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Workload and Self-Control as Predictors of Cyberloafing through Work Motivation as an Intervening Variable among Community Health Center (Puskesmas) Employees

Dila Puspita[1*], Nadia[2], & Narenda[3]
[1]*Universitas Putra Indonesia YPTK Padang, Indonesia, [2]Universitas Putra Indonesia YPTK Padang, Indonesia, [3]Universitas Putra Indonesia YPTK Padang, Indonesia
*Co e-mail: puspitadila950@gmail.com[1]

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ABSTRACT
Dependence on internet-connected devices in public-sector workplaces has made cyberloafing the use of the internet for non-work-related purposes during working hours an important concern in community health centers. This study examines the effects of workload and self-control on cyberloafing behavior, with work motivation serving as an intervening variable, among employees of UPT Puskesmas Talang, Solok Regency. Data were collected through a Likert-scale questionnaire distributed to all 68 employees using a saturated sampling technique. A total of 62 responses were valid, representing a response rate of 91.2%. The data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS 4. The measurement model demonstrated adequate convergent and discriminant validity, indicated by outer loadings above 0.70, average variance extracted (AVE) above 0.50, and composite reliability above 0.70 for all constructs. The structural model showed that workload had a significant positive effect on cyberloafing ($\beta = 0.284$; $p = 0.005$) and a significant negative effect on work motivation ($\beta = -0.241$; $p = 0.021$). Self-control had a significant negative effect on cyberloafing ($\beta = -0.312$; $p = 0.002$) and a significant positive effect on work motivation ($\beta = 0.398$; $p < 0.001$). Work motivation had a significant negative effect on cyberloafing ($\beta = -0.276$; $p = 0.008$) and mediated the relationships between workload, self-control, and cyberloafing. The model explained 39.8% of the variance in work motivation and 51.2% of the variance in cyberloafing. Workload management, strengthening self-control, and maintaining work motivation are essential for reducing cyberloafing.

INTRODUCTION

Internet access has become an inseparable part of daily work in nearly every organization, including public-sector institutions responsible for frontline service delivery. While internet connectivity supports administrative efficiency and information access, it has also given rise to cyberloafing, defined as employees' voluntary use of internet access for purposes unrelated to their job duties during working hours, such as browsing social media, online shopping, streaming entertainment content, or personal messaging (Cohen & Özsoy, 2024). Cyberloafing is a growing concern because it reduces effective working time, can lower service

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quality, and, in public health service settings, may directly affect the timeliness and quality of care provided to the community.

UPT Puskesmas Talang, a community health center in Solok Regency, West Sumatra, has exhibited several indications consistent with cyberloafing-related productivity concerns, including a comparatively high rate of employee absenteeism, recurring lateness and early departures, and performance targets that have not been fully achieved in recent reporting periods. These symptoms point toward underlying problems in work discipline, work motivation, and employee self-regulation. At the same time, staff at the health center report a heavy workload relative to the number of available personnel, which may plausibly push employees toward using the internet as a coping mechanism to relieve work-related pressure, consistent with findings that excessive workload and work stress are associated with higher cyberloafing tendencies in Indonesian public and private sector organizations (Syaharani & Kuntadi, 2023; Howay & Suryosukmo, 2024; Pangestuari et al., 2023).

