Does supervisors' mindfulness keep employees from engaging in cyberloafing out of compassion at work?

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to examine whether the appearance of cyberloafing at work, that is, the use of the company's internet connection for personal purposes, may be due to a workplace that lacks mindfulness and compassion. The authors first hypothesize that supervisors' mindfulness is related to the mindfulness of their direct followers, and that both are related to employees' compassion at work. The authors also hypothesize that compassion mediates the link between supervisors' and followers' mindfulness and cyberloafing, and that empathic concern mediates the link from compassion to cyberloafing.

Design/methodology/approach – A questionnaire was distributed to followers working in groups of three with the same leader in all of the 100 banks in London (UK). Supervisors and their direct reports ($n = 100$) and 100 triads of followers ($n = 300$) participated. The authors applied structural equation modeling (SEM) for analyses.

Findings – Results showed that supervisors' and followers' mindfulness were significantly related to each other and to compassion at work, but compassion acted as a mediator only in the case of supervisors' mindfulness. Empathic concern mediated the compassion-cyberloafing link.

Research limitations/implications – The study could suffer from mono-method/source bias and specificities of banks and their work processes can raise concerns about the generalizability of the results.

Practical implications – Findings suggest that mindfulness training may facilitate compassion at work, which, in turn, will restrain the occurrence of cyberloafing at work.

Originality/value – This is the first study to analyze how and why employees refrain from harming their organizations out of compassion.

Keywords Quantitative, Mindfulness, Leaders, Cyberloafing, Compassion at work, Personal internet use

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Dutton *et al.* (2014) describe compassion (from the Latin, *com-*: together, and *-passio*: to suffer) as "an interpersonal process involving the noticing, feeling, sensemaking, and acting that alleviates the suffering of another person." Although prior research suggests that employees can perceive organizations as vulnerable enough to inspire compassion (e.g. Hutchins and Wang, 2008; Shapiro *et al.*, 2011), only employees have been studied as recipients of compassion at work. However, as Lilius *et al.* (2008) suggest, compassion experienced at work not only leads employees to reshape their understanding of their co-workers and themselves, but also of their organization as a whole.

This paper explores how and why employees may help their organizations out of compassion at work. Based on unitarism theory by Alan Fox (1966), which assumes that, within organizations, employees share similar basic values, interests and a unitary common goal with peers and supervisors, we postulate that employees help their organizations out of compassion more easily when their workplace is integrated and harmonious, where mindfulness can play a central role. Because mindful employees do not avoid, alter, or try to control work experiences (Hayes *et al.*, 2006), employees who are high in mindfulness might improve behavioral choices related to awareness of others' needs and vulnerabilities (Chatzisarantis and Hagger, 2007; Langer and Moldoveanu, 2000), thus facilitating an integrated and harmonious workplace that leads them to help their organizations out of compassion. Mindfulness is the opposite of acting automatically at work, that is, as defined by Kabat-Zinn (2005, p. 4), "paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally" (see also, Reb *et al.*, 2015). In this regard, Good *et al.* (2016, p. 114) contend that there is "emerging evidence […] that mindfulness is fundamentally connected to many aspects of workplace functioning," but it "has not been systematically integrated in the workplace to date." This study accepts this challenge and aims to empirically examine whether mindfulness could be involved in a work compassion process directed at the organization.

Although prior research has examined the interpersonal effects of leaders' mindfulness on followers, such as the increase in ethical decision making (Ruedy and Schweitzer, 2010; Shapiro *et al.*, 2012) and job and need satisfaction (Reb *et al.*, 2014), the role that leaders' mindfulness could play in followers' mindfulness and compassionate behavior has received little systematic attention. Based on unitarism theory (Fox, 1966), we contend that because leaders' mindfulness may provide an integrated and harmonious workplace that is able to activate this unitary concern for the organization, it could also facilitate greater openness in followers to socially learn mindfulness routines (Bandura, 1977). Therefore, this paper also examines whether followers' mindfulness is enhanced by the mindfulness of their direct supervisors, and whether they can both ultimately elicit employees' perceptions of compassion at work and helping behavior toward the organization.

One way employees can show acts of compassion toward their organization is by refraining from harming the organization (Dalai Lama, 2002). As Whitebrook (2002) noted, compassion implies a lack of attribution of blame and moving away from revenge toward care and forgiveness is a firm expression of compassion. In a workplace where compassion is experienced, therefore, even though staff are ready to participate in some type of action that would undermine the organization, they may eventually decide not to. Because employees are experiencing compassion at work, they may be concerned about the wellbeing of the organization and refrain from giving in to their harmful impulse. Schwartz (1968) refers to this phenomenon as "awareness of consequences," that is, becoming aware of the potential effects of one's acts on the welfare of others; and Bandura (1999) refers to it as "moral engagement," the power to refrain from behaving inhumanely. Considered as production deviance (Robinson and Bennett, 1995), cyberloafing can be one of these harmful activities at work that employees can renounce out of compassion. Cyberloafing is defined as employees' misuse of company-provided internet access for non work-related purposes during their work day (Lim, 2002; Lim and Teo, 2005). Indeed, there is considerable concern among managers that cyberloafing leads employees to waste energy and time (Lim and Teo, 2005), impair organizational goals for development, postpone tasks, and expose information systems to spyware infection (Levoie and Pychyl, 2001).

Research examining the role that mindfulness and compassion can play in the emergence of cyberloafing in the workplace is nonexistent. This study posits that the mindfulness of supervisors and/or followers may be able to directly move employees to decide not to participate in cyberloafing out of compassion. As such, if employees are mindfully engaged,

either directly or because of the mindfulness of their supervisors, they can increase their experienced compassion at work and better regulate their behavior (Langer and Moldoveanu, 2000), rejecting participation in cyberloafing. However, in order for mindfulness to lead employees to reduce their cyberloafing out of compassion, it has to previously elicit employees' experiences of working in a compassionate workplace, i.e., whether or not compassion mediates this relationship. In addition, this decision by employees to refrain from cyberloafing as a result of experiencing compassion at work cannot really be considered compassion unless employees feel empathic concern for the organization (Dutton *et al.*, 2014) because, for instance, employees may simply decrease cyberloafing because they want to keep their jobs. Therefore, to show that the cyberloafing restraint is altruistic and, hence, compassionate, empathic concern should ultimately be examined as a mediator in the link between compassion and cyberloafing.

