhances balance (Althammer et al., 2021) thereby reducing tension. Also, mindful employees are more thoughtful about the implications attached to their actions (Goodman & Schorling, 2012).

This study considers cyberslacking as a positive mechanism, easing out psychological work pressures among employees. Thus, it adds to the literature on cyberslacking and its association with job stress, thereby considering cyberslacking as a stress-management tool for employees in the workplace. At the same time, the current research examines the role of employee mindfulness as a moderator to the overall relationship.

Most studies deem cyberslacking as a counterproductive work behaviour (O'Neill et al., 2014). It is suggested that excessive cyberslacking can reduce productivity by diverting employees' attention and involvement to their phone or other IT tools (Rose, 2017). In addition to financial costs from decreased worker productivity, cyberslacking jeopardises network security, limits organisational capacity, and exposes companies to a number of legal risks, ranging from security fraud to sexual harassment (Oswalt et al., 2003). While cyberslacking is typically portrayed as a negative behaviour resulting in productivity and revenue losses (Alharthi et al., 2021; Mastrangelo et al., 2006; Nusrat et al., 2021), engaging in brief periods of breaks or time off work, on tasks unrelated to work may have positive effects, such as relief from boredom, fatigue or stress, greater job satisfaction or creativity, enhancing one's well-being, recreation and recovery, leading to happier employees (Eastin et al., 2007; Oravec, 2002; Reinecke, 2009; Stanton, 2002). Employees feel that cyberslacking behaviours, such as sending personal emails and surfing news websites, help them "handle challenges at work" and make them "a better worker" (Zafar, 2008). In addition, using the Internet while at work has been linked to increased productivity in some cases. Garrett and Danziger (2008) discovered that Internet productivity gains and cyberslacking had a positive correlation.

A similar study was conducted by Stoddart (2016) considering cyberslacking, job stress, burnout and mindfulness as variables forming part of the study; however, the researcher examined the role of cyberslacking and mindfulness as coping mechanisms that will help reduce job burnout caused due to job stress. The author found evidence for the hypothesis that mindfulness affects the relationship between job stress (represented by role overload) and job burnout, but only partially.

Thus, this study aims to investigate cyberslacking as a means to cope and manage stress using coping theory and respite literature to back the hypotheses. The research intends to address several gaps in literature. First, the risks and challenges attached to the use of technology at workplace has been studied by several researchers (Orhan et al., 2021), but the behavioural implications attached to IT usage such as distraction, cyberdeviance, and cyberslacking are rather understudied. Further, literature on respite focuses on the employee's time off and breaks from work. Employees may perceive cyberslacking as a means to disconnect from work, replenish their resources, and relieve stress (Wu et al., 2020). The importance of respite and its potential impact on employee well-being at work has received far less attention in research. Therefore, further studies are needed to understand the mechanism underlying how employees might take a break from work and engage in tasks/activities (for, e.g. cyberslacking in this study) to avoid tension and burnout building up. This study is a step in that direction.

Second, certain research contexts are inundated with cyberslacking. India is not among the top ten countries focusing on cyberslacking, indicating a lack of study and awareness. Conducting this research in a culturally diverse context in contrast to the USA, China, and other countries will offer an in-depth understanding of cyberslacking behaviour.

Third, the role of employee mindfulness as a personal resource was also explored further in the study. This makes the current study unique from the existing works on cyberslacking and adds to the literature on mindfulness. Fourth, this research contrasts cyberslacking from counterproductive behaviours and conceptualises it as a coping mechanism, which encourages a dialogue on sustainable IT usage by employees, making it significant in the dynamic business environment. This would guide managers and practitioners in formulating well-being policies in future. This will further assist in determining the acceptable level of cyberslacking, which does not hamper employees' performance and organisational goals.

In light of the foregoing, this work answers the research questions:

RQ1: How does cyberslacking represent itself as a form of coping in an unfavourable work environment?

RQ2: What is the association of job stress with cyberslacking among employees?

RQ3: How does employee mindfulness as a personal resource may affect the relationship between cyberslacking and job stress relationship?

The remainder of the paper is divided into three sections. Literature review is followed by the formulation of hypotheses. The next section contains research methodology and data analysis, and the last section contains the discussion on analysis, study's results and implications.