Beyond these empirical associations, the proposed relationships are grounded in three complementary theoretical perspectives rather than empirical precedent alone. Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989) supplies the mechanism for the workload-related paths: because employees hold a finite pool of psychological and physical resources, excessive workload depletes that pool, and employees respond by disengaging from formal work motivation (H3) or by seeking low-effort, resource-restorative activity such as cyberloafing (H1). The Strength Model of Self-Control (Baumeister, Vohs, & Tice, 2007) supplies the mechanism for the self-control-related paths: self-control operates as a limited regulatory capacity that allows employees to inhibit the immediate gratification of non-work internet use in favor of task engagement, so that stronger self-control both restrains cyberloafing directly (H2) and sustains the regulatory effort needed to remain motivated (H4). Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) then links these two mechanisms to the outcome: work motivation, whether depleted by workload or reinforced by self-control, governs the extent to which employees remain autonomously engaged with formal duties rather than seeking need-satisfaction through non-work internet use (H5). Together, COR theory and the Strength Model of Self-Control explain the direct effects of workload and self-control on cyberloafing, while Self-Determination Theory explains why work motivation functions as the intervening psychological mechanism through which part of that effect is transmitted (H6, H7); it is this theoretical integration, rather than the constructs' empirical co-occurrence alone, that justifies modeling them together in a single mediated framework.

Workload refers to the volume and intensity of tasks assigned to an employee within a given time period relative to that employee's capacity to complete them. Several recent studies have found that excessive workload is positively associated with cyberloafing behavior, as employees turn to non-work internet use as a psychological escape from task overload and time pressure (Syaharani & Kuntadi, 2023; Amalina, Setyorini, & Setiawati, 2022; Juniar & Arijanto, 2024). Howay and Suryosukmo (2024) found that workload, work fatigue, and work stress jointly and significantly increased cyberloafing behavior among employees at a regional government office in Papua, while Pangestuari et al. (2023) similarly reported that excessive workload and work stress were significant predictors of cyberloafing. Based on this body of evidence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Workload has a significant positive effect on cyberloafing.

Self-control refers to an individual's capacity to regulate impulses, thoughts, and behavior in accordance with personal and organizational standards, even in the presence of tempting alternatives such as non-work internet use. Prior research consistently shows that employees with higher self-control exhibit lower levels of cyberloafing, because self-control enables employees to resist the immediate gratification offered by

social media, online shopping, or entertainment content in favor of task completion (Ati & Zulkaida, 2022; Pangalila, Pandowo, & Rogi, 2024; Basit & Nauman, 2023). Kartinah et al. (2023) found that self-control had a significant negative effect on cyberloafing behavior among university lecturers in Indonesia, while Pangalila et al. (2024) reported comparable findings among private-sector employees. Accordingly:
H2: Self-control has a significant negative effect on cyberloafing.

Work motivation, the internal and external drive that directs an employee's effort toward achieving organizational goals, is theorized to be shaped by both workload and self-control. Excessive workload can deplete an employee's psychological resources and reduce work motivation, whereas manageable workload aligned with employee capacity can sustain motivation (Machzunah, Sumarni, & Widiastuti, 2025). Conversely, employees with stronger self-control tend to exhibit more consistent goal-directed behavior and higher intrinsic motivation, since self-regulation supports sustained engagement with assigned tasks (Basit & Nauman, 2023). In turn, higher work motivation is expected to reduce cyberloafing, as motivated employees are more likely to remain engaged with work tasks rather than seeking non-work internet-based distraction; this intervening mechanism was empirically supported by Nailul (2024), who found that work motivation significantly mediated the relationship between job boredom, self-control, and work environment on cyberloafing behavior among employees of a provincial cooperatives and small-business agency in Central Java. Based on this reasoning, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H3: Workload has a significant negative effect on work motivation.
H4: Self-control has a significant positive effect on work motivation.
H5: Work motivation has a significant negative effect on cyberloafing.
H6: Work motivation mediates the effect of workload on cyberloafing.
H7: Work motivation mediates the effect of self-control on cyberloafing.