In sum, this paper will test whether supervisors' mindfulness is related to the mindfulness of their followers (*H1*), and whether both are positively related to compassion (*H2*) and negatively to cyberloafing (*H3*). The paper will also examine whether compassion mediates the link between mindfulness and cyberloafing (*H4*), and whether empathic concern mediates the link between compassion and cyberloafing (*H5*). Before testing our hypotheses, we will first conduct a confirmatory factorial analysis (CFA) to empirically support the distinctiveness of the variables in this study. Finally, the paper discusses theoretical and practical implications.

Literature review and hypotheses

Unitarism (Fox, 1966) assumes that all organizational members have a common purpose, and that conflict is abnormal and caused by interim reasons, bad communication, and poor management. This "unitarist approach" has also been adopted toward HRM. According to Moore and Gardner (2004, p. 278), it is an approach "in which the common interests between employers and employees are assumed." Unitarism embodies a central concern of HRM and has also inspired the new service management school (Bowen and Schneider, 1995), which stresses shared, overlapping interests grounded in unitarism, and where the "satisfaction mirror" is a significant notion (Heskett *et al.*, 1997), that is, the idea that employees' experiences and sentiments will be reflected in another organizational member, or even a customer. This is perhaps what Marchington and Wilkinson (2002) meant by "neo-unitarism," where sharing the same objectives and working together harmoniously would lead to a win-win situation mainly between managers and workers.

Frost (1999) called for rethinking organizational theory and business practice to incorporate compassion at work as an important determinant of organizational life. Since then, compassion at work has been found to provide organizations with significant competitive advantages, such as adaptability and change (Madden *et al.*, 2012; Golden-Biddle and Mao, 2012), engagement and commitment (Lilius *et al.*, 2008), learning and innovation (Carmeli *et al.*, 2009; Cooperrider and Godwin, 2011), and high-quality service and brand loyalty (Brooks, 2013; McClelland, 2012). Although abundant prior literature on compassion focuses on helping behaviors such as helping with work-related tasks (Anderson and Williams, 1996), lending a hand (Flynn and Brockner, 2003) and collaborating with others (Dukerich *et al.*, 2002), empirical work supporting the impact of compassion experienced at work on classic constructs of organizational behavior is scarce. The same can be said about mindfulness at work. Exceptions include studies supporting the influence of supervisors' mindfulness and compassion at work on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Reb *et al.*, 2014) and the influence of work compassion on job performance (Chu, 2016; Moon *et al.*, 2016).

Cyberloafing is certainly a classic and widely studied organizational behavior construct which, in addition to being the most frequent way employees waste time at work

(Malachowski, 2005), is becoming rampant (Liberman *et al.*, 2011; Weatherbee, 2010). Next, we will discuss whether leaders' mindfulness may lead to the creation of a favorable atmosphere at work for a "mindfulness mirror" and vicarious compassion.

Mindfulness of supervisors and their direct followers
As discussed earlier, this study posited that a basic sense of unity in the workplace (Fox, 1966) can favor the staff's reflection of their leaders' mindfulness. Certainly, the "satisfaction mirror" effect (Heskett *et al.*, 1997) supports this belief when theorizing that work satisfaction can be the reflection of the satisfaction felt by other actors in the same context. Thus, it is likely that leaders may reflect their mindfulness onto the staff by encouraging certain processes at work such as social learning (Bandura, 1977). In this regard, previous research has found that, in self-disclosure narratives, for example, changes in leaders' language improve specific mindfulness skills in followers (Moore and Brody, 2009). Ray *et al.* (2011) also contend that leaders' mindfulness can create a mindful context by signaling what they expect, reward and support in followers (Zohar, 1980), that is, by prioritizing mindfulness over other aims (see Katz-Navon *et al.*, 2005).

Therefore:

H1. Leaders' mindfulness is positively related to followers' mindfulness.

Mindfulness of followers and leaders and compassion at work
According to Fox (1966), the more organizational members share common interests in the organization's functioning, the more they will feel socially close to others in the workplace, and we argue, hence, that they will experience more empathic concern about the need for aid in their surroundings. Because mindfulness reflects the employees' awareness of the needs and vulnerabilities of their organization, it may activate the unitary concern for the organizational goals, facilitating the emergence of compassion (Aspy and Proeve, 2017; Barbaro and Pickett, 2016). Given that mindfulness could promote behavioral self-regulation (Langer and Moldoveanu, 2000) and moral decision making (Black *et al.*, 2012; Ruedy and Schweitzer, 2010; Shapiro *et al.*, 2012), mindfulness could involve staff in a work compassion process directed at the organization as a whole. Therefore, drawing on the idea of mindfulness as a way to self-regulate behavior (Langer and Moldoveanu, 2000) and promote greater social connection at work (Brown *et al.*, 2007), we hypothesize that employees with mindfulness will experience compassion at work (Figure 1).

