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THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL LAZINESS AND THE MEANS TO OVERCOME IT IN A MARTIAL LAW

У статті розглядається ефект соціальних лінощів, який полягає в тому, що збільшення чисельності групи призводить до зменшення індивідуальної продуктивності її членів. Автори аналізують особливості прояву цього ефекту серед студентів закладів вищої освіти. У «нормальних» умовах групове навчання має ряд переваг, серед яких налагодження комунікацій, соціалізація, набуття навичок роботи в групах тощо. Однак ефект соціальних лінощів може призводити до таких негативних наслідків, як втрата інтересу до навчання, зниження успішності, повна втрата мотивації до навчання.

Автори статті на основі аналізу наукової літератури та власних досліджень пропонують ряд інструментів для запобігання та подолання ефекту соціальних лінощів у студентському середовищі. Серед них: актуалізація індивідуальності та підвищення ідентифікації; вирішення проблеми безбілетника; якісне цілепокладання; системна залученість.

У умовах дистанційного навчання, яке характеризується асинхронністю, часовою розірваністю та нестійкістю соціальних зв'язків, ці інструменти втрачають свою ефективність. Автори статті пропонують розробити нові інструменти, які враховують особливості дистанційного навчання.

Серед таких інструментів, які запропонували студенти, є: формалізація групових стосунків; групова соціалізація; групова робота; чітка ідентифікація особистості; проектний підхід.

У висновку автори статті стверджують, що ефект соціальних лінощів в умовах війни набув нових рис і вимагає оновленого інструментарію.

Ключові слова: соціальні лінощі, студенти, дистанційне навчання, групове навчання, інструменти запобігання та подолання ефекту соціальних лінощів

The article considers the effect of social laziness, which is the increase in the number of groups leading to a decrease in the individual productivity of its participants. The authors analyze the features of this effect manifestation among students of higher education institutions. Under "normal" conditions, group study has several advantages, including communication, socialization, acquiring skills of working in groups, etc. However, the effect of social laziness can lead to negative consequences such as a loss of interest in education, a decline in academic performance, a complete loss of motivation to study.

Based on the analysis of scientific literature and their own research, the authors of the article suggest a number of means to prevent and overcome the effect of social laziness among students. The means include actualizing individuality and enhancing identification; solving the problem of the freeloaders; qualitative target setting; systematic engagement.

In the context of remote study, characterized by asynchrony, time discontinuity and unstable social ties, these means lose their effectiveness. The authors of the article suggest developing new means that take into account the peculiarities of remote study.

The means suggested by the students include formalization of group relations; promoting group socialization; group work; establishing clear identity of the individual; adopting project-based approach. In conclusion, the authors of the article state that the effect of social laziness in the conditions of the war has

acquired new features and requires an updated means to overcome it.

Keywords: social laziness, students, remote study, group learning, means to prevent and overcome the effect of social laziness

Formulation of the problem. Although the problems of social laziness have long been under consideration among researchers, new factors of nowadays have changed the perception of this phenomenon. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the key factor that influenced the change in the behavior of groups was the factor of rapid digitalization but the invasion of Russia has significantly shifted the focus. Moreover, the longer the war lasts, the more variable the manifestations of social laziness become, primarily due to accumulation of psychological fatigue and social burnout, and motivational volatility becomes more and more unpredictable. Therefore, studying the peculiarities of social laziness in wartime conditions, the shifts in individual priorities and values due to war and the fragmentation of families is imperative.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Recent research and publications by N.P. Gornostai [3], O.L. Korobanova [1], M. Olson [4], V. V. Shveda [5, 6, 7], O.A. Kozlova, K.V. Komarova, S. Harkins, B. Latane and K. Williams [8], K. Earley [9], C. Bond and L. Titus [10] and others have addressed social laziness. However, most studies focus on "normal" conditions and "normal" functioning of social groups, even in remote work and/or study conditions.

The purpose of the article. The article aims to study the effect of social laziness in the student environment, characterized by instability and insufficient formation of relationships, asynchrony, lack of systematic communication and time and distance discontinuity.