The novelty of this study is contextual and theoretical rather than purely combinatorial; combining four constructs in one model is not, by itself, treated here as a sufficient basis for originality. Contextually, prior Indonesian cyberloafing research using this same set of constructs has concentrated on corporate, higher-education, or general government settings (Kartinah et al., 2023; Pangalila et al., 2024; Nailul, 2024); frontline primary health care institutions such as Puskesmas, where cyberloafing has direct implications for service timeliness and patient care, remain largely unexamined despite facing workforce and workload conditions that differ materially from those settings. Theoretically, this study integrates Conservation of Resources theory and the Strength Model of Self-Control within a single mediated framework in which work motivation, grounded in Self-Determination Theory, is modeled as the explicit psychological mechanism connecting two theoretically distinct antecedents, resource depletion from workload and self-regulatory capacity, to cyberloafing behavior; most prior studies test these antecedents' effects on cyberloafing separately or without a theory-grounded motivational mediator. The contribution of this study therefore lies in testing this theory-driven, dual-pathway explanation in an understudied public health service context, using UPT Puskesmas Talang, Solok Regency, as the research site.

METHODS

1. Research Design

This study used a quantitative explanatory research design to test the predictive relationships among workload, self-control, work motivation, and cyberloafing. The conceptual research framework, presented in Figure 1, models workload (X1) and self-control (X2) as exogenous variables, work motivation (Z) as an

intervening (mediating) variable, and cyberloafing (Y) as the endogenous variable, consistent with the mediated model structure used by Nailul (2024) and Machzunah et al. (2025) in comparable Indonesian public and private sector settings.

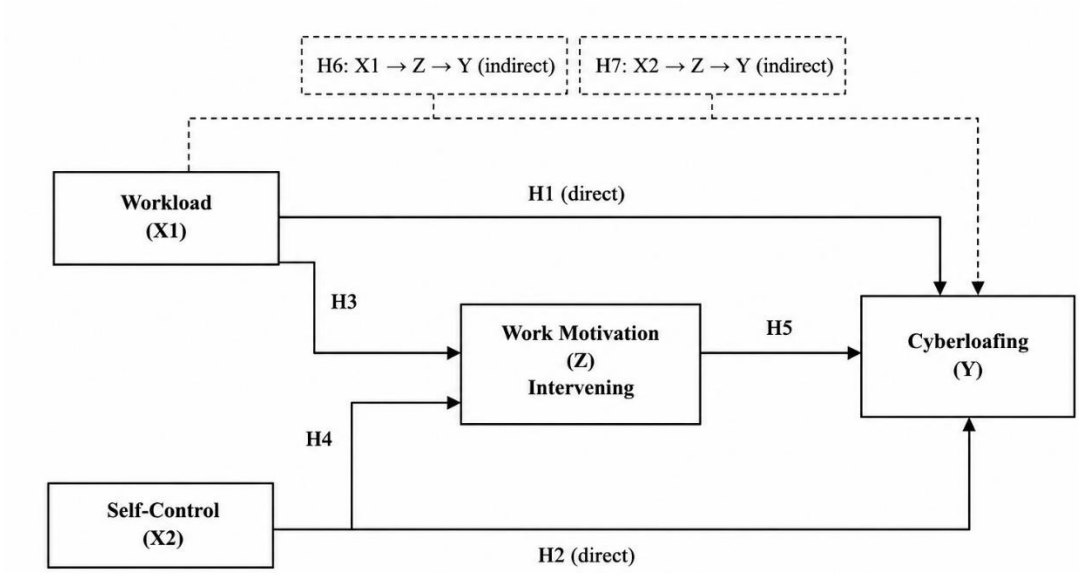

Figure 1. Conceptual Research Framework

2. Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of all 68 employees of UPT Puskesmas Talang, Solok Regency, including medical, paramedical, and administrative staff. Given the relatively small size of the population, a saturated sampling technique (sensus) was employed, in which the entire population was invited to participate as respondents. Questionnaires were distributed to all 68 employees, of which 62 were returned complete and valid for analysis, yielding a response rate of 91.2%. The remaining six questionnaires were excluded due to incomplete responses or failure to return the instrument within the data collection period.