Therefore:

H2a. Followers' mindfulness is positively related to compassion at work.
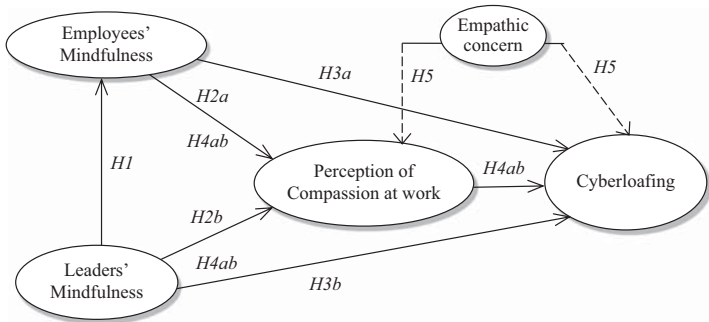

Figure 1.
Theoretical model of mindfulness of employees and leaders, perceptions of compassion at work, empathic concern, and cyberloafing

Prior work shows that emotional contagion (Tee, 2015) and witnessing another person's altruistic behavior elicit "moral elevation" – the perception of moral beauty or moral excellence (Haidt, 2006) – which also increases altruism in the witness (Schnall *et al.*, 2010). In this regard, Vianello *et al.* (2010) found that leaders' moral excellence (self-sacrifice and interpersonal justice) elicits "moral elevation" in followers, which, in turn, fully mediates leaders' effects on followers' compassion (Karakas and Sarigollu, 2013). This paper argues that because leaders' mindfulness elicits "moral elevation," it may be related to employees' perceptions of compassion at work. Likewise, because a link has been suggested from moral elevation to empathic concern (see Diessner *et al.*, 2013) and compassion (Batson and Ahmad, 2009) in followers, and leaders' mindfulness has been proposed as an elicitor of moral elevation (Cameron and Fredrickson, 2015) and empathy (Kingsbury, 2009), we hypothesize that leaders' mindfulness may also be linked to followers' experienced compassion at work (Figure 1).

Therefore:

H2b. Leaders' mindfulness is positively related to compassion at work.

Leaders' and followers' mindfulness and refraining from cyberloafing

Regardless of the reasons for employees' participation in cyberloafing, employees who have a strong connection with others in the workplace may be less likely to harm the organization by cyberloafing. One explanation stems from the basic unitary concern that presumably exists in the workplace (Fox, 1966), which is awakened by members' mindfulness. In this regard, mindfulness leads employees to feel more embedded in the organizational goals and values, and so engaging in cyberloafing would in essence involve harming the self (Levesque and Brown, 2007). As such, because mindfulness reflects heightened intentional awareness of experiences and behaviors, this awareness may inhibit automatic engagement by making alternative behavioral choices – such as the rejection of cyberloafing – more salient (Dijksterhuis and Van Knippenberg, 2000).

Therefore:

H3a. Followers' mindfulness is negatively related to cyberloafing.

If supervisors are high in mindfulness, it is expected that they can more easily create a mindful context in the workplace that activates the basic feeling of unitary concern for the organizational goals and values. Supervisors who are mindfully engaged are more likely to be embedded in the organization's values and goals and, therefore, would more strongly convey their expectations, rewards, and support (Ray *et al.*, 2011) to their followers regarding behaviors that weaken or break the basic unity at work, such as cyberloafing. In fact, previous research suggests positive influences of leaders' mindfulness on employees' attitudes, wellbeing and behaviors (Reb *et al.*, 2014). Thus, supervisors' mindfulness may allow cyberloafing to be identified as an obstacle to achieving workplace unity and make it more difficult to activate automatic engagement in cyberloafing (Figure 1).

We hypothesize, accordingly:

H3b. Leaders' mindfulness is negatively related to cyberloafing.

The mediating role of compassion between mindfulness and cyberloafing

Mindfulness is not compassion itself, but by reflecting employees' awareness of the consequences of cyberloafing, it creates a context that cultivates compassion at work (Tirch, 2010). Therefore, employees' compassion experienced at work is what should ultimately lead them to reject behaviors that they know are harmful to the organization.

Because mindfulness just intensifies compassion experienced at work, whereas compassion at work is what motivates employees to reject engaging in cyberloafing, we hypothesize that compassion at work could mediate the negative link from followers' mindfulness to cyberloafing.

Therefore:

H4a. Compassion mediates the negative link from followers' mindfulness to cyberloafing.

The unitary interest at work may affect the extent to which one feels part of the organization, and, as discussed earlier, mindfulness could maintain or reinforce this unitary concern at work. In other words, to the extent that leaders feel that they have greater mindfulness, they are likely to feel more socially connected to followers in the workplace (Aspy and Proeve, 2017; Barbaro and Pickett, 2016) and facilitate connectedness at work. This connectedness can allow supervisors and employees to display feelings of being "human among humans" (Kohut, 1984, p. 200), which has been found to mediate the connection between mindfulness and pro-environmental behavior (Barbaro and Pickett, 2016). Hence, we hypothesize that, because compassion at work could perform similarly to connectedness, it would mediate the relationship between leaders' mindfulness and their followers' cyberloafing.

Therefore:

H4b. Compassion mediates the negative link from leaders' mindfulness to cyberloafing.

The mediating role of empathic concern between compassion and cyberloafing

Empathic concern can be defined as "other-oriented emotional responses elicited by and congruent with the perceived welfare of a person in need" (Batson and Ahmad, 2009, p. 6), and it captures feelings of tenderness, sympathy, compassion and soft-heartedness. The real reason for compassion is empathic concern in response to the need for help. Compassion only arises when employees feel empathic concern (Dutton *et al.*, 2014), that is, when they perceive the organization's world as their own (Levesque and Brown, 2007) and "mirror" its difficulties and mishaps. Otherwise, part of the decrease in cyberloafing may not be due to compassion itself, but rather to employees' "concern" about cyberloafing for other reasons, such as self-interest in maintaining productivity in order to keep their jobs. Therefore, because this study contends that employees decrease cyberloafing through compassion itself – i.e., altruistically – we hypothesize that the link between compassion and decreased cyberloafing will be explained by empathic concern, which will act as a mediator in this relationship (Figure 1).

Therefore:

H5. Empathic concern mediates the negative link from compassion to cyberloafing.

