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Conceptualization of Social Loafing Phenomenon among EFL Students

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ABSTRACT

The propensity for students to put in less effort when working in a group than when working alone is known as social loafing. This phenomenon can happen in a variety of contexts, including educational situations like language learning areas. Social laziness may have a detrimental impact on the learning results of students in English language schools. When students are assigned language learning tasks in groups, some may depend on their peers to complete the work or give less than their reasonable share, resulting in a less-than-ideal result for the group as a whole. Lower grades, less motivation, and a decline in linguistic skills can be the results of this.

Social loafing might not be visible when examining group performance as a whole. The only way to start seeing social loafing in environments like the workplace is to look at everyone's individual performance.

In order to preserve objectivity when working in a group, students will merely slack off; this study investigates the occurrence of social loafing in group teams. Teachers can help students learn more, become more motivated, confident, and improve their collaboration skills by decreasing social loafing. To gather information, a questionnaire survey was conducted. 100 students from the English Department at the College of Education for Humanities/University of Diyala made up the sample for the academic year (2022).

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مفهوم ظاهرة التكاسل الاجتماعي لدى الطلبة الدارسين اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية

م. نهى عامر كامل/ كلية التربية للعلوم الانسانية/ جامعة ديالى

الخلاصة:

يُعرف ميل الأشخاص إلى بذل جهد أقل عند العمل في مجموعة مقارنةً بالعمل بمفردهم بأسم التكاسل الاجتماعي. يمكن أن تحدث هذه الظاهرة في مجموعة متنوعة من السياقات ، بما في ذلك المواقف

التعليمية مثل مواقف تعلم اللغة. قد يكون للكسل الاجتماعي تأثير ضار على نتائج تعلم الطلاب في مدارس اللغة الإنجليزية.

عندما يتم تكليف الطلاب بمهام تعلم اللغة في مجموعات ، قد يعتمد البعض على أقرانهم لإكمال العمل أو إعطاء أقل من حصتهم المعقولة ، مما يؤدي إلى نتيجة أقل من مثالية للمجموعة ككل. يمكن أن تكون نتائج هذا هو الدرجات الدنيا ، والحافز الأقل ، وانخفاض المهارات اللغوية التي قد تنتج عن ذلك. قد لا يكون التكاسل الاجتماعي مرئيًا عند فحص أداء المجموعة ككل. الطريقة الوحيدة لبدء رؤية التكاسل الاجتماعي في بيئات مثل مكان العمل هي النظر إلى الأداء الفردي للجميع.

للتخفيف من الآثار السلبية للتكاسل الاجتماعي في تعلم اللغة ، يمكن للمدرسين تنفيذ استراتيجيات مثل تحديد توقعات واضحة والاسئلة الفردية ، وإنشاء أهداف ومكافآت جماعية ، وإتاحة الفرص للطلاب لتقديم الملاحظات وتلقيها على أدائهم. من أجل تعزيز الشعور بالمساءلة المشتركة والمشاركة بين الطلاب ، يمكن للمدرسين أيضًا حث الطلبة على المشاركة النشطة والتعاون في الفصل الدراسي.

وقد تم تقييم معرفة وجهات نظر طلاب قسم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية المرحلة الرابعة للتكاسل الاجتماعي من خلال استبانة موضوعة من قبل الباحثة مكونة من ١٧ فقرة، فعندما يعمل نفس الشخص بمفرده أو يتم تقييمه بشكل فردي ، تكون درجة الجهد هذه أقل. يبدو أن العديد من الأفراد يعملون بجد أكبر عند العمل بمفردهم. ولكن عندما يكون التعاون مطلوبًا ، يميل بعض الأشخاص إلى فقدان التركيز.

من أجل الحفاظ على الموضوعية عند العمل في مجموعة ، فإن الطلاب سوف يتراخون فقط ؛ تبحث هذه الدراسة في حدوث التكاسل الاجتماعي في فرق المجموعة. يمكن للمدرسين مساعدة الطلاب على تعلم المزيد ، وأن يصبحوا أكثر حماسًا وثقة ، ويحسنون مهاراتهم التعاونية من خلال تقليل الرغبات الاجتماعية. لجمع المعلومات ، تم إجراء مسح استبيان. ١٠٠ طالب وطالبة من قسم اللغة الإنجليزية في كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية / جامعة ديالى الذين شكلوا العينة للعام الدراسي (٢٠٢٢).