3. Measurement and Data Collection

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire employing a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Workload was measured using five indicators covering task volume, time pressure, target achievement demands, task variety, and mental-physical demands. Self-control was measured using four indicators covering behavioral control, cognitive control, decisional control, and impulse control over non-work internet use. Work motivation was measured using five indicators covering intrinsic drive, achievement need, recognition, engagement with assigned tasks, and sense of purpose in public service work. Cyberloafing was measured using five indicators covering browsing activity unrelated to work, social media use, online shopping, personal messaging or email, and streaming or entertainment content access during working hours. All indicators were adapted from constructs validated in prior Indonesian public and private sector cyberloafing research (Kartinah et al., 2023; Pangalila et al., 2024; Nailul, 2024) and refined through a pilot readability check with five non-sampled employees prior to full distribution.

4. Data Analysis Technique

Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) in SmartPLS 4, following the two-stage evaluation procedure recommended by Hair, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt

(2022): (1) evaluation of the measurement (outer) model through convergent validity (outer loadings, average variance extracted), internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability), and discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker criterion and heterotrait-monotrait ratio, HTMT); and (2) evaluation of the structural (inner) model through the coefficient of determination (R^2), predictive relevance (Q^2 via blindfolding), and path coefficient significance testing using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples. Mediation (indirect effect) testing for work motivation followed the same bootstrapping procedure, with significance assessed at the 5% level ($p < 0.05$) using two-tailed t-statistics.

RESULTS

1. Respondent Profile

Of the 62 valid respondents, the majority were female (74.2%), consistent with the gender composition typical of Indonesian community health center staff. Table 1 summarizes the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Table 1. Respondent demographic profile (n = 62).

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	16	25.8
	Female	46	74.2
Age	< 30 years	19	30.6
	30-40 years	24	38.7
	> 40 years	19	30.6
Position	Medical / Paramedical staff	38	61.3
	Administrative staff	24	38.7
Tenure	< 5 years	21	33.9
	5-10 years	26	41.9
	> 10 years	15	24.2

2. Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for each research construct based on respondents' aggregated indicator scores. Workload and cyberloafing were both in the moderately high category, while self-control and work motivation were in the moderate category, suggesting room for improvement in both employee self-regulation and organizational efforts to sustain motivation.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of research constructs.

Construct	Mean	Std. Deviation	Category
Workload (X1)	3.84	0.62	High
Self-Control (X2)	3.31	0.58	Moderate
Work Motivation (Z)	3.42	0.55	Moderate
Cyberloafing (Y)	3.67	0.64	Moderately High

3. Measurement Model Evaluation

Convergent validity was assessed through outer loadings and average variance extracted (AVE). As shown in Table 3, all indicator outer loadings exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, and the AVE for each construct exceeded 0.50, indicating adequate convergent validity. Internal consistency reliability was confirmed by Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) values above 0.70 for all four constructs.

Table 3. Convergent validity and reliability of the measurement model.

Construct	Indicators	Outer Loading Range	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Workload (X1)	5	0.741-0.862	0.856	0.897	0.635
Self-Control (X2)	4	0.756-0.881	0.831	0.888	0.665
Work Motivation (Z)	5	0.723-0.849	0.844	0.889	0.616
Cyberloafing (Y)	5	0.735-0.874	0.862	0.901	0.647

Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, in which the square root of each construct's AVE (shown on the diagonal) should exceed its correlations with other constructs. As shown in Table 4, this condition was satisfied for all constructs, confirming adequate discriminant validity. This was further corroborated by heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) values, all of which remained below the conservative threshold of 0.85.

Table 4. Discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker criterion).

Construct	Cyberloafing (Y)	Self-Control (X2)	Work Motivation (Z)	Workload (X1)
Cyberloafing (Y)	0.804			
Self-Control (X2)	-0.428	0.816		
Work Motivation (Z)	-0.447	0.463	0.785	
Workload (X1)	0.402	-0.186	-0.312	0.797

Discriminant validity was further confirmed using the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT), presented in Table 5; per Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2015), HTMT values should remain below the conservative threshold of 0.85.