Methodology

Sampling procedure and context characteristics

The target population of this study consists of at least 10,000 organizational members who comprise the investment banking workforce in the City of London. Once each bank had given its consent, one of the researchers emailed the questionnaires to the sampled leaders and received the responses during a seven-month period beginning in the fall of 2015. We asked the leaders to choose three direct followers randomly during their work time, making sure that the selected followers were performing different tasks and worked in different situations within the team. Almost all the leaders accepted and complied with our invitation (91 percent), but when they did not, we insisted until achieving 100 sampled leaders with their 300 respective followers. The sampled leaders ($n = 100$) included 46 percent lower-level managers, 40 percent middle managers, and 14 percent top managers. We confirmed that

respondents were exposed to cyberloafing because they used desk or laptop computers with the company's internet connection during their work. All of the 400 questionnaires returned were ultimately retained for analysis because none of them were considered invalid. In the banking context studied, cyberloafing can be especially harmful. This sector is especially "time-conserving" (Malachowski, 2005), and staff are considered "knowledge workers" (Rahman and Abdul-Gader, 1993). Cyberloafing may especially put core tasks for the bank's effective functioning (e.g. information collecting and its process and analysis) at risk.

The sample of employees ($n = 300$) consisted of 69.7 percent men and 30.3 percent women; 35 percent were 34 years old or less and 16 percent were 55 years old or more. In addition, the different percentages of the sampled employees showed more than six years of tenure in the sector (82.7 percent), current bank (69.3 percent), and present position (37 percent). In all, 75 percent of the sampled employees had job tenure of less than 7 years, organizational tenure of less than 11 years, and banking tenure of less than 16 years. Lastly, only 26.7 percent of the respondents had an undergraduate level education.

Measures

Items were scored on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) – and in the case of cyberloafing, from 1 (never) to 7 (constantly). Items are presented in Table II.

Mindfulness. Mindfulness of leaders and their direct followers was assessed using the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS), which has the longest empirical track record as a valid measure of mindlessness. We chose the MAAS six-item short-scale (e.g. "It seems I am running on automatic pilot, without much awareness of what I'm doing") developed by Black *et al.* (2012), which is easy for respondents to fill out. The MAAS assesses mindlessness, and item scores were consequently reverse-coded, with higher scores indicating greater mindfulness.

Experienced compassion. Compassion at work was measured with the Lilius *et al.* (2008) three-item compassion scale. On a seven-point Likert-type scale, respondents reported how frequently they experienced compassion: on the job, from their supervisor and from their co-workers.

Empathic concern. We assessed empathic concern with the seven-item Empathic concern subscale of the Interpersonal Reactivity Index, which measures feelings of warmth, concern, and sympathy for others. The scoring of three items ("Sometimes I don't feel sorry for other people when they are having problems," "When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them," and "Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal") was reversed because they were measuring empathic concern in the opposite direction (see Table I).

Cyberloafing. Cyberloafing was measured based on Lim's (2002) eleven-item seven-point scale, which included items referring to browsing and e-mail activities. The scale is expected to be one-dimensional. We chose four browsing items and one about e-mail activities that combined Lim's "sending" and "reading" e-mail. We omitted Lim's third item, "checking" e-mail, because of possible overlap with "reading" e-mail.

Control variables. Based on the organizational literature, we selected gender (1 = man, 2 = woman) and age (1 = up to 25 years old; 2 = between 25 and 34; 3 = between 35 and 44; 5 = between 45 and 54; 5 = between 55 and 65; 6 = over 65 year old) as variables that could co-vary with all the variables in this study.

Statistical analysis

We analyzed the collected data using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) and structural equation modeling (SEM). SPSS was used to calculate the descriptive statistics and Cronbach's α values. The SEM package AMOS 22 was used to assess the relationships

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Gender	1.30	0.46	–						
2. Age	2.70	0.74	−0.073	–					
3. Employee's mindfulness	2.85	1.19	0.098	0.070	(0.859)				
4. Supervisor's mindfulness	2.76	1.38	0.046	0.150**	0.129*	(0.758)			
5. Compassion at work	4.88	1.16	0.056	−0.033	0.200***	0.196***	(0.815)		
6. Empathic concern	5.39	0.76	0.066	0.150**	0.179**	0.291***	0.217***	(0.732)	
7. Cyberloafing	3.67	1.78	−0.011	−0.153**	−0.217***	−0.125*	−0.221***	−0.174***	(0.846)

Notes: $n = 300$. Gender (1 = male, 2 = female); age (1 = up to 25 years; 2 = more than 25 and up to 40; 3 = more than 40 and up to 55; 4 = more than 55 and up to 70; 5 = 70 and older). The numbers in parentheses on the diagonal are the square roots of the average variance extracted (AVE). $*p < 0.05$; $**p < 0.01$; $***p < 0.001$

Table I.
Descriptive statistics and correlations

and ensure that all the variables in this study performed as five distinct constructs. Accordingly, CFA tests of construct validity were conducted, and the following indices were considered: goodness of fit (GFI), comparative-fit (CFI), normed-fit (NFI), Tucker–Lewis (TLI) and incremental-fit (IFI), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). We included gender and age control variables directly into the model as stand-alone variables (Hancock and Mueller, 2006). Scoring of the mindfulness items was reversed because they were assessing mindfulness in the opposite direction. Finally, we conducted the mediation tests, following the approach of sequential chi-squared difference tests (SCDT) (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988) and the Baron and Kenny (1986) method.

Results

The CFA results in Table II show that the proposed five-factor solution is insufficient ($\chi^2 = 1,735.619$, $p < 0.001$, df $= 320$, GFI $= 0.807$, CFI $= 0.845$, IFI $= 0.846$, TLI $= 0.821$, NFI $= 0.815$, RMSEA $= 0.115$), with fit indexes below 0.90 and RMSEA over 0.05, even though one item with a factor loading of less than 0.5 (mindfulness of followers) was dropped. Because the fit of the CFA for the five-factor solution was low, we analyzed the modification indices' properties from the SEM package AMOS 22 to try to identify the most strained part of the SEM model. The greatest drops in model discrepancy took place among covariances between item-errors for mindfulness of leaders (e1 and e2), empathic concern (e18 and e19), and followers (e6 and e7). Accordingly, we considered residual correlations between these residual terms (see Table II).