Literature Survey

Cyberslacking

The use of technology at work is increasing, which benefits efficiency and productivity in information access. However, they also consistently divert employees' attention and effort in several ways (Barjis et al., 2011). Cyberslacking or cyberloafing is "a minor form of organizationally oriented deviant use of IT with low technical skill" and/or "a serious form of organizationally oriented deviant use of IT with low technical skill" (Venkatraman et al., 2018, p. 17). It is the usage of technology and the internet during working hours by individuals. Literature on cyberslacking is divided based on the positive and negative outcomes it may produce. Behaviours such as cyberslacking as research has evinced can cost the firm financially and socially (Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara & Viera-Armas, 2017), along with the organisations facing the potential risks of legal liabilities and security issues (Hu et al., 2015). Apart from job performance and productivity loss, Sonnentag et al. (2018) assert that cyberslacking activities lead to mental strain and stress. It has also been associated with triggering negative emotions at the workplace (Sonnentag et al., 2017) and causing work disengagement. Yet, using social media and the Internet helps in relieving stress and anxiety by facilitating psychological withdrawal. An employee's mental departure from work is referred to as psychological withdrawal (Lehman & Simpson, 1992) or respite from work (Orhan et al., 2021; Rudnicka et al., 2022). Thus, the possibility of viewing cyberslacking as a coping mechanism instead of a counterproductive work behaviour is something that academicians and management experts have not considered.

Cyberslacking can be classified as major or minor depending on the intensity and impact created by such an act of the employee (Blanchard & Henle, 2008). Minor cyberslacking includes short-term actions, not inviting any legal liabilities such as surfing the Internet for mails, news, and social networking websites (Güğerçin, 2020). However, such actions do have repercussions on employees' performance and productivity (Alharthi et al., 2021; Güğerçin, 2020; Kühnel et al., 2020; Metin et al., 2016; O'Neill, et al., 2014; Usman et al. 2021). Thus, even minor cyberslacking has been viewed as anti-normative, i.e. behaviour which is morally unacceptable to the wider community (the organisation and its stakeholders who are impacted by it) (Ning &

Zhaoyi, 2017). Major cyberslacking behaviours are more intense and capable of attracting legal actions (Güğerçin, 2020). This includes online gambling, visiting unauthorised sites (Blanchard and Henle, 2008; Lim, 2002).

In addition to major and minor cyberslacking, scholars have also emphasised various sorts of cyberslacking behaviour in literature. It has been divided into three sorts—information search, e-commerce and personal communications such as emails and chats (Mahatanankoon et al., 2004). Ramayah (2010) has added downloading information for personal use from the Web as a fourth dimension to the above classification. According to experts, the growth of social media platforms has led to the development of fresh forms of cyberslacking. Recent taxonomies classify cyberslacking into recreation, informational or virtual activities (for e.g. gaming) on the Internet (Bett et al., 2018).

A growing body of literature has looked at cyberslacking as a deviant behaviour that affects many constructions. It must be understood that it is not the technology that is a problem, rather its utilisation and the intentions attached to technology use. Some individuals may use digital technologies out of addiction, or as a way to reduce anxiety or avoid FOMO (fear of missing out) (Rosen & Samuel, 2015) or may engage in cyberslacking due to perceived injustice at workplace, personal or professional stress, or in retaliation to supervisor behaviour (Henle & Blanchard, 2008; Pindek et al., 2018), which commonly theorises cyberslacking as a negative workplace behaviour and explaining why individuals may turn towards technology use in unfavourable circumstances at the workplace. Further, an organisation's culture has also been proven to be an essential element that may determine cyberslacking behaviours as it governs employees' behaviour at the workplace (Nusrat et al., 2021). Sawitri and Mayasari (2017) conducted a research to investigate the influence of cyber use such as watching prohibited videos during work hours on creative performance, while studying the moderating influence of creative self-efficacy. They found that some activities such as Internet surfing, emailing, casual browsing and acts such as emailing activities and leisure activities boost creative performance at work and facilitates pleasant relationships at work, while serious browsing acts negatively impact creativity.