Outline of the main material. The effect of social laziness or Ringelmann effect, originally described by the eponymous researcher Maximilian Ringelmann in 1913, is one of the basic group effects in social psychology. The essence of this effect lies in the fact that the increase in the number of groups decreases individual productivity of the members, and, consequently, the group's overall productivity.

The subconscious of a person drives them to save their effort, despite the undeniable individual importance of the result, as the overall outcome depends on other participants' efforts. Consequently, there's a redistribution of responsibility and a reassessment of the significance of individual contributions.

S. Harkins, B. Latayne, J. Sweeney, and others have delved into the effect of social laziness. Their studies revealed that 1-2, sometimes 3, individuals exert the primary efforts in a group, while the rest contribute minimally, occasionally feigning effort.

For example, the aforementioned Bibb Latane, Kipling Williams and Stephen Harkins conducted experiments on a group of six individuals seated in a semicircle. The participants were blindfolded and wearing headphones. Deafening applause and shouts were broadcast through the headphones to the group of participants. The participants were deprived of the opportunity to hear their own or other people's shouts and applause. The group was to shout or applaud as loudly as possible, alone or with others. It was expected that each participant would shout louder because they would feel relaxed. In reality, social laziness manifested itself to the fullest: in the group, the participants shouted or applauded three times less noise than each of them individually. However, in the opinion of the participants of the experiment, they performed equally in both cases [8].

Subsequent research unveiled insufficient coordination among group participants, despite being necessary for achieving results.

It is worth noting that Ringelmann himself formulated a group efficiency formula as

$$C = 100 - 7 \times (K - 1),$$

where C represents the average individual contribution of participants, and K signifies the number of group members [2]. He believed interpersonal processes distracted groups from their full potential, identifying two sources of performance decline: loss of motivation and coordination problems, with the former associated with the effect of social laziness.

Among the main reasons for the manifestations of social laziness, it is advisable to note:

- the above-mentioned lack of coordination between the group members;
- reduction of motivation due to the overall growth of the group, as well as to the acceleration of the rate of such growth;
- uncertainty (some researchers even emphasize the anonymity) of the contribution of each member of the group;
- loss of personal identification; dispersion of liability that can be manifested even in the irresponsibility of individual members of the group.

Further research on this issue has revealed certain features of social laziness depending on external factors of personality formation and the environment of further functioning. In particular, in 1989, Christopher P. Earley conducted a study of social laziness, taking into account the influence of the cultural factor on this phenomenon. The experiment involved groups of individuals with Western (individualistic) and Asian (collectivistic) types of culture. An individualistic culture is characterised by the fact that individual goals of its members are no less (if not more) important than group goals, while in a collectivist culture, on the contrary, group goals prevail over individual goals. Earley suggested that social laziness may be less pronounced in collectivist cultures, which focus on achieving the overall result by the group rather than the individual. In his research, he demonstrated that Chinese managers, performing a number of hours-long tasks, worked harder in a group than US managers who made more effort working alone [9].

It is worth noting that the manifestations of social laziness are subject to people of any age, social status, sex, material wealth, religion, etc.

In accordance with the purpose, the article's focus is on analyzing the characteristics of social laziness among students in higher education institutions, predominantly involved in group studies. Such groups are formalized, and in the conditions of martial law, they are formal. Under the "normal" conditions (such we consider studying to 22.02.2024), group work exhibit advantages such as establishing and maintaining communications; socialization and formation of social ties; acquiring skills of group working, which over time transforms into the ability to work on a project-based approach; mastering critical thinking; forming a control system that involves the ability to maintain a sustainable feedback, etc. Among the shortcomings can be noted: conformism, social laziness and potential loss of individuality.

Group study involves the presence of a formal (according to the age) and an informal leader (institute of student self-government), rhythm of activities, time dependence, and formalization of relations outside the group and pluralism of relations within the group.