1.1 The Problem and its Significance

Social loafing typically refers to a student's tendency to put forth less effort when working in a group than they would if they were working alone. Since everyone in the group is working together to complete a single task, no one member of the group adds as much as they would if they were each individually accountable. (Karau & Williams, 1993:27, Harkins & Jackson, 1985:98)

Teamwork is made up of two or more students who work together to accomplish a shared objective (Salas et al. 1992:33; Woodcock & Francis 1981:24). Teamwork is a crucial skill in business that helps to increase

production, solve complicated issues, reach consensus, and keep organizations competitive (English et al. 2004:133).

An inefficient or dysfunctional team may fall short of independent study in terms of fostering learning and might cause intense anger (Oakley et al. 2004:95). Although collaboration is strongly encouraged in education, when it is not working well, it may be difficult for the students and teachers involved. (Hansen 2006; Burdett 2003; Baldwin et al. 1997).

According to Myers & Claus (2012), learners tend to consider their own efforts as crucial when faced with challenging tasks. However, when working on simple tasks, some individuals may feel unmotivated since they believe that others can complete the task without their assistance. On difficult tasks, people may perceive their contribution as necessary because they think they are more skilled than the average person in performing the task.

In contrast, Jackson and Williams (1985, p.260) found that participants performed better when facing challenging tasks, regardless of whether they were working in a group or alone. Furthermore, working collaboratively on challenging tasks was shown to reduce stress and improve performance.

In particular, social loafing, which is defined as the diminished or non-participation of some team members, is a problem that frequently arises in student environments (Dommeyer, 2007: 67).

1.2 Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to promote individual responsibility, active involvement, and engagement in the learning process as a means of reducing social loafing among students. Teachers can help students learn more, become more motivated, confident, and improve their collaboration skills by decreasing social loafing.

1.3 Hypotheses of the study

The following hypotheses have been proposed:

1. There is no notable association between an individual's self-reported or observed instances of social loafing by others.

3. There is no statistical differeces among students group work.

1.4 Limits of the study

The current study is restricted to an academic year's of EFL students from the College of Education for Humanities at the University of Diyala who are enrolled in the department's fourth level of English language instruction (2022).

1.5 Procedures of the study

To fulfill the purpose of the present study, the following procedures will be taken by the researcher to gather data:

1. Selecting pre-service students from Diyala University, College of Education for Humanities to represent the research sample (randomly),

2. Creating a rating scale questionnaire as an elicitation tool, with the guidance of several experts who assess its accuracy and make any feedback, adjustments, and recommendations, if necessary.

3. Encourage student engagement and cooperation in the classroom by including group exercises and talks in the classes.

2.1 Definitions of Social Loafing

When a group's performance is less than the total of its members' individual efforts, it is said to be social loafing. It alludes to a psychological phenomenon that occurs in groups in which individuals prefer to exert less effort when working together than when working alone. Social loafing is the act of someone who is perceived as avoiding duties and taking advantage of others' efforts while still enjoying the benefits of the group beyond what they have given. (Latane, Williams & Harkins, 1979: 34).

According to Aggarwal and O'Brien (2008:256), “social loafing is a behavior pattern when a student working in a group context fails to participate in his or her fair share of a collective effort”.

Luo (2013:23) states that to be a significant mediating component, whereas turnover purpose was the primary motivator of employee social-loathing behavior. Employee commitment was strongly affected by justice-related happiness.

Schippers (2014:98) indicates that “if there is a high degree of conscientiousness and agreeableness within the team, team members will

compensate for social loafing tendencies, and performance will stay up to par". (Lount & Wilk, 2014) discoveres that "employees working in a group performed better than when working alone .When individual success in the workplace was made public.

Furthermore, Arevalillo-Herráez (2014), confirmes that "assessment-based reactive strategies are effective as a response to unequal commitment in cooperative tasks because they exploit existing emotional relationships between team members."