However, from an organisational standpoint, it is important to comprehend cyberloafing and its precursors since it is widely believed to encompass all activities that deviate from organisational norms (Pindek et al., 2018). The analysis of patterns of usage of technology (both work and non-work related) by employees is complex and poses new challenges ahead of management, yet it must be realised that engaging in behaviours related to technological distractions, such as cyberslacking, may sometimes represent them as 'respite' and 'micro-breaks', which may detach them from stressful work conditions (Orhan et al., 2021) and not necessarily

attached to negative outcomes. In recent years, scholars have questioned the prevailing belief that cyberloafing is uniformly harmful, suggesting instead that it may have a "bright side" for employees. Moderate online leisure activities can help employees cope with work stress (Stoddart, 2016), achieve higher levels of recovery (Coker, 2013), and be more committed to subsequent work (Syrek et al., 2018). These studies highlight a fundamental tension existing in current literature that focuses on the effects of cyberloafing on individuals. Thus, despite the fact that cyberloafing as a positive intervening mechanism has been associated with constructs like boredom at the job (Pindek et al., 2018), job involvement and motivation and better emotional well-being (Lim & Chen, 2012; Wu et al., 2020), this aspect remains largely underresearched. The research study conducted by Stoddart (2016) too opines that low to moderate use of Internet may help employees deal with job stress.

Hypothesis Development

Job Stress and Cyberslacking Behaviour

Multiple studies have revealed that job stress negatively impacts the psychological health of employees (Pujol-Cols & Lazzaro-Salazar, 2020), leading to strain and tension. According to the coping theory, when a person receives a stressful input in the environment, he or she assesses the threat posed by stress as well as the resources available to assist him manage (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). "An environmental circumstance that causes a negative emotional reaction" is what a stressor is (Spector, 1998). Coping is a method or way (cognitive or behavioural) of handling stress (Gustems-Carnicer et al., 2019; Moos & Schaefer, 1993).

Due to the pervasiveness of mobile and Internet in people's lives, the present study argues that, to cope with stressful situations, individuals are more likely to spend time on personal Internet and mobile use even during work hours. The practice of diverting an employee's attention from work-related responsibilities to social or leisure activities may help the employee to detach himself from the stressful work environment and replenish lost resources (Stoddart, 2016). Also, not every negative emotion resulting from job stress is accompanied by anger, vengeance, or revenge, since people might be meek to respond and would look for alternative ways to release the negative emotional buildup.

As a result, they are more inclined to come up with creative ways to cool down (Holtz & Harold, 2013) or withdraw from work. Employees may contemplate using cyberslacking as an avoidance strategy to cope with stress ignoring the stress stimuli or abandoning the stressful work environment (Dubinsky & Hartley, 1986). Consequently, a break from work may result in non-work activities such as Internet browsing, monitoring sports news websites, sending or receiving emails, and browsing online shopping portals. For instance, the study conducted by Koay and Soh (2018) found that job stress represented by workplace ostracism is a predictor of employee cyberloafing.

In a study conducted by Güğerçin (2020) on job-related stress and cyberslacking, the researcher identified those aspects of technology-induced stress that were predictors of cyberslacking and asserted that cyberslacking may be used to neutralise the tension and difficulties that employees experience due to the negative consequences of technology-induced stress. Yet another study by Chen et al. (2022) conducted among 730 undergraduate students identified perceived stress in their lives was a significant predictor of cyberloafing tendencies.

Due to the expected severance of major cyberslacking, people might not be willing to disclose major cyberslacking behaviours. Therefore, the scope of this study has been restricted to minor cyberslacking behaviour, in which employees report using messenger, social media websites, stock market trading, news access, and online shopping during work hours.

Therefore, it is suggested that:

H1: Job stress increases the likelihood of engaging in cyberslacking behaviour.