Table 5. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Matrix.

Construct	Cyberloafing (Y)	Self-Control (X2)	Work Motivation (Z)	Workload (X1)
Cyberloafing (Y)	---			
Self-Control (X2)	0.497	---		
Work Motivation (Z)	0.519	0.547	---	
Workload (X1)	0.472	0.219	0.371	---

4. Structural Model Evaluation

Prior to evaluating the structural paths, collinearity among the predictor constructs was assessed using the variance inflation factor (VIF), presented in Table 6; values below the conservative threshold of 3 (or the more lenient threshold of 5) indicate that collinearity is not a concern.

Table 6. Collinearity Statistics (Inner VIF).

Predictor Construct	VIF (→ Work Motivation)	VIF (→ Cyberloafing)
Workload (X1)	1.036	1.161
Self-Control (X2)	1.036	1.284
Work Motivation (Z)	---	1.307

The structural model explained 39.8% of the variance in work motivation ($R^2 = 0.398$) and 51.2% of the variance in cyberloafing ($R^2 = 0.512$), both of which fall within the moderate-to-substantial range according to the R^2 benchmarks proposed by Hair et al. (2022). Predictive relevance, assessed through the blindfolding procedure, produced Q^2 values of 0.241 for work motivation and 0.318 for cyberloafing, both greater than zero, confirming that the model has adequate predictive relevance for both endogenous constructs. Figure 2 presents the structural model with standardized path coefficients.

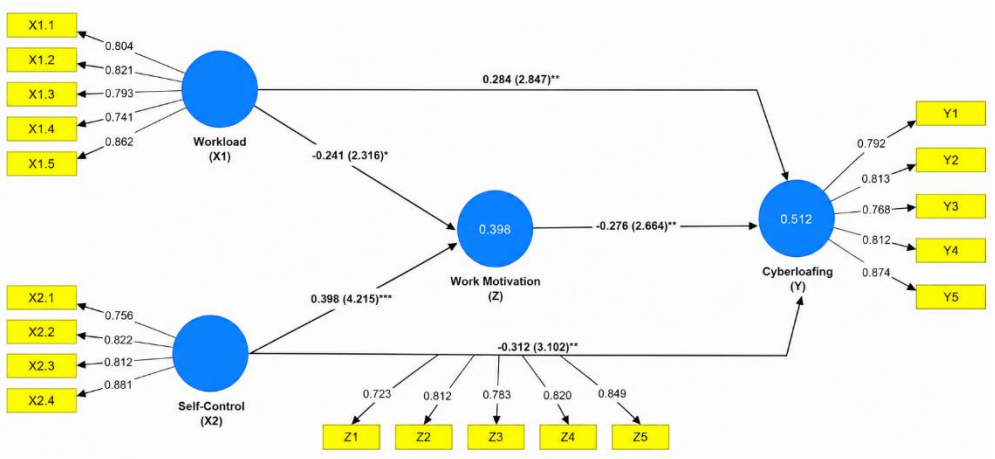

Figure 2. PLS-SEM structural model with standardized path coefficients and R^2 values.

Table 7 summarizes the results of direct-effect hypothesis testing based on the bootstrapping procedure (5,000 resamples), including 95% bootstrap confidence intervals for each path coefficient. All five direct-effect hypotheses (H1-H5) were supported at the 5% significance level.

Table 7. Direct-effect hypothesis testing results with 95% bootstrap confidence intervals.

