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## Gender Differences and Types of Cyberloafing Activities in Probation Service of Albania

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**ABSTRACT:** *Cyberloafing refers to employees using their work time for non-work-related internet activities such as checking social media, personal email, and web browsing. This paper is about gender differences and types of the cyberloafing activities. The general purpose of this study is to measure gender differences related to these types of cyberloafing activities. It is also important to measure demographic factors such as age, education, marital status and work experience related to the types of cyberloafing activities. The methodology used for this study was a questionnaire made by Coker in 2011, with a set of 20 statements which better reflects their relative frequency of cyberloafing activity. The sample selected in this study were the employees of the Probation Service in Albania. The study discovered no significant relationship between gender differences and cyberloafing behaviors, but it points out that female employees prefer to shop online and male employees pursue online news sources. International research supports the notion that there is no significant relationship between various forms of cyberloafing activities and demographic variables such as age, education, marital status, and work experience.*

**Keywords:** cyberloafing, gender differences, demographic factors, online new site, online shopping.

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### INTRODUCTION

Cyberloafing refers to employees using the Internet during work hours for personal activities unrelated to their duties, such as social media or online shopping. Various studies examine cyberloafing from perspectives such as: behavioral, focusing on frequency and duration; psychological, exploring motives such as boredom or addiction; organizational, studying productivity and moral impact; technological, looking at internet monitoring tools; and

legal/ethical, taking into account privacy rights. Cyberloafing affects productivity and employee engagement, prompting institutions and organizations to develop strategies to address it. Overall, cyberloafing is a global workplace issue shaped by individual behavior and company policies, with research helping organizations manage and minimize its effects on productivity and engagement. (Lim & Chen, 2012). Therefore, this study aims to compare gender differences in cyberloafing among employees in Probation Service of Albania, as well as investigate the relationship between the two. The hypothesis of the study is that there is a significant relationship between gender differences and types of activity of cyberloafing. This study further examines other demographic variables such as: age, marital status and work experience. Gender differences include preference for activities, motivations, frequency and duration, impact on work performance, and contextual factors such as cultural norms and organizational policies. Men tend to cyberloaf more frequently than women due to different patterns of internet use or preferences for online activities. These differences are subtle and influenced by various factors, and further research is needed to understand them comprehensively. (Karali et al. 2024).

### **Differences in men and women in cyberloafing**

Research on gender differences in cyberloafing by employees for non-work activities during work hours is growing in organizational psychology. Studies show that both men and women engage in cyberloafing, with different activities. Men gravitate towards games and videos, while women prefer social networks and shopping. Men may cyberloaf for fun, while women seek work-life balance or social connections. Men may be more adept with technology and cyberloafing. Gender stereotypes and organizational culture influence how cyberloafing is viewed, influencing the consequences. Excessive cyberloafing impairs productivity, regardless of gender. Future research should address methodological biases and consider organizational factors that influence cyberloafing. Developing gender-sensitive strategies and a supportive work culture are essential. Gender differences in cyberloafing affect workplace dynamics and require further study for effective management strategies (Keser et al. 2016)

Research on female cyberloafing behavior reveals common patterns and preferences during work hours. Females often engage in social networking, online shopping, entertainment, health-related activities, communication with colleagues, and accessing educational resources. These activities serve as breaks from work tasks, help maintain social connections, manage personal tasks, provide relaxation, promote health management, facilitate collaboration, and support skill enhancement. Understanding these behaviors can assist organizations in creating policies that accommodate both productivity and employees' personal needs. (Balta and Kokkinos, 2019). Men are prone to cyberloafing behavior, influenced by factors not specific to gender. Reasons for engaging in cyberloafing include boredom, procrastination, stress relief, social interaction, curiosity, and the ease of technology access. Some individuals seek entertainment or distraction online when work is not engaging, while others procrastinate or use online activities for stress relief. Social media can provide a platform for socializing and networking during work hours. People may also explore topics of interest online during breaks. The flexibility of smartphones and computers makes it convenient to access online content at any time. The multifaceted reasons for cyberloafing can

vary based on individual preferences, job demands, workplace culture, and personal habits. Organizations address cyberloafing through clear policies, a productive work environment, and monitoring to maintain productivity. But beside their needs to cyberloaf, there may exist some negative impact in their job performance.