Under "normal" conditions, social laziness often stems the presence of the student group itself, since it involves minimal socialization and work in unstable mini-groups within a large student group. Therefore, the manifestation of this effect is inevitable, and the consequences can be a loss of interest in discipline, a decrease in success, and a complete loss of motivation for learning. Moreover, the brighter the individual effect of social laziness is manifested, the less time is required to reduce the success of the group as a whole, correspondingly accelerate the decline of group success, leading to imbalance and institutional jeopardy. Therefore, we can talk about a certain upward spiral of social laziness. Its manifestation leads to waning interest in subjects, declining success, and a complete loss of learning motivation.

Researchers have developed an effective set of means to prevent and overcome the effects of the social laziness, including:

- Actualizing individuality and enhancing identification. Therefore, the growing role of the individual is a precautionary measure that prevents impersonal participation in general educational, social or other types of student activities. When students feel their uniqueness and contributions are recognized, it bolsters their understanding of quality education's significance, positively influencing group dynamics and counteracting social laziness.

- Solving the classic problem of the "stowaways" or "freeloaders". Mansour Olson once convincingly proved that the impersonation of participation and the lack of public control leads to uncontrolled growth of the freeloaders [4]. It acknowledges that the problem under consideration is much more serious than the disrespect or greed of such freeloaders. In Ukraine, the volunteer movement is on the rise, which is essentially based on the mechanisms of the theory of collective action. For instance, some residents are supposed to decide to make their city cleaner and tidier. No, they would not decide to dismiss all the janitors, but rather to work together to facilitate their work, because the city is large and there are not enough janitors. Therefore, either the residents would decide to increase their contributions to the city treasury to hire more janitors, which in itself is not a guarantee of cleanliness, or they would cooperate with each other and make the city cleaner on their own. Naturally, some residents would work hard, some would work half-heartedly, and some would simply create the illusion of their participation. Thus, the same problem of the "stowaway" arises. Such a freeloader tries to do nothing, which, in turn, not only reduces the effectiveness of collective work, but can also lead to the fact that collective work may not take place. As is well known, a bad example is contagious. So half of the residents would work, and half would do nothing. Of course, there is a possibility that the first half of the residents would be completely conscious and responsible, with high motivation, but it is much more likely that a good idea to clean up the city would never be implemented because of freeloaders. It should be mentioned that the problem of freeloaders is most typical for large groups in which people do not know each other, and therefore communication and,

as a result, organisation of such groups is difficult. In other words, it could be argued that the impact of this problem is overestimated. However, this argument is refuted by the inhomogeneity of student groups, which is exacerbated by individual educational trajectory [7]. Upholding personal ethics and standards is an individual choice, yet the generalized impact of such students may disrupt existing norms, evaluation systems, and narrowing the pluralism of tasks and methods of their implementation, etc. This issue gains importance in academic integrity contexts. It is crucial to emphasize the individual significance of each student, establish intra-group public oversight, and avoid large group formations, as this might compromise educational quality, graduate competence, and national economic advancement.

– Qualitative goal setting. The pedagogical and teaching experience of the authors leads us to argue that most students lack goal-setting skills. Embracing the traditional SMART approach in goal setting enables the formation of qualitative and perceptible goals for both groups and their participants. Therefore, goals should be specific (answering questions like what, why, who, where, and which), measurable (answering how I will know when the goal is achieved), achievable (answering how I can attain the goal), relevant (answering if the goal is necessary), and time-bound (answering when). Additionally, goals should be intricately complex, interesting, and motivating to solve.

– Use of self-management and time management methods. Even the Pareto principle allows understanding how social laziness affects the motivation and engagement of students. Therefore, it is advisable to use time management tools, in particular: the Eisenhower matrix, the Benjamin Franklin method, the Charles Schwab method, the "tomato" method, the "Swiss cheese" method, etc. Adherence to rational approaches to time management will allow doing more with less effort, which will be supported by a positive emotional background.

– Systematic involvement. Utilizing classical competitive approaches, gamification in learning, establishing social connections, and fostering a friendly atmosphere diminishes the impact of social laziness. Social compensation approaches can also prove beneficial.

The above tools have proven to be effective. However, how effective will these means be in remote learning characterized by asynchrony, discontinuity in time, and unstable social ties?

During teaching activities, the authors engaged students in discussions regarding the relevant topic within the learning process, inviting them to develop means to combat social laziness should it arise within their groups.