The Moderating Role of Mindfulness

Mindfulness is defined as "paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally" (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, p. 4). It is the state of acceptance and receptivity in which one's awareness and attention are focused in the present moment (Shapiro & Carlson, 2009). To put it in simple words, mindfulness entails being aware of what is going on within ourselves and in the world, without avoiding facts or feelings that we do not like or do not wish to be true (Ericson et al., 2014). Workers dealing with demanding workplaces manage such demands by utilising a number of resources at their disposal such as self-efficacy, emotional intelligence and self-leadership (Bermejo-Martins et al., 2021; Kotzé, 2021; Schultz et al, 2015). Mindfulness is considered as a personal resource that helps people manage the pressures by encouraging employees to concentrate on the present and now, rather than on issues and outcomes beyond their control (Grover et al., 2017). A lot of attention has been given to this concept in management research (Wan et al., 2020), but literature is scarce in exploring its role as a personal resource with respect to cyberslacking. Only a couple of studies have explored the influence of employee mindfulness while predicting employees' cyberslacking behaviour. Chen et al., (2022) using the dual systems theory investigated the role of mindfulness and mind wandering in predicting passive cyberloafing. It was found that mindfulness significantly reduced mind wandering while using technology such as smartphones. In this

line, Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara et al. (2020), however, focused their study on exploring leaders' and followers' mindfulness. They studied these variables with cyberloafing, compassion and empathic concern.

Since job stress has been conceptualised as an interplay of job demands and resources, it has been contended that personal resources have the capacity to affect results by directly altering perceptions and consequences of job demands and the deployment of resources (Grover et al., 2017). They also contend that personal resources act as moderators of job demands (Martín-Hernández et al., 2020). Mindfulness advocates suggest that mindfulness assists in more positive coping, as it enables individuals to feel more in control of the events they are experiencing by drawing them into the present moment. Thus, the effects of external environmental stimuli (in this case job stress) may not be felt by a mindful individual. Therefore, he may not seek active coping strategies to deal with job stress. Mindful individuals reject automatic information processing in favour of intentional information processing. They might undertake a thorough analysis of the existing environment and select the most appropriate actions to take. Individuals with a high trait level of mindfulness bring awareness to current experience, shift their attentional focus and have less heuristic-based thoughts (Luo et al., 2022; Panek et al., 2015). Following this line of logical reasoning, we conceive that individuals who are highly mindful can improve self-regulation of their behaviours by being more conscious and alert to the current context.

Research suggests that having a wandering mind is linked to a lower sense of happiness and well-being through assisting with the clarification of one's values and the selection of behaviours that are congruent with these values (Ericson et al., 2014). Since mindfulness contributes to the well-being of a person, it is implied that it manages stress as well. Therefore, this study proposes a tenet that a mindful person will be less likely to engage in stress-induced cyberslacking behaviour as he will be aware of his/her present state of mind and only cyberslack to a limit that does not affect the performance adversely.

So, it is hypothesised that

H2: Mindfulness is a significant negative predictor of cyberslacking among employees.

H3: Mindfulness moderates the relationship between job stress and cyberslacking behaviour such that when employees' mindfulness is higher, the relationship between job stress and cyberslacking is weaker.

Research Methodology

Materials and Methods

The current study intends to examine the above hypotheses using a sample of employees who work in various private sector organisations (banking, insurance, IT, education, real estate) in Delhi NCR. A diverse sample was used to increase the generalisation ability of the study.

For use in this study, standardised instruments that had already been validated through previous studies and pilot tested were selected. The questionnaire was divided into three parts, where part I consisted of questions related to job stress, part II consisted of mindfulness and part III included items pertaining to cyberslacking. All the three sections consisted of items to be anchored on a Likert scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Further, the instrument also consisted of a small section dedicated to the demographic profile of the respondents.

Job Stress

This construct was measured using a four-item scale adapted from House and Rizzo (1972) and previously used in several studies. A sample item includes, "I feel fidgety or nervous because of my job". The scale was summed to generate a composite job stress score. A high score on this construct reflects high perception of job stress and a low score indicates a low perception of job stress. The Cronbach alpha reliability of this construct was found to be 0.87 and was consistent with previous research studies.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness was measured using Black et al.'s (2012) MAAS (Mindful Attention Awareness Scale) which has been used as a valid measure of mindfulness in several studies. The six-item scale includes items as "It seems I am running on automatic pilot, without much awareness of what I'm doing". All the items on this scale are reverse coded, where high scores reflect greater mindfulness.