(Koay, et al. 2017)

- **Cognitive-Emotional Discontent Component:** This component refers to the mental and emotional dissatisfaction employees may feel towards their work, which can lead to disengagement. Factors such as boredom, stress, or a lack of interest can drive individuals to seek distraction online, reflecting their desire to escape from an unfulfilling work environment.
- **Perceptual Discontent Component:** This component involves how employees perceive their workplace and their role within it. Negative perceptions about organizational culture, job satisfaction, or management support can contribute to feelings of discontent, prompting employees to engage in cyberloafing as a means of coping or as a form of rebellion against perceived injustices or lack of support.
- **Behavioral Discontent Component:** This component encompasses the actual behaviors exhibited by employees in response to their discontent. In the context of cyberloafing, it refers to the actions taken—such as using the internet for personal activities during work hours—stemming from their cognitive and perceptual dissatisfaction. These behaviors can impact productivity and engagement negatively.

### **What are the negative impact of men and women in cyberloafing?**

According to different studies, engaging in cyberloafing during work hours can have various negative impacts for males and their organizations. This includes decreased productivity due to time spent on non-work-related activities, resulting in missed deadlines and lower efficiency. Quality of work may suffer as attention is diverted to online distractions, leading to errors and incomplete tasks. Loss of focus and concentration can hinder consistent performance. Excessive cyberloafing may affect perceptions of professionalism, team dynamics, job satisfaction, and even pose security risks. To address these issues, organizations should set clear guidelines on internet use, promote a productive work culture, and encourage responsible technology use to maximize performance and maintain a positive work environment. (Ahmad & Ommar, 2009)

Females engaging in cyberloafing at work can have various negative impacts on individuals and organizations. These include decreased productivity, lower quality of work, loss of focus and concentration, negative perceptions from colleagues, time management issues, legal and security risks, disruptions to team dynamics, and decreased job satisfaction and engagement. To address these issues, organizations should establish clear guidelines on internet use, promote productive online activities, encourage breaks that enhance well-being, and cultivate a work culture focused on efficiency and accountability. It is important to balance internet use with work responsibilities to maintain productivity and ensure a positive work environment. (Vitak et al, 2011).

### **The relationship between cyberloafing and other demographics variables, age, marital status and work experience.**

This study examines other demographic factors, in addition to gender differences, such as: age and marital status of employees. In this study, the differences in age and marital status will also be seen, related to the types of cyberloafing activities. Age differences in cyberloafing can be influenced by generational characteristics, technological familiarity, work experience, work-life balance, and organizational culture. Younger employees may prefer different types of activities, while older employees may have different perceptions of productivity and work experience. Workplace cultures can also influence age-related differences. The impact on productivity may vary by age, with younger employees perceiving short breaks for non-work internet use as necessary for focus and motivation. Understanding individual motivations and organizational contexts is important in managing workplace internet use effectively. (Spath and Vengrouskie, 2022).

Marital status differences in cyberloafing can influence time management, motivation, perception of work-life balance, workplace policies, and social support and distractions. Married individuals may have different time management constraints, prioritize efficient work hours, and have access to social support networks that can influence their online behaviors. Workplace policies regarding internet use can also influence behaviors across different marital statuses. Understanding these dynamics can help organizations tailor policies and interventions to promote productive internet use among employees regardless of their marital status. Further research is needed to explore nuances in more depth. Employees at different experience levels engage in cyberloafing for various reasons influenced by their circumstances and job environments. Entry-level employees may use online activities to cope with stress or seek advice. Mid-level employees may break up routine tasks or network professionally. Senior employees may engage in non-work-related activities or share knowledge. Employers can implement policies to manage cyberloafing based on factors like job demands and workplace culture while also providing legitimate breaks and professional development opportunities. (Ozler and Polat, 2012)

- **Cognitive Component:** This component pertains to the thoughts and perceptions that individuals have regarding their work and cyberloafing behavior. It includes aspects like how employees perceive their productivity, the value of internet use during work hours, and the impact of cyberloafing on their professional image. For instance, the text notes that excessive cyberloafing can lead to negative perceptions of professionalism and team dynamics, reflecting how employees cognitively process their actions and their consequences.
- **Behavioral Component:** This component focuses on the actual actions taken by employees in relation to cyberloafing. It includes the behaviors associated with engaging in non-work-related activities online during work hours. The text discusses decreased productivity, lower quality of work, and time management issues as direct outcomes of these behaviors. Organizations are encouraged to set clear guidelines on internet use to mitigate these behavioral impacts.
- **Affective Component:** This component involves the emotional responses and feelings associated with cyberloafing. It encompasses job satisfaction, engagement, and the emotional effects of losing focus and concentration. The text highlights that both men and women may

experience decreased job satisfaction and engagement due to cyberloafing, illustrating how feelings about work and internet use can influence overall workplace morale.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Design**

This study explores gender differences in cyberloafing activities among employees in the Probation Service of Albania. Utilizing a quantitative and cross-sectional approach, data was collected at a single point in time, aiming to descriptively and correlationally analyze how various factors influence the online behaviors of male and female employees. The findings seek to enhance understanding of these differences and their implications for workplace productivity and engagement.