The results of a new CFA, shown in Table II, reveal that the proposed five-factor solution is notably better ($\chi^2 = 686.349$, $p < 0.001$, df $= 288$, GFI $= 0.877$, CFI $= 0.923$, IFI $= 0.933$, TLI $= 0.912$, NFI $= 0.879$, RMSEA $= 0.068$), with most of the fit indexes over 0.90 and RMSEA below 0.08. In fact, as Browne and Cudeck (1993) state, RMSEAs between 0.05 and 0.08 can still indicate an adequate fit. Furthermore, Cronbach's α, in Table II, ranged from 0.845 to 0.925, above the recommended α of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). Finally, we calculated the descriptive statistics (see Table I). Table I includes the scale means, standard deviations and correlations (r) for the all the constructs in this study and the control variables. Results reveal some significant correlations that could suggest initial support for our hypotheses.

To test the association between mindfulness of supervisors and followers (*H1*), and the link from the mindfulness of both followers and supervisors to compassion (*H1a* and *H1b*), we considered the SEM model shown in Figure 2, where the mindfulness of followers and supervisors, compassion, and cyberloafing variables were entered at the same time with the pertinent paths, along with the control variables. The model displays significant paths from

	Factor loading	SMC	Composite reliability	AVE
(F1) Employee's mindfulness[a] (Cronbach $\alpha = 0.864$)		0.017	0.850	0.738
X01: I find myself preoccupied with the future or the past	0.505			
X02: I rush through activities without being really attentive to them	0.675			
X03: I find myself doing things without paying attention	0.958			
X04: It seems that I am "running on automatic pilot," without much awareness of what I am doing	0.878			
X–: I get so focused on the goal I want to achieve that I lose touch with what I'm doing right now to get there[b]	–			
(F2) Supervisor's mindfulness[a] (Cronbach $\alpha = 0.889$)		–	0.863	0.575
X05: I get so focused on the goal I want to achieve that I lose touch with what I'm doing right now to get there	0.949			
X06: I find myself preoccupied with the future or the past	0.991			
X07: I rush through activities without being really attentive to them	0.637			
X08: I find myself doing things without paying attention	0.578			
X09: It seems that I am "running on automatic pilot," without much awareness of what I'm doing	0.502			
(F3) Compassion at work (Cronbach $\alpha = 0.845$)		0.070	0.911	0.664
How frequently you experienced				
Y10: compassion on the job	0.868			
Y11: compassion from my supervisor	0.894			
Y12: compassion from my co-workers	0.662			
(F4) Empathic concern (Cronbach $\alpha = 0.882$)		0.056	0.887	0.536
Y13: I am often quite touched by things that I see happen	0.786			
Y14: I often have tender, concerned feelings for other people less fortunate than me	0.849			
Y15: sometimes I do not feel sorry for other people when they are having problems (R)	0.873			
Y16: others' misfortunes don't usually disturb me a great deal (R)	0.803			
Y17: I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person	0.608			
Y18: when I see someone being treated unfairly, I do not feel very much pity for them (R)	0.572			
Y19: when I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective toward them	0.555			
(F5) Cyberloafing (Cronbach $\alpha = 0.925$)		0.049	0.926	0.715
I acknowledge that I have used my company's internet at work to […]				
Y20: visit websites and digital newspapers to seek personal (non-work) information	0.828			
Y21: visit the website of my bank to consult my current account	0.813			
Y22: read or send personal (non-work) e-mails	0.874			
Y23: download software or files for personal or family use	0.918			
Y24: Surf the Net and so escape a little	0.790			
Control variables				
C18: gender[c]	–	–	–	–
C19: age[c]	–	–	–	–

Notes: AVE, average variance extracted; SMC, squared multiple correlation. SEM suggestions about modification indices include the following co-variances: e1–e2 (0.6), e18–e19 and e6–e7 (0.72); Cmin = 686.349; df = 288; $p < 0.001$; Cmin/df = 2.383; GFI = 0.877, CFI = 0.923, IFI = 0.933, TLI = 0.912, NFI = 0.879, RMSEA = 0.068. [a]The scoring of all the items in this scale was reversed after this CFA was conducted; [b]item dropped because its loading was below 0.5; [c]control variables were entered in the CFA as observed variables co-varying with all four latent factors and indicators

Table II.
Results of confirmatory factor analysis
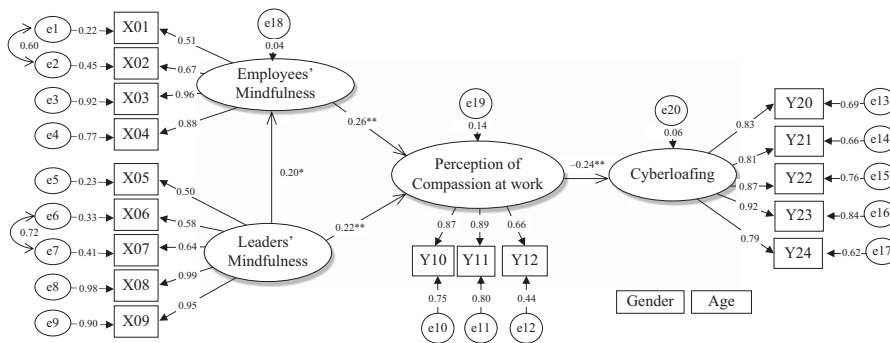
Notes: $n = 300$. $\chi^2 (148, 300) = 404.893$, $p < 0.001$, df $= 148$, Cmin/df $= 2.736$, GFI $= 0.880$,
CFI $= 0.932$, IFI $= 0.933$, TLI $= 0.922$, NFI $= 898$, RMSEA $= 0.076$. *$p < 0.01$; **$p < 0.001$

Figure 2.
Tested SEM model of
mindfulness of
employees and
leaders, perceptions of
compassion at work,
and cyberloafing

mindfulness of leaders to mindfulness of followers (*H1*) ($\beta = 0.200$; $p < 0.01$), from
mindfulness of followers to compassion (*H2a*) ($\beta = 0.260$; $p < 0.001$), from mindfulness of
leaders to compassion (*H2b*) ($\beta = 0.220$; $p < 0.001$), and from compassion to cyberloafing
($\beta = -0.240$; $p < 0.001$). Therefore, *H1*, *H2a* and *H2b* were supported (see Table III).