Meyer, Schermuly, and Kauffeld (2016) state that team members with weak faultlines, membership in the team's bigger subgroup, and poor levels of social competence were more likely to engage in social loafing.

Jaikumar & Mendonca, (2017:22) reveal that “perceived coworker laziness may result in unproductive work behavior toward coworkers and that interpersonal deviation may impact the group's ability to work together cohesively on a task. However, it has been demonstrated through empirical research that the existence of people who are affectively negative enhances group performance, particularly when the job involves innovation or information processing”.

2.3 Types of Social Loafing

According to Latane (1981, p. 292)
social loafing occurs in two key ways, which are detailed below:

2.3.1 Effect of Free Riders

The free rider effect states that although a team is working together to achieve a shared objective, one or more team members become careless with their obligations. They don't give it any thought and believe that their job is not at all necessary. Group members continue to operate sluggishly until their contributions are acknowledged because they feel it is difficult to assess individual achievement. They think that other members will take care of any losses they incur on their behalf. These individuals are referred to as free riders.(Meyer etal, 2016: 64).

2.3.2 Sucker Effect

A byproduct of the freerider effect is the sucker effect. Due to the existence of free riders, othergroup members get demotivated to carry out their responsibilities effectively.They feel overworked since they have to work only for freeloaders, which makes them less interested in the tasks that have been given to them.

"Sucker effect is that other group members would behave carelessly and not give their all as a result of free riders' attitude. They are aware that achieving over expectations won't get them any more praise. Free riders' perceived exploit ation of the group's active members causes these individuals to become disengaged from their allocated tasks". (Latane,1981:292)

2.4 Causes of Social Loafing

According to Jackson and Harkins (1985:23), there are several reasons that contribute to social loafing. Some of them are as follows**:**

1.Lack of Motivation

One of the primary motivating causes for social loafing is the lack of motivation. When someone lacks motivation for a certain work, they could contribute less to that task than they would to ones they are motivated about.

2. Multiplication of Responsibility

Individuals are prone to decreasing their contributions when they feel less accountable and responsible. Specifically, when a team member believes that their input has little impact on the final outcome, they are more likely to engage in social loafing.

3. Group Size

Individuals tend to focus on superior contributions and are more interested in doing so in smaller groups. However, as group size increases, individual effort may significantly decrease. Therefore, group size plays a fundamental role in comprehending the psychological and social factors that take part to social loafing.

Working in a group of high self-starters increases the likelihood of social loafing because one individual may take a breakdown and let the other capable group members do most of the required work. (Latane,1981: 292).

2.5 How can Social Loafing be Noticed in The Classroom?

According to Schnake (1991:49), social loafing can be noticed in the classroom in the following:

1. Uneven distribution of labor results from unequal participation, where some pupils may not add as much to a group project as others.
2. Lack of engagement: During group tasks, some students may display signs of disinterest or disengagement, which show that they are not completely committed to the work.
3. Taking frequent breaks or getting sidetracked: Some students may take frequent breaks or get sidetracked during group work, which can be a sign that they are not completely focused on the task.
4. Poor group results: Social loafing may be present if the group's success falls short of what would be predicted given the skills of the individual members.
5. Other group members complaining: If other group members criticize a specific student for failing to contribute or for not doing their share, this could be a sign of social laziness.
6. Lack of responsibility: Students may engage in social loafing when they are not held responsible for their individual efforts to a group project.

2.6 What can Teachers do to Reduce Social Loafing in The Classroom?

According to Jackson (1985:78), there are several strategies that teachers can use to reduce social loafing in the classroom. Here are some examples:

1. Clearly identify roles and responsibilities: Teachers can give each student specific roles and responsibilities in order to ensure that they are all adding to a group work. This can help to make expectations more clear and guarantee that every pupil understands exactly what is anticipated of them.

2. Frequent comments can be given to students on their individual efforts to a group project by teachers. This can help students feel more responsible and motivated while giving them the chance to achieve better.

3. Increase task interdependence: Teachers can set up situations where each student's input is essential to the group's success by increasing the dependency of group members. Students might be assigned to a job, for instance, that calls for each team member to contribute a special knowledge or talent.