### **Variables**

The variables of this research are as follow:

**Cyberloafing** refers to the practice of employees using the internet for personal activities during work hours, often leading to decreased productivity and focus. This behavior can manifest in various forms, such as browsing social media, reading online news sites and online shopping it poses challenges for organizations aiming to maintain an efficient work environment.

**Gender Differences** in cyberloafing highlight how male and female employees may engage in different online activities and for varying reasons. Research indicates that men may gravitate toward reading online news sites, while women often prefer online shopping.

### **Sample**

The sample comprised 78 employees from the Probation Service in Albania. Data were collected using the Google Forms platform, with the questionnaire distributed via official work emails to 111 employees of the Probation Service. The study employed Coker's (2011) instrument, which includes 20 types of cyberloafing activities, to examine gender differences in these behaviors. Participants rated the frequency of their cyberloafing activities on a scale from 1 (Never) to 7 (Often). The reliability of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ), yielding a high reliability score ( $\alpha = .731$ ). For each item, the mean and standard deviation were calculated. Additionally, correlation analyses were performed to investigate the statistical relationships between activity types and variables such as age, gender, marital status, work experience, and education.

**To participate in this study, participants had to meet certain inclusion and exclusion criteria.**

#### **Inclusion Criteria**

- To be an employee of Probation Service in Albania
- To be an Albanian citizen
- To be between 25 – 55 years old
- Acceptance of informed consent

### **Exclusion Criteria**

- To be influencer for any online product / company

### **Sample Type**

The sample for this study consisted of employees from the Probation Service in Albania. A total of 111 employees were invited to participate through their official work email, and 78 completed the questionnaire, resulting in a 70.3% response rate.

### **Instruments**

The instrument used in this study was adapted from Coker (2011), comprising 20 types of cyberloafing activities.

#### **Cyberloafing Inventory:**

Participants were asked to indicate how frequently they engaged in the following activities during work hours using a scale from 1 (Never) to 7 (Often):

1. Browsing non-work-related websites
2. Checking personal email accounts
3. Online shopping
4. Using social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)
5. Watching non-work-related videos (e.g., YouTube)
6. Playing online games
7. Reading news or articles unrelated to work
8. Engaging in personal messaging (e.g., WhatsApp, Messenger)
9. Using work time to manage personal finances online
10. Streaming music or podcasts
11. Participating in online forums or discussion boards
12. Researching travel or vacation plans
13. Browsing job search websites
14. Uploading or downloading personal files (e.g., photos, documents)
15. Engaging in online surveys or quizzes
16. Visiting entertainment websites
17. Browsing health-related websites
18. Reading or posting on blogs
19. Participating in online contests or giveaways
20. Checking personal cloud storage (e.g., Google Drive, Dropbox)

Participants' responses were used to assess the overall prevalence of cyberloafing and analyze gender differences in these activities.

### **Hypothesis**

H<sub>0</sub>= There is a significant relationship between gender differences and types of activity of cyberloafing.

H<sub>1</sub>= Men engage in cyberloafing more frequently than women, due to differences in internet use patterns and preferences for online activities.

**Ethical Issues:**

The study adhered to ethical guidelines by ensuring that participants were fully informed about the research objectives and procedures. Steps were taken to protect participants' rights throughout the study.

**Approval and Consent of Participants:**

Participants provided informed consent before participating, with all necessary details about the study made available to them. Their participation was voluntary, and they had the right to withdraw at any time without consequences.

**Maintaining the confidentiality and anonymity of participants:**

The confidentiality and anonymity of participants were strictly maintained. No personal identifying information was collected or disclosed, and data were stored securely to prevent unauthorized access.

**RESULTS**

Presented below are the key data, results, and findings from this research, which address the various objectives outlined earlier.

Table 1. Differences in the subscales of reading online news sites and shopping, with a gender-based preference, are noted.

		Variable	N	Mean	S.D	t	p
Gender	Male	reading online news sites	35	3.54	6.254	.954	.046*
	Female	shopping	43	4.13	7.261	.549	.039*

A comparison of cyberloafing activities between genders was conducted with a sample of 78 participants, consisting of 35 males and 43 females. The arithmetic mean for males was M = 3.54 with a standard deviation of 6.254, while for females it was M = 4.13 with a standard deviation of 7.261. The overall gender difference in mean scores for cyberloafing was not significant (p = 0.634). However, significant differences were found in specific activities: males showed a notable difference in reading online news sites (p = 0.046), while females exhibited a significant preference for shopping (p = 0.039).