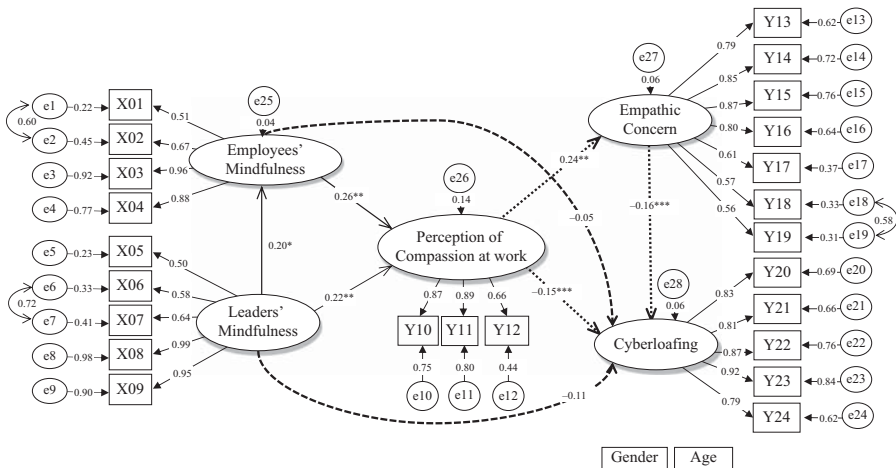| Hypothesis	Relationship	Standardized β	χ^2	df	GFI	CFI	IFI	TLI	NFI	RMSEA
H1	Leader mindfulness → Staff mindfulness (Figure 2)	$\beta = 0.200$; $p < 0.001$	404.893	148	0.880	0.932	0.933	0.922	0.898	0.076
H2a	Staff mindfulness → Compassion (Figure2)	$\beta = 0.260$; $p < 0.001$	404.893	148	0.880	0.932	0.933	0.922	0.898	0.076
H2b	Leader mindfulness → Compassion (Figure 2)	$\beta = 0.220$; $p < 0.001$	404.893	148	0.880	0.932	0.933	0.922	0.898	0.076
H3a(+)	Staff mindfulness → Cyberloafing (Figure 4)	$\beta = -0.101$; $p = 0.109$ (+)	345.063	101	0.880	0.927	0.927	0.913	0.900	0.088
H3b	Leader mindfulness → Cyberloafing (Figure 4)	$\beta = -0.149$; $p = 0.014$	345.063	101	0.880	0.927	0.927	0.913	0.900	0.088
H4a(+)	Staff mindfulness → Cyberloafing (Figure 3)	$\beta = -0.050$; p ns.	687.887	290	0.881	0.922	0.922	0.912	0.879	0.068
H4b	Leader mindfulness→ Cyberloafing (Figure 3)	$\beta = -0.110$; p ns. (*)	687.887	290	0.881	0.922	0.922	0.912	0.879	0.068
H5	Compassion→ Cyberloafing (Figure 3)	$\beta = -0.150$; $p < 0.05$ (**)	687.887	290	0.881	0.922	0.922	0.912	0.879	0.068

Notes: (+)Because staff mindfulness has no significant main effects on cyberloafing (*H3a*), *H3a* was rejected
and the study of *H4a* dropped. *Although SEM "offers" in the Figure 3-model the possibility that leaders'
mindfulness has a direct path to cyberloafing, it was no longer significant; **when empathic concern was
modeled as mediator in the compassion-cyberloafing link, the direct path from compassion to cyberloafing
decreased from ($\beta = -0.240$; $p < 0.001$; Figure 2) to ($\beta = -0.150$; $p < 0.05$) (supporting partial mediation)
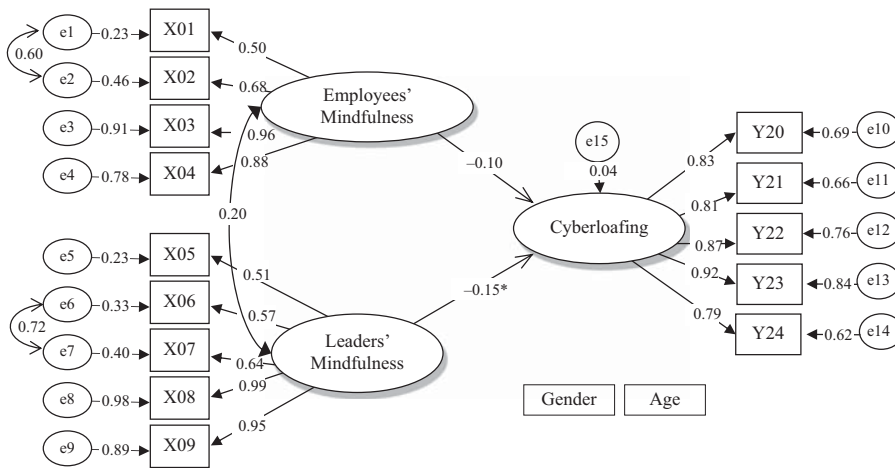
Table III.
Relationship between
variables based on
which hypotheses
were accepted or
rejected

In order to test *H4* and *H5* regarding mediation, we first tested whether mindfulness of followers and supervisors are directly related to cyberloafing (*H3a* and *H3b*), and whether compassion is directly related to cyberloafing (*H5*). As Figure 2 indicates, *H5* regarding the mediation of empathic concern is not initially rejected because the path between compassion and cyberloafing is significant ($\beta = -0.240$; $p < 0.001$). Concerning *H4*, the Figure 2 model was reduced in Figure 4 by deleting compassion and establishing a covariance between the mindfulness of followers and supervisors. The results of this SEM model ($\chi^2 = 345.063$, $p < 0.001$, df = 101, GFI = 0.880, CFI = 0.927, IFI = 0.927, TLI = 0.913, NFI = 0.900, RMSEA = 0.088) show that only the path between mindfulness of supervisors and cyberloafing was significant ($\beta = -0.149$; $p = 0.014$), whereas the direct path from mindfulness of followers to cyberloafing was not supported ($\beta = -0.101$; $p = 0.109$) (see Table II). These patterns support *H3b* but reject *H3a* and, therefore, *H4a* about compassion mediating between followers' mindfulness and cyberloafing.