Cyberslacking

The construct of cyberslacking was adopted from PAWS (Procrastination at Work Scale) (Metin et al., 2016). A sample item on this scale was, "I do online shopping during working hours" is one such item. High scores indicated greater tendencies among employees to cyberslack. The Cronbach alpha for this construct was found to be 0.89.

Pre-testing and Pilot Testing

To ensure that the questionnaire has no ambiguity and is representative of all aspects of the constructs taken in the study (Drost, 2011), the questionnaire was sent to three experts.

Each expert belonged to a different sector, namely banking, IT and education. The experts possessed working experience of more than 15 years each. Their feedback was incorporated and minor changes in the questionnaire was made. Further, this instrument was put to pilot testing on a sample size of 50 employees (Cooper et al., 2006; Hertzog, 2008) and found sufficient reliability. Therefore, in the pilot testing the instrument was found appropriate to be used for the study.

Data Collection

The self-report-structured questionnaire was administered online to a total of 620 employees explaining to them the purpose of the study. A total of 392 completed questionnaires were received earning a response rate of 63.2% and considered for data analysis. The descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data were analysed with Pearson's correlation and path analysis using AMOS structural equation modelling. A two-step approach, as suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), was followed. First, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed to check for model fit properties, and then a path analysis was performed to check for the causal relationships as per the hypothesised model framework. To check for common method bias, all the items of the questionnaire were not separated by any labels or under different heads to avoid letting respondents know which items represent which constructs. Also, Harman's single factor test was used to reveal the amount of covariance among all the measures that a single factor can account for. Technically, this should not exceed 50%. In the present study, a single factor accounts for

only 34.2% of the covariance among measures, indicating that common method bias was not a problem.

Results

The results of confirmatory factor analysis to ascertain that each item well represents each of the constructs and assess the fit of the model resulted in the following fit indices: $\chi^2 = 324.18$; df = 156; χ^2/df = 2.07; RMSEA = 0.05; CFI = 0.95; NFI = 0.93; IFI = 0.94. The fit indices suggest that the measurement model fits the data well (Hu and Bentler 1999). Moreover, convergent validity and discriminant validity were estimated using Fornell and Larcker's approach (1981). The composite reliabilities and average variance extracted (AVE) of each of the constructs are indicated in Table 2, along with all the correlation among the constructs. The composite reliabilities well exceed 0.7 and AVE > 0.5, indicating strong evidence for convergent validity.

From Table 2, it is observed that all the constructs display more than average values indicating significant job stress and cyberslacking. The correlation between job stress and cyberslacking indicates a positive relationship between them, significant at $p < 0.01$. Similarly, the relationship between mindfulness and cyberslacking is negative as hypothesised to be significant at $p < 0.01$. Thus, the research model is evidenced by significant associations between constructs and may now be tested for path analysis.

Path Analysis

Using the structural equation modelling-based path analysis (Fig. 1), researchers tested the hypotheses. The results of the path analysis can be summarised by looking at the figure, which presents standardised path coefficients. The standardised path coefficients decide the directionality of relationship that exists between constructs and must be significant for the purpose of rejecting the null hypothesis. Thus, we found that job stress increases the likelihood of cyberslacking among employees ($\beta = 0.243$, $p < 0.01$), which means that as employees feel more stressful at work, they are more likely to cyberslack thus providing support to H1. Further, to ascertain the interactive effects of mindfulness on the relationship between job stress and cyberslacking, two more hypotheses were tested: that, first, a negative relationship between mindfulness and cyberslacking exists and this was confirmed via negative standardised coefficient ($\beta = -0.261$) significant at $p < 0.05$; second, an interaction term (job stress*mindfulness) was computed and its effects on cyberslacking behaviour among employees were ascertained. Mindfulness is a significantly negative predictor of cyberslacking such that it attenuates the positive influence

Table 1 Descriptive statistics for the sample

Characteristics	N	Percent
Gender		
Female	103	26.27
Male	289	73.72
Total	392	100
Experience		
< 3	67	17.09
03-Oct	195	49.74
> 10	130	33.16
Total	392	100
Industry		
Banking	122	31.12
Insurance	86	21.93
IT	132	33.67
Real estate	52	13.26
Total	392	100