**T - test**

	Levene's test for equal variances		T- test for equal averages							
	F	Sig.	T	gl	Sig. (2-way)	The difference of the average	Standard error difference	95% Confidence Interval		
								The lowest	The highest	
<b>Online news sites</b>	Assumed equal variances	.083	.0879	-.190	26	.046	-1.121	5.908	-13.994	11.752
	Assumed unequal variances			-.157	2.628	.886	-1.121	7.119	-25.701	23.459
<b>shopping</b>	Assumed equal variances	.083	.0651	-.190	26	.039	-1.121	5.908	-13.994	11.752
	Assumed unequal variances			-.157	2.628	.886	-1.121	7.119	-25.701	23.459

The study by Balta et al. (2016) examines gender differences in cyberloafing behavior, showing that certain personality traits influence these tendencies differently between men and women. The findings suggest that men are more likely to engage in cyberloafing than women, emphasizing the importance of understanding these gender-based variations.

It was observed that there were no statistically significant differences in the types of cyberloafing activities based on participants' education level ( $p = 0.689$ ), age ( $p = 0.584$ ), marital status ( $p = 0.814$ ), or work experience ( $p = 0.514$ ).

**Correlation**

		Gender Differences	Age	Cyberloafing	Marital Status	Education	Work Experience
Gender Differences	Correlation Pearson	1	.238	.745	.507	.597	.543
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000**	.634	.019	.004	.011
	N	78	78	78	78	78	78
Age	Correlation Pearson	.238	1	.605**	.415	.126	.706**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.300		.689	.055	.576	.000



	N	78	78	78	78	78	78
Cyberloafing	Correlation	.656**	.605**	1	.604**	.473*	.747**
	Pearson						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.116	.358		.251	.121	.0758
	N	78	78	78	78	78	78
Marital Status	Correlation	.507*	.415	.879**	1	.482*	.752**
	Pearson						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.354	.122	.814		.235	.133
	N	78	78	78	78	78	78
Education	Correlation	.597**	.126	.473*	.482*	1	.570**
	Pearson						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.576	.689	.023		.006
	N	78	78	78	78	78	78
Work Experience	Correlation	.543*	.706**	.747**	.752**	.570**	1
	Pearson						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.255	.299	.514	.592	.483	
	N	78	78	78	78	78	78

\*\* . The correlation is significant at the level 0.01 (2-tailed).

\* . The correlation is significant at the level 0.05 (2-tailed).

### Analysis of Correlation:

It is important to note that, particularly in the Tirana Territorial Probation Service Branch, which has the highest number of employees compared to other branches and is situated near the Institute for the Execution of Criminal Decisions "Jordan Misja", the process of cyberloafing is hindered by radio wave interference. This may be one reason why no statistically significant relationships were identified between the types of cyberloafing activities and other variables such as age, education, marital status, and work experience.

- **Hypothesis<sub>0</sub>:** Radio wave interference in the Tirana Territorial Probation Service Branch reduces the frequency of cyberloafing compared to other branches.
- **Hypothesis<sub>1</sub>:** Radio wave interference may explain the lack of significant relationships between cyberloafing activities and variables such as age, education, marital status, and work experience.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this research encompass both demographic data and participants' attitudes toward cyberloafing activities. The study draws conclusions regarding the relationship between cyberloafing behaviors and variables such as age, gender, marital status, work experience, and education. The sample consisted of 78 employees from the Probation Service, including 43 women and 35 men, representing all Territorial Branches of the institution.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study aimed to assess gender differences in various types of cyberloafing activities. The initial hypotheses we proposed were not supported, indicating that there is no statistically significant relationship between gender and the types of cyberloafing activities. However, the results showed that males tend to favor reading online news sites, while females are more inclined towards shopping activities. These findings align with those of international studies, although there are some differences.

The analysis also revealed no statistically significant relationship between demographic variables - such as age, education, marital status, and work experience - and the various types of cyberloafing activities. This finding is consistent with results from international studies.

## LIMITATIONS

This sample was collected solely from an institution under the Ministry of Justice. A broader approach would have enhanced the effectiveness and clarity of the results, but the instrument was administered only in institutions where access was feasible. Another limitation is the scarcity of research on gender differences and types of cyberloafing activities in Albania. The study primarily relied on foreign literature, as local studies were not available. This lack of Albanian research made it difficult to draw comparisons with studies conducted in our context, neglecting the cultural factors involved. Additionally, it's important to note that the questionnaire was distributed via the Google Forms platform, which not all employees could access to participate in the study.

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