In total, 54 responses were received from 4 student groups of different programme subject areas, accepting only answers displaying individual manifestations rather than retelling of theoretical material. Since the effect of social laziness is manifested in participants of any gender, age, social and financial situation, etc., the responses were processed without ranking. Multiple tools were allowed as options for answers.

Notably, not all students agreed that social laziness manifested within their groups. In summary, among the 54 responses, 6 indicated the absence of social laziness in the student group.

Classic means prevailed among the proposed means, but the following were encountered: formalization of group relations; group socialization; group work; clear identity of the individual; project-based approach; solution of the problem of non-acceptance of formal and lack of informal leadership; uncertainty of motivation.

Visually, the distribution of responses is depicted in Figure 1. (The "classic means" group comprises means discussed on the previous page: updating individuality and increasing identification, systematic engagement, quality goal setting, and addressing the problem of the freeloaders).

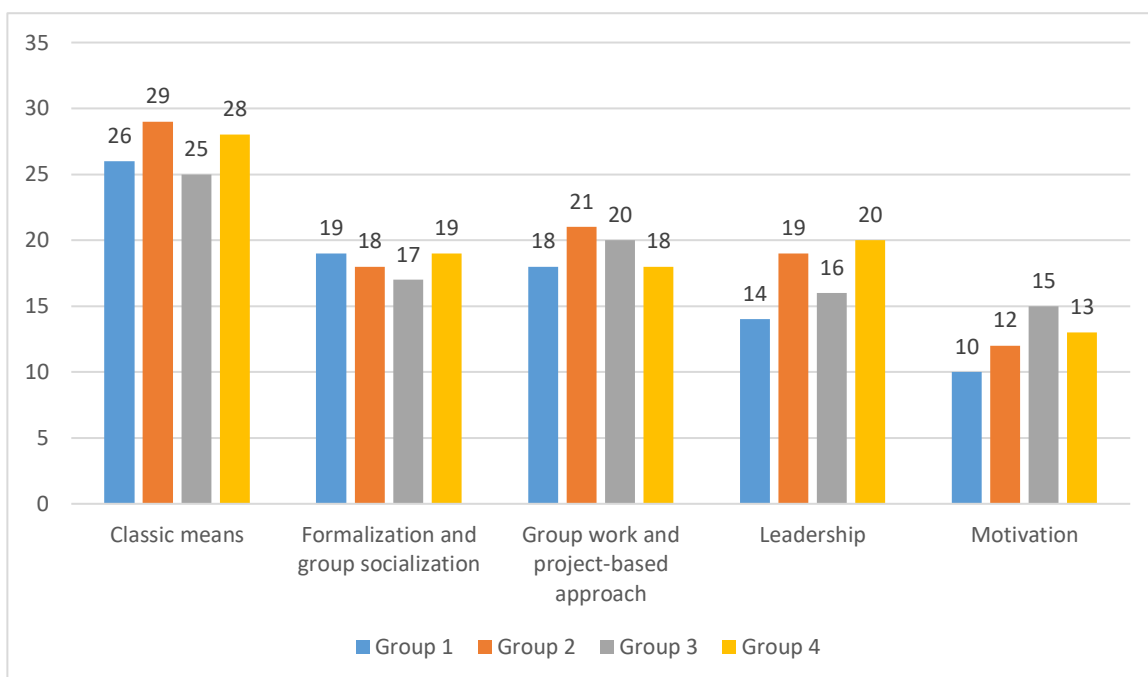


Figure 1. The distribution of the means suggested by students to overcome the group manifestations of social laziness.

When summarizing the proposals and disregarding responses influenced by knowledge formed during lectures, the most pressing issue regarding the manifestation of social laziness is the absence of formal structure within groups and the lack of socialization among students in the groups (see Figure 2).