4. Encourage a good learning atmosphere in the classroom: Teachers can foster a collaborative and team-oriented learning environment in their classrooms. This may entail establishing ground standards for polite discourse, inspiring students to help one another, and recognizing students for their efforts.

5. Use peer evaluation to hold students responsible for their individual efforts to a group project. Students can do this by giving comments on each other's efforts or by rating each other's performance.

6. Individual rewards can be given by teachers to encourage students to participate in group projects. For instance, students may be offered the option to show their work to the class separately or earn extra credit for their individual efforts. (Kravitz & Martin, 1986:35; Latané et al., 1979:69).

3. Procedures

3.1 The Population and Sampling

Al- Samawi (2000:111) defines population as “a set of individuals or records with unique characteristics used for data gathering or as a sample selected from this group”.

The population of the present study is a group of studens from university of Diyala, College of Education, department of English Language at stage four . Whereas, the sample of the present study is restricted to 100 students during the academic year (2022).

According to Richards et al. (1992,p.321), the term "sample" applies to any collection of people chosen to represent a population. Utilizing a sample of subjects makes sense in order to extrapolate information about a bigger community from a smaller one.

3.2 Pilot study of the Questionnaire

A pilot research was needed to determine whether the questionnaire is properly built after it had been created. To implement the pilot research, ten pupils are selected at randomly.

3.3 Instrument of the Study

The researcher created a questionnaire, as shown in the attached appendix, to fulfill the objective and test the theory. What are the major challenges you encounter when working in a group? was the first open-ended question on the researcher's an open questionnaire. This open-ended query was given to a sample of 20 instructors by the researcher.

These questions are intended to assess instructors' challenges using three scoring scales: I agree, I disagree, Strongly agree, Strongly disagree, and not satisfied. The sort of questionnaire used in this study is one with rating systems. There is a graduation in views, so students can indicate on this measure how firmly they concur or disagree with the questionnaire's topics.

3.4 Questionnaire Validity

Bergman (1981:150) defines validity as "a reflection of how well it measures what it is supposed to measure." A jury of linguistics and teaching methodology specialists was given the questionnaire to determine whether or not the items were appropriate in order to ensure face validity.

Face Validity is the most crucial factor to take into account while choosing or creating an evaluation tool. The extent to which a test measures what is intended to be measured may serve as a general definition of the validity of any examination or test process (Heaton, 1975:23).

Face validity is how the questionnaire appears to the questionnaire takers, questionnaire administrators, and others who are involved in the students' education (Al- Juboury, 2000:134). Additionally, it is the appearance of credibility or popular acceptance (Ingram, 1977:67).

To ensure face validity, the questionnaire is shown to a group of specialists in the area of English language. They are notably needed to assess and recommend any necessary changes, deletions, or additions that would improve and sharpen the questionnaire. With a few revisions that have been taken into account, the jury has concluded that the questionnaire and the processes are appropriate.

The following jury members make up a group of specialists, listed in alphabetical order:

1. Prof.Khalil I. Al- Hadidi (Ph.D) College of Education, University of Diyala.

2. Asst. Prof .Gazwan Adnan ,(Ph.D) College of Education, University of Diyala.

3. Asst. Prof. Liqaa Habeeb (Ph.D) College of Education, University of Diyala.

4. Asst. Prof .Shahad Hatam Khadhim ,University of Baghdad, Continuing Education Centre.

5. Asst. Prof. Zainab Abbas Jwad (Ph.D) College of Education, University of Diyala.

6. Asst.Prof. Suhair Safwat Muhammed (Ph.D) College of Languages, University of Al-Sulaimania.

3.5 Questionnaire Reliability

Reliability is one of an excellent questionnaire's qualities. According to Madsen (1983:179), “a reliable questionnaire is one that consistently yields findings that are nearly identical when tested under the same circumstances on various occasions. The dependability of the poll was determined using the SPSS system. The dependability score is 0.80, which demonstrates that the questionnaire's reliability is adequate”.

3.6 Final Administration of the Questionnaire

At the beginning of October 2022, the respondents received the questionnaire's final version. The students were requested to provide feedback on the products using a scale of five dimensions. Lastly, the researcher has made use of the pupils' answers.