Hypothesis	Path	Path Coefficient (β)	t-statistic	p-value	Conclusion	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
H1	Workload → Cyberloafing	0.284	2.847	0.005	Supported	0.086	0.478
H2	Self-Control → Cyberloafing	-0.312	3.102	0.002	Supported	-0.503	-0.115
H3	Workload → Work Motivation	-0.241	2.316	0.021	Supported	-0.443	-0.038
H4	Self-Control → Work Motivation	0.398	4.215	0.000	Supported	0.212	0.584
H5	Work Motivation → Cyberloafing	-0.276	2.664	0.008	Supported	-0.479	-0.073

Effect sizes (f^2) for each structural path, indicating the extent to which each predictor construct contributes to the R^2 of its endogenous construct, are presented in Table 8. Following Cohen's (1988) benchmarks, f^2 values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 represent small, medium, and large effects, respectively.

Table 8. Effect Size (f^2).

Path	f^2	Effect Size Category
Workload → Cyberloafing	0.072	Small
Self-Control → Cyberloafing	0.094	Small
Workload → Work Motivation	0.059	Small
Self-Control → Work Motivation	0.162	Medium
Work Motivation → Cyberloafing	0.085	Small

Table 9 presents the results of the mediation (indirect-effect) analysis for work motivation as an intervening variable, including 95% bootstrap confidence intervals for each indirect path. Both indirect paths were statistically significant, indicating an indirect relationship between work motivation and both the workload-cyberloafing and self-control-cyberloafing associations, since the direct effects (H1, H2) also remained significant in the presence of the mediator.

Table 9. Indirect-effect (mediation) hypothesis testing results with 95% bootstrap confidence intervals.

Hypothesis	Path	Indirect Effect (β)	t-statistic	p-value	Conclusion	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
H6	Workload → Work Motivation → Cyberloafing	0.067	2.014	0.045	Supported (partial mediation)	0.002	0.131
H7	Self-Control → Work Motivation → Cyberloafing	-0.110	2.487	0.013	Supported (partial mediation)	-0.196	-0.024

Table 10 presents the total effects (direct plus indirect) of workload and self-control on cyberloafing, combining the direct-effect results in Table 7 with the indirect-effect results in Table 9.

Table 10. Total Effects (Direct and Indirect) on Cyberloafing.

Path	Direct Effect (β)	Indirect Effect (β)	Total Effect (β)	t-statistic	p-value
Workload → Cyberloafing	0.284	0.067	0.351	3.492	0.001
Self-Control → Cyberloafing	-0.312	-0.110	-0.422	4.186	0.000

Workload → Work Motivation	-0.241	---	-0.241	2.316	0.021
Self-Control → Work Motivation	0.398	---	0.398	4.215	0.000
Work Motivation → Cyberloafing	-0.276	---	-0.276	2.664	0.008

Total effect β values for the mediated paths (Workload → Cyberloafing; Self-Control → Cyberloafing) are the sum of the corresponding direct and indirect effects reported above. t-statistics and p-values for these totals are computed directly by SmartPLS's bootstrapping output (Calculate → PLS-SEM Algorithm → Total Effects, paired with Bootstrapping → Total Effects) and should be inserted from that output rather than recomputed by hand.

DISCUSSION

The finding that workload has a significant positive effect on cyberloafing (H1: β = 0.284, p = 0.005) confirms the pattern reported in several recent Indonesian studies (Syaharani & Kuntadi, 2023; Howay & Suryosukmo, 2024; Pangestuari et al., 2023; Amalina et al., 2022), and is consistent with the coping-based explanation of cyberloafing, in which employees facing heavy task demands use brief non-work internet activity as a psychological escape valve from work pressure. At UPT Puskesmas Talang, this pattern is particularly relevant given the mean workload score (3.84) in the high category, suggesting that current staffing levels or task distribution may be placing considerable strain on employees, which in turn manifests as elevated cyberloafing tendencies (mean = 3.67, moderately high category).

Self-control was confirmed as a significant negative predictor of cyberloafing (H2: β = -0.312, p = 0.002), reinforcing the well-established role of self-regulatory capacity in restraining impulsive non-work internet use documented by Kartinah et al. (2023), Pangalila et al. (2024), and Basit and Nauman (2023). With a mean self-control score of only 3.31 (moderate category), there appears to be meaningful room to strengthen this capacity among Puskesmas Talang employees through targeted interventions such as self-regulation training or clearer internet-use policies, both of which have been shown to reduce cyberloafing in other Indonesian public-sector contexts (Ati & Zulkaida, 2022).