H5 and the "surviving" *H4b* about mediation were then tested by analyzing the three Baron and Kenny (1986) conditions for mediation. As Figures 2–4 show, Baron and Kenny's first condition for *H4b* and *H5* is fulfilled because in Figure 4 supervisors' mindfulness showed a significant path to cyberloafing ($\beta = -0.149$; $p = 0.014$), whereas concerning *H5*, compassion showed a significant path to cyberloafing in Figure 2 ($\beta = -0.240$; $p < 0.001$). Baron and Kenny's second condition was also fulfilled because, as Figure 3 shows, compassion was predicted by supervisors' mindfulness ($\beta = 0.220$; $p < 0.001$) and also predicted cyberloafing ($\beta = -0.240$; $p < 0.001$), whereas concerning *H5*, empathic concern was predicted by compassion ($\beta = 0.240$; $p < 0.001$) and also predicted cyberloafing ($\beta = -0.160$; $p < 0.05$). Lastly, the numbers reveal that the third Baron and Kenny condition was also satisfied. As Figures 3 and 4 show, once empathic concern and compassion were entered as a mediators, the betas of the mindfulness-cyberloafing link ($\beta = -0.149$; $p = 0.014$) decreased from ($\beta = -0.149$; $p = 0.014$) in Figure 4, until no longer being significant ($\beta = -0.110$; p ns.) in Figure 3 (full mediation); whereas the betas of the compassion-cyberloafing link ($\beta = -0.240$; $p = 0.001$) decreased from ($\beta = -0.240$; $p = 0.001$) to ($\beta = -0.150$; $p < 0.05$) in Figure 3 (partial mediation). Thus, these patterns also add

Figure 3.
Partially mediated SEM tested model of compassion perceptions and empathic concern as a mediators

Notes: $n = 300$. χ^2 (290, 300) = 687.887, $p < 0.001$, df = 290, (χ^2 (290, 300) = 687.887, $p < 0.001$, df = 290, Cmin/df = 2.372, GFI = 0.881, CFI = 0.921, IFI = 0.923, TLI = 0.912, NFI = 879, RMSEA = 0.068. *$p < 0.01$; **$p < 0.001$; ***$p < 0.05$

Notes: $n = 300$. χ^2 (101, 300) = 345.063, $p < 0.001$, df = 101, Cmin/df = 3.416, GFI = 0.880, CFI = 0.927, IFI = 0.927, TLI = 0.913, NFI = 900, RMSEA = 0.088. *p = 0.014

Figure 4.
Tested SEM model of the direct paths from mindfulness of supervisors and mindfulness of employees to cyberloafing

support for *H4b* and H% about mediation. Table III offers a summary of the above relationships between variables based on which hypotheses were accepted or rejected.

Finally, we conducted a nested model comparison to seek further support for the both mediations, using the SCDT. Following Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) patterns, our saturated model (less constrained) in Figure 3 (χ^2 (290, 300) = 687.887, $p < 0.001$, df = 290, Cmin/df = 2.372, GFI = 0.881, CFI = 0.921, IFI = 0.923, TLI = 0.912, NFI = 879, RMSEA = 0.068) was compared to the more constrained model (i.e. in which we removed the direct paths from mindfulness of followers and supervisors to cyberloafing, and from compassion to cyberloafing) (χ^2 (292, 300) = 695.063, $p < 0.001$, df = 292, Cmin/df = 2.380, GFI = 0.881, CFI = 0.922, IFI = 0.923, TLI = 0.913, NFI = 879, RMSEA = 0.068). Unlike the former model, which was only partially mediated, this latter model represents a fully mediated model of the effects of both leaders' mindfulness and compassion on cyberloafing. According to the CFI and TLI fit indices, this fully mediated model shows a better fit than the saturated model. Given that the change in the χ^2 of the hypothesized model when compared to the saturated model was significant at the 0.05 level ($p < 0.05$) ($\chi^2_d(3) = 13.502$; df$_d$ = 3; $p = 0.037$), these results indicate that this better fit is significant and, thus, it adds further support for *H4b* and *H5* (see Table III).

Discussion
The aim of this paper was to study experiences of compassion at work as a mediator in the link from supervisors' mindfulness and their followers' mindfulness to cyberloafing, and whether supervisors' mindfulness affects followers' mindfulness. Unlike followers' mindfulness, this study first shows that only the presence of supervisors' mindfulness is significant in leading staff to reduce cyberloafing through compassion. However, followers' mindfulness elicits compassion, which, in turn, reduces the occurrence of cyberloafing through empathic concern, and the mindfulness of supervisors and followers are related. Therefore, in both cases, mindfulness seems to influence cyberloafing's occurrence. This section aims to offer theoretical and practical implications of these findings and avenues for future research.