Table 2 Correlations, AVE and composite reliabilities

Measures	No. of items	Mean	SD	AVE	1	2	3
Job stress	4	3.89	1.4	0.684	0.92		
Mindfulness	6	3.78	1.2	0.676	− 0.11	0.86	
Cyberslacking	4	4.12	0.89	0.615	**0.389***	**− 0.287***	0.94

*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed)

Parentheses represent composite reliability values for the relevant construct

Fig. 1 Path analysis of all the study constructs
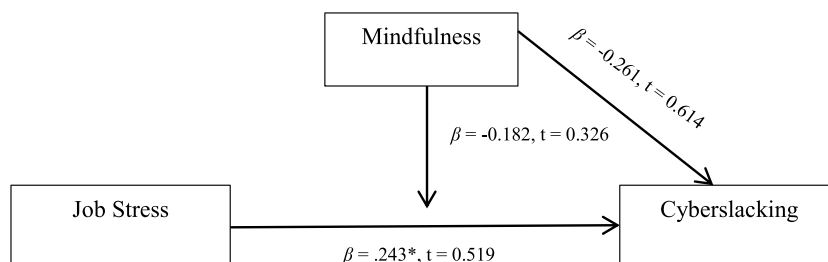
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed)

of job stress on cyberslacking, thereby moderating this relationship ($\beta = − 0.182$, $p < 0.05$). It thus may be concluded that employees who are mindful of their actions may be less likely to engage in cyberslacking despite high job stress.

Discussion

The purpose of this work was to analyse the influence of job stress and mindfulness on cyberslacking behaviour. So, the authors examined the direct relation between job stress and cyberslacking behaviour and mindfulness as a moderator for this relationship. To do the same, the current study employs the coping theory. Employees use the Internet and other media to escape the monotony and boredom of work, or to break free from rising stress levels at work, yet lost productivity due to abuse of the Internet and other media costs businesses a lot of money (Van der Heijden et al., 2012). Even though just a just a small amount of research has been done in this area, workplace stress has been identified as one of the important antecedents for rising employee cyberslacking behaviour (Koay et al., 2017; RuningSawitri, 2012; Zhu et al., 2021), which is consistent with our findings. Zhu et al., 2021 also found that job stress induces cyberslacking behaviour of employees.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to some noteworthy consequences, the first being the natural worry of infection from COVID-19 instilled in the employees (Khawaja et al., 2021) and in every other human being in the world. Second, since home became the new workplace for employees, the line between personal and workspace has become blurred and caused anxiety, burnout and other mental distress (Wong et al., 2021; Zepeda-Arce et al., 2017). Third, with

a home-based work environment, direct supervision is not prevalent. Due to these situational reasons, also cyberslacking behaviour tends to rise. The authors add to the existing literature on cyberslacking by looking at its relationships with perceived job stress and employee mindfulness. Primarily, the study found a positive relation between job stress and cyberslacking. This reflects that employees' choose cyberslacking behaviour when they face job stress. They might do it as a coping strategy, to manage stress through diverting their mind or refreshing their mood. It has been known that employees who are high in mindfulness act less unethically compared to employees who are low in mindfulness (Ruedy & Schweitzer, 2010). Following this premise, the current study hypothesised employee's mindfulness as a moderator, proposing that employees' mindfulness will dampen the relationship between job stress and cyberslacking. The same was confirmed to hold true in the empirical investigation.

Theoretical Implications

The study contributes to the literature on cyberslacking behaviour by examining its relationships with two key employee-based factors: job stress and employee's mindfulness. Further, most of the previous studies had taken cyberslacking as a counterproductive work behaviour; however, the current study provided a new outlook to the variable by studying it as a stress-coping intervention.

As per the literature survey and to the best of the authors' knowledge, this study is first to explore the moderating role of employees' mindfulness as a personal resource with work-related stress as a predictor of employees' cyberslacking behaviour. The findings not only add to the empirical evidence on

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cyberslacking behaviour of employees, but also to the literature of mindfulness in organisations.