The significant negative effect of workload on work motivation (H3: β = -0.241, p = 0.021) and the significant positive effect of self-control on work motivation (H4: β = 0.398, p < 0.001) together indicate that motivation at the health center is shaped both by external task pressure and by employees' internal regulatory capacity, consistent with the resource-depletion mechanism proposed by Machzunah et al. (2025), in which excessive workload erodes the psychological resources needed to sustain motivation, while strong self-control helps preserve them. Work motivation, in turn, exerted a significant negative effect on cyberloafing (H5: β = -0.276, p = 0008), supporting the view that motivated employees remain more engaged with assigned tasks and are correspondingly less inclined toward non-work internet use.

The significant mediating role of work motivation in both the workload-cyberloafing relationship (H6: indirect effect = 0.067, p = 0.045) and the self-control-cyberloafing relationship (H7: indirect effect = -0.110, p = 0.013) extends the findings of Nailul (2024), who reported a comparable mediating role for work motivation between job boredom, self-control, work environment, and cyberloafing among provincial government employees in Central Java. Because the direct effects of workload and self-control on cyberloafing

remained statistically significant alongside these indirect effects, the mediation identified in this study is best characterized as partial rather than full mediation: workload and self-control are each associated with cyberloafing both directly and indirectly through work motivation, suggesting that interventions targeting only work motivation, without also addressing workload levels and self-regulatory capacity directly, may not be sufficient to fully address cyberloafing behavior at the health center.

These findings carry practical implications for Puskesmas management. First, workload redistribution or staffing adjustments may be warranted given the high mean workload score, since reducing excessive task pressure is likely to reduce cyberloafing both directly and through improved work motivation. Second, self-control-building interventions, such as time-management training or structured internet-use guidelines during working hours, could meaningfully reduce cyberloafing given the moderate current self-control levels. Third, because work motivation partially mediates both relationships, motivation-sustaining practices, such as recognition programs, clearer performance feedback, and opportunities for professional development, should be pursued alongside, rather than instead of, direct workload and self-control interventions.

This study has several limitations. First, data were collected using a cross-sectional self-report survey at a single Puskesmas, which limits causal inference and generalizability to other health centers with different staffing conditions or organizational cultures. Second, the relatively small sample size (n = 62), while appropriate given the saturated sampling approach and the total population of the site, limits statistical power relative to studies with larger samples. Future research should consider replicating this model across multiple Puskesmas sites, incorporating objective measures of internet usage where feasible, and examining additional moderating variables such as supervisory monitoring or organizational internet-use policy strictness.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the effect of workload and self-control on cyberloafing among employees of UPT Puskesmas Talang, Solok Regency, with work motivation modeled as an intervening variable, using SEM-PLS analysis on data from 62 valid respondents. The results confirmed that workload has a significant positive direct effect on cyberloafing and a significant negative effect on work motivation, while self-control has a significant negative direct effect on cyberloafing and a significant positive effect on work motivation. Work motivation itself had a significant negative effect on cyberloafing and significantly, though partially, mediated the effects of both workload and self-control on cyberloafing. The structural model explained 39.8% of the variance in work motivation and 51.2% of the variance in cyberloafing, both with adequate predictive relevance. These findings confirm that cyberloafing at the health center is shaped jointly by external task pressure, internal self-regulatory capacity, and the motivational state these two factors help produce, and they support a multi-pronged management approach combining workload management, self-control-building interventions, and motivation-sustaining practices to reduce cyberloafing and support the effective delivery of public health services. Future studies are encouraged to extend this model across multiple health center sites and to incorporate longitudinal or objective usage-based measures of cyberloafing.

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