First, contrary to expectations, and although it is the employee who ultimately engages in cyberloafing, the results indicate that the staff's mindfulness is not effective in causing them to reject cyberloafing, at least not directly. An explanation for these results may be found in the leading role that leaders (and hence leaders' mindfulness compared to followers' mindfulness) may play in discouraging cyberloafing. Followers' mindfulness may have an influence on cyberloafing, but it is relegated by leaders' mindfulness, once they are modeled together. In fact, the correlation matrix in Table I seems to suggest this, given that followers' mindfulness is significantly and negatively correlated with cyberloafing. Another explanation for these results may be the existence of two overlapping targets that employees could have in mind when delivering compassion toward the organization. Although it is first expected that staff deliver compassion toward the organization as members of this organization, because the leaders represent the organization, employees could feel (as followers) that they are also helping their leaders. In other words, leaders seem to be both elicitors and recipients of their followers' acts of compassion toward the organization at the same time. The consequences of this situation are uncertain and may explain why followers' mindfulness did not lead to rejecting cyberloafing. In our opinion, leaders are the human visible face of the organization and, hence, the greatest motivator for followers to deliver compassion toward the organization. However, followers who are mindfully engaged when their supervisors are not may be less able to associate these "mindless leaders" with the organization and reduce cyberloafing out of compassion toward them. Another explanation may suggest that, contrary to what our model indicates, the relationship between mindfulness and cyberloafing is not linear. In this case, only high and/or low followers' mindfulness affects cyberloafing significantly, but overall this relationship is not significant. In any event, the role that followers' mindfulness played in our model was not irrelevant. Followers' mindfulness was indeed shown to exert a "domino effect" that "pushes" compassion toward cyberloafing. In doing so, the followers' mindfulness provides supervisors' mindfulness with an alternative route to more strongly build a compassionate context where cyberloafing is restrained.

Second, regarding theoretical implications, empirical work supporting the impact of mindfulness and compassion on classic organizational behavior constructs is scarce. Unlike in this paper, these constructs have only been studied through helping behaviors from a pure positive (rather than negative) psychology approach, as in helping with work-related tasks (Anderson and Williams, 1996), lending a hand (Flynn and Brockner, 2003) and collaborating with others (Dukerich *et al.*, 2002). Rare exceptions are studies showing that supervisors' mindfulness and compassion at work can influence OCB (Reb *et al.*, 2014) and job performance (Chu, 2016; Moon *et al.*, 2016). This paper, thus, makes an important contribution to the management and organizational behavior field because it not only expands the array of causes of cyberloafing, a classic construct in these fields, but it also presents a novel and previously unexplored perspective on studying mindfulness and compassion as ways to discourage harmful behavior at work (such as cyberloafing). This paper also expands our knowledge in the field by studying and supporting organizations as a whole as recipients of employees' acts of compassion at work, and whether these acts of compassion stem from supervisors' and employees' mindfulness. As such, the results provided double support (i.e. through experienced compassion at work and empathic concern) for mindfulness and compassion as ways to encourage employees to help their organization by refraining from undermining it. Finally, this paper could open up an important avenue for future research on important topics at work, such as compassionate leadership, moral engagement, the mindfulness and compassion mirror, the association between mindfulness and compassion at work, and staff rejection of counterproductive work behavior out of compassion.

Third, regarding practical implications, the paper's findings offer new insights that can provide managers with a novel intrinsically motivation-based self-regulatory strategy that can complement other anti-cyberloafing strategies. Prior research has already supported the role of leadership in managing cyberloafing, mostly based on coercive strategies (e.g. Flynn, 2005; Mirchandani and Motwani, 2003; Mirchandani, 2004; Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara and Olivares-Mesa, 2010) and a self-regulatory approach (Conlon *et al.*, 2005). These study results seem to be consistent with the significant role played by supervisors in influencing cyberloafing. Based on promoting the employee's awareness that in a compassionate workplace destructive behavior disturbs the necessary unity for everyone's wellbeing (Fox, 1966), this study could lead to future research on managing cyberloafing through a novel intrinsic motivation-based self-regulatory strategy that would complement other strategies where leaders' mindfulness elicits followers' compassion experienced at work and is capable of reducing cyberloafing. Because cyberloafing is particularly harmful in sectors such as banking, the context of this study, mindfulness and compassion seem to be useful tools for managers to combat cyberloafing in banking.

Because mindfulness seems to be the result of states, even though over time it can become an individual trait (Brefczynski-Lewis *et al.*, 2007), we suggest implementing proven antecedents of a mindfulness state. Mindfulness training programs for leaders and employees are strongly recommended. For instance, the group program mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) uses meditation to alleviate stress and other disorders and can be useful to promote mindfulness in leaders. MBSR has been associated with higher levels of mind attention (Shapiro *et al.*, 2012), based on a process to develop moment-to-moment experiences that enhance awareness, vitality, and coping and produce less negative affect and more veridical perception. However, in addition to cultivating mindfulness, mindfulness traits could also be included in assessment programs of current supervisors (and staff) and profiles for future recruitment and selection processes. Compassion at work provides organizations with significant competitive advantages. Achieving higher levels of mindfulness as a self-regulating strategy of employee behavior could also become a sustainable competitive advantage because mindfulness-based strategies are rare and hard for the competition to detect and imitate.

Limitations, future research and conclusions

The paper has weaknesses that should be considered. First, because all the studied companies belong to the banking industry sector in the UK, the results may not be entirely generalizable to other industrial sectors. In addition, we used self-report measures, and the assessments of perceptions of compassion and cyberloafing were obtained from the same source. Accordingly, they can present mono-method/source biases.

However, mindfulness of supervisors and followers is self-reported from different sources, and so these mindfulness measures can be considered reliable, significantly strengthening the reliability of our model. Future research is needed with other industry sectors and societal cultures using multilevel analysis of the data. Moreover, some authors have suggested that, when engaging in internet activity (Trevino and Webster, 1992), people can be in a "flow state" and, hence, lose awareness and self-consciousness of their environment (see also Rettie, 2001). Therefore, future research could examine whether, once staff have engaged in cyberloafing out of a lack of compassion, cyberloafing itself would lead them to a "vicious circle" that aggravates the problem.

In conclusion, although staff members may consider engaging in cyberloafing, by moving them away from self-interest or retribution toward care and help, the presence of mindfulness and compassion in the workplace might lead the staff to "pardon" the organization, in spite of any justified or justifiable reasons for engaging in cyberloafing.

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