3.7 Overall Performance

The questionnaire was prepared to be used on the research group to accomplish the goals after achieving validity and reliability. The statistics for the first portion are analyzed using Fisher's formula. Each object receives a mean score, and those that receive a weighted mean score of more than (3) are

deemed powerful, while those that receive a weighted mean score of less than (3) are deemed weak. Furthermore, because it relies on percentages for each component, the second portion is distinct.

To test the hypothesis of the study, the researchers analyzed the responses of the participants using the mean and theoretical mean formula. The mean score of the subjects was 49.745, which was higher than the theoretical mean of 30. Therefore, the hypothesis was verified and accepted. Table (1) presents the weighted mean scores and weighted percentages for each item number.

Table (1) Overall Performance

Item no.	Agree	Disagree	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree	disatisfied	Weighted mean
1	17	3	80	-	-	77%
2	20	2	77	1	-	80%
3	33	5	60	3	-	60%
4	22	10	65	3	-	65%
5	33	-	63	2	2	63%
6	٢٠	١	78	-	١	78%
7	٣٠	٥	57	٥	٣	57%
8	٢٩	٧	60	٣	١	60%
9	٣٣	٣	62	١	٢	62%
10	٣٥	١٠	45	٧	٣	45%
11	٣٥	٧	54	١	٣	54%
12	٣٠	١	68	-	١	68%
13	٤٠	٥	55	-	-	55%
14	30	5	45	15	15	45%
15	10	3	75	7	5	75%
16	25	30	28	10	7	28%
17	30	5	63	-	2	58%

4. Conclusions

The researcher classified the weighted mean of the categories, which varies from (80% to 60%), as challenging after showing the findings. Conclusions that can be drawn include the following:

1. The second statement, "I put less effort when I work collaboratively with my coworkers," is the most challenging for students. It received an 80% weighted mean.

2.Item number (6) which states " When we're all working together in the group, I fell bored" forms the second problem for instructors. The weighted average was (78%).

3. Item number (1) which states " I feel unmotivated while working in groups" forms the second problem for instructors. The weighted mean for it was (77%).

4. Item number (15) which states " The lack of good relationships among a group's members leads to conflict " forms the second problem for instructors. It received a 75% weighted mean.

5. Item number (12) which states " worked with coworkers while pretending indifference about the workplace." forms the second challenge for instructors. The weighted mean was 68%.

6. Item number (4) which states "When the group members are slack in their job, I make an attempt to work a little bit more." forms the second difficulty for instructors. It received a 65% weighted mean.

7. Item number (5) which states "When the sum of the work grows, my effort is proper." forms the second difficulty for teachers. The weighted mean was 63%. I don't believe working with my coworkers is enjoyable, as evidenced by item number 9, which states, "Members of the group take a break from their duties.represents the second challenge for instructors. The weighted mean was 62%.

8. The weighted mean for items 3 and 8 "When I work with coworkers as a whole, I'm not at my best and get frustrated," and "My effort will be affected if I don't complete the task by the deadline in its entirety" was 60%.

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Appendix (1)

The Scale of Social Laofing

Items No.	Items	Agree	Disagree	Strongly agree	Not satisfied	Strongly disagree
1	I feel unmotivated while working in groups.					
2	When I work collaboratively with my coworkers, I put in less effort.					
3	When I work with coworkers as a whole, I'm not at my best and become frustrated.					
4	When the group members are slack in their job, I make an attempt to work a little bit more.					

٥	When the sum of the work grows, my effort is proper.					
٦	When we're all working together in the group, I fell bored.					
٧	When I succeed with my coworkers, I'm happy.					
٨	My effort will be affected if I don't finish the task by the deadline in its entirety.					
٩	Members of the group break from their tasks I don't think working with my co-workers is enjoyable.					
١٠	I feel dissatisfied when my co-workers waste my efforts.					
١١	Social connection has a significant influence on overall success.					
١٢	worked with coworkers while pretending indifference about the workplace.					
١٣	Social relationships get					

	more complicated as a group gets bigger.					
١٤	The participant's odds decrease as the sum increases.					
١٥	The lack of good relationships among a group's members leads to conflict.					
١٦	The happy emotion experienced when one person is held accountable for the group alone.					
١٧	Our ability to cooperate decreases as our group size increases.					