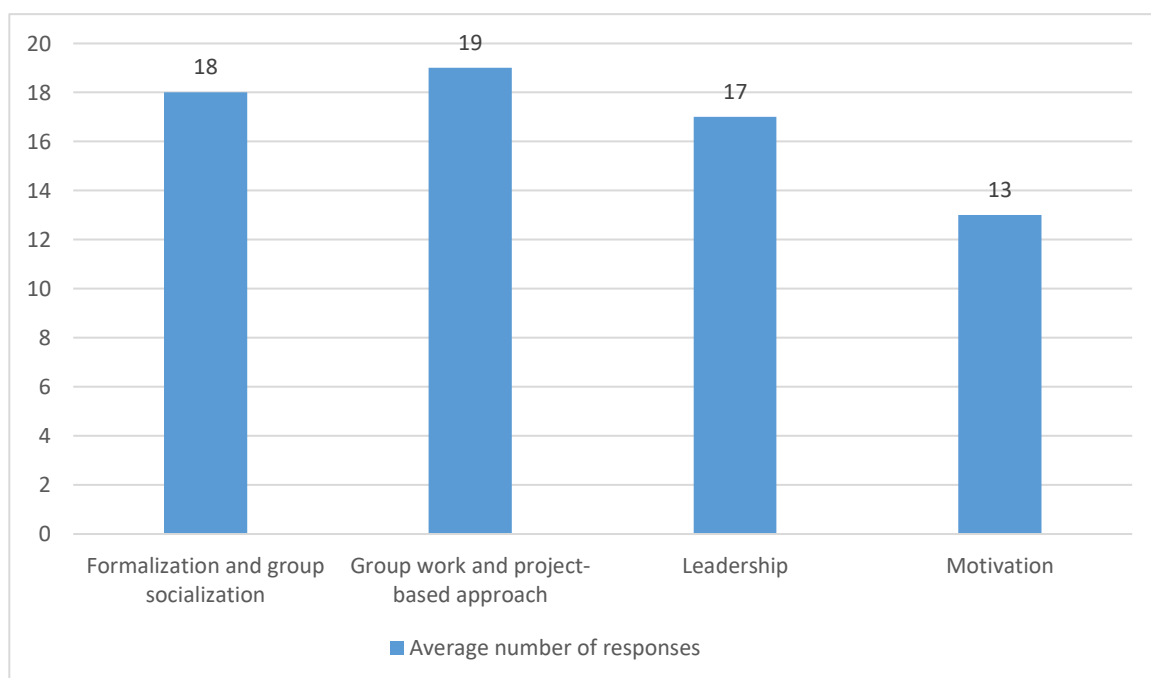


Figure 2. The average results of popularity of "non-classic" means to overcome social laziness.

Results. Based on the data presented, it can be inferred that the features of the educational process in the conditions of martial law have devalued the effectiveness of conventional means to combat the manifestations of social laziness. Instead, the need for group work and the importance of overcoming communication restrictions in remote study and communication have become a new necessity. Developing a formalized mechanism for group relations is advisable due to the challenges posed by asynchrony, time

and distance discontinuity hindering the formation of stable social bonds within groups. Even the role of student group leaders has shifted predominantly toward upholding traditions. In real scenarios, these leaders often act as conduits for the student body's position, convey official institutional stances, facilitate communication, and manage conflicts within student groups, etc.

It is worth noting that facilitation can be seen as an effective tool to combat social laziness. For example, N. Triplett discovered that cyclists show the highest race results when they compete with other athletes rather than when they do it for time.

To verify this assumption, Triplett conducted the first-ever social and psychological experiment, which consisted of the following: the psychologist asked children to spin a spinning rod for speed. In one case, the children twist the spinning alone and in an empty room, and in the other, in the company of their peers. The result showed that children who twisted the spinning in the presence of other children did it faster than those who did it alone [10].

Thus, it is social facilitation, as the opposite of social laziness, which can be used in educational activities, bringing elements of competition and sports performance into the learning process.

Furthermore, it can be argued that amid martial law and associated crises, social laziness might serve as an individual's psychological response and an attempt to redefine priorities.

Conclusions. Consequently, the effect of social laziness in the conditions of the war has acquired new features and, accordingly, requires an updated means to overcome. In further studies, the authors aim to broaden the scope by soliciting new student suggestions for combatting social laziness and identifying mechanisms to implement new and updated means to combat the manifestations of social laziness in the student environment, including by studying the effect of social facilitation.

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