Further, the study validates the usefulness of stress-coping theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) in understanding interpersonal behaviour. According to the coping theory, when confronted with a stressful environmental input, a person assesses the threat provided by the stimuli as well as the resources available to help him cope with it. The study utilised the coping theory to understand how cyberslacking can act as a resource to manage the stressful situation arising out of work. This would add to the theoretical development by coping theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) with cyberslacking and how it is related to job stress.

Practical Implications

The study also has significant managerial implications. First, we remind managers about the positive side of minor cyberslacking. In other words, it acts as a resource for employees to manage their stress. The study provides insights for managers to understand how small breaks in the form of cyberslacking temporarily remove employees from stressful situations. Using social media, reading online news or doing online shopping help employees to relax and return to work with a fresh and calm mind. Additionally, managers can use this study as a basis of cyberslacking guidelines.

The study also indicates implementing practices to enhance mindfulness amongst employees which will enable self-regulating behaviours. This will foster self-awareness among them for their actions and make wiser choices at workplace. It may even help them realise the amount of time they should devote to non-work activities, but maintaining their productivity. Mindfulness enables employees to not waste their time and prevent them from major cyberslacking. Overall, the research findings can be utilised by managers and practitioners in formulating well-being policies for employees in future. This will further assist in determining the acceptable level of cyberslacking which does not hamper employees' performance and organisational goals.

Limitation and Future Research Directions

The current study is limited to three variables only—job stress, cyberslacking and mindfulness. Future studies can elaborate on the current study by including employees' productivity along with other mediators. This will provide new findings on the association of cyberslacking on productivity in the presence of job stress and mindfulness.

This work has been developed around cyberslacking as an outcome of stress. However, it would also be interesting to know the influence of cyberslacking on individual employees' stress. This will allow the practitioners to

understand the optimal usage of IT for non-work-related activities. Future work is encouraged on the influence of cyberslacking on engagement and involvement, as this will enhance the understanding of cyberslacking behaviour. Cyberslacking should also be studied as moderator in future studies. Future researchers may also investigate the relationship between employees' mood, stress and cyberslacking behaviour, as this will reflect more on the positive or/and adverse side of cyberslacking behaviour.

This work has been developed around cyberslacking as an outcome of stress. However, it would also be interesting to know the influence of cyberslacking on individual employees' stress. This will allow the practitioners to establish equilibrium in the usage of IT for non-work-related activities. Future work is encouraged on influence of cyberslacking on engagement and involvement as this will enhance the understanding of cyberslacking behaviour. Cyberslacking may also be studied as moderator in future studies to understand its relationship with other constructs. Future researchers may also investigate the relationship between stress and cyberslacking behaviour in the presence of personal resources and traits such as employee's moods, their affective states, self-control and big five personality traits, as this will reflect more on the positive and/or adverse side of cyberslacking behaviour.

Key questions reflecting applicability in real life

1. Why must an organisation consider and address cyberslacking as an outcome of increased stress at work and amplified technology use at workplace?
2. What can be the linkages between job stress and cyberslacking tendencies among employees at workplace?
3. How can cyberslacking be viewed as a positive mechanism assisting employees in coping with stress at workplace instead of being deemed as a counterproductive work behaviour?
4. How can employee's personal resources such as mindfulness alter the association between stress-induced cyberslacking behaviours among employees?
5. What kind of interventions and trainings by organisations help in reduced cyberslacking behaviours?

Author Contributions Study of cyberslacking as a positive behavioural outcome was conceived by Mishra and its association with a construct—job stress—was ideated by Tageja. Both the authors conceived the research concept based on rigorous literature review and participated in model development. The questionnaire was developed and designed by Mishra along with initial pilot testing. Data analysis which includes descriptive statistics and path analysis (using AMOS SEM) was performed by Tageja. Limitations, practical implications and future research questions were contributed equally by both the authors. Both the authors read and approved the final manuscript and participated in the critical appraisal as well as revision of the manuscript.

Availability of Data and Materials The data collected and analysed during the current study are available with the corresponding author and can be made available on reasonable request.

Code Availability D23.

Declarations

Conflict of Interest The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Ethics Statement This material is the authors' own original work, which has not been previously published elsewhere.

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