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| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Influences of Online Learning on Social Loafing

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| ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to explore the Influences of Online Learning on Social Loafing. Since the pandemic, online learning has become more popular, and students have been exposed to various cooperative and collaborative learning exercises. These group activities are not usually well-liked by students. Students who work in groups face various challenges, such as personal conflicts, unequal effort, scheduling, and others. This study utilized the qualitative research method. This study's sixteen (16) participants were selected through purposive sampling. The researcher's semi-structured interview guide was used in data gathering through interviews. The thematic analysis of Braun and Clarke was used to analyze the qualitative data. Ten (10) emergent themes were established from the participants' responses, classified under three (3) overarching themes that provided answers to sub-problems. The emergent themes were extracted from the significant statements of the key participants. For the description of the participants on their experiences during online learning, the overarching theme, *Experience of the Participants of Social Loafing in an Online Learning, has three (3)* emergent themes that were classified as *Relying on the group leaders; Absence of collaboration; Poor Prioritization*. The Factors of Online Learning that Contribute to Social Loafing has four (4) emergent themes that were classified: *Group size, Internet Connectivity issue, Digital distractions, and Types of Leaders, while* the Implications of the Participants' Contribution to Social Loafing in Online Learning has three (3) emergent themes that were classified as *Affecting Group's Quality of Performance and Grades; Affecting Mental Health; Affecting groups relationship.* The study's findings and recommendations were used to improve the issues encountered during online learning on social loafing.

1. Introduction

Online learning has been growing steadily worldwide because of new technologies and the widespread use of the Internet. It also provides learners with ubiquitous learning opportunities and makes the knowledge processes more learners-centered, thus adopted by higher education institutions globally (Dwivedi et al., 2019). In addition, online education is the new normal in India and has become a requirement now. India has throughout been using traditional learning and has upheld it. The rise of online education, which has raised education standards, compelled India to transfigure the education system. Online education is sprouting in India, making a sturdy position. While online learning had existed long before the epidemic, it had a distinct purpose: it provides learners with access to modules and subjects they would not have had otherwise, or it supplemented what people were learning in real classrooms (Khan et al., 2021).

Furthermore, group work has always had challenges, even face-to-face instruction, specifically in social loafing. Social loafing refers to the inclination to decrease one's personal effort when collaborating within a group as opposed to the effort exerted when working independently (Williams & Karau, 1991). Moreover, as the demand for online learning increases, technology and course design advances have allowed educators to incorporate many of the best face-to-face course practices into the online environment (Piezon & Ferree, 2008). Team-based learning, such as threaded discussion groups and small group activities, are among these methods.

Collaborative group work markedly enhances students' perception of learning and problem-solving skills, leading to a more advanced level of learning than individual learning in isolation (Hiltz et al., 1999). Furthermore, group work has always had challenges, even face-to-face instruction, specifically in social loafing. Social loafing refers to the inclination to decrease one's personal effort when engaged in group activities, as opposed to the effort exerted when working independently (Williams & Karau, 1991).

In Southwestern Cebu, Philippines, Raul Tabanao, a Cebu Daily News digital writer, stated that many students struggle in an online class setting, especially in provincial areas that lack internet connectivity. According to a student, she is joggling on her studies because of the intermittent connection that could lead to difficulties in school activities (Tabanao, 2020). However, the Cebu lockdown (along with other global shutdowns) has made online classrooms the principal source of educational teaching for students of all ages. During school lockdowns in the Philippines, most universities, including the University of Cebu, have turned to online learning. Lecturers boosted the learning experience by fully utilizing digital media. Assessments have become more regular, allowing instructors to monitor each student's progress and intervene as needed. Thanks to online learning, each student can learn at their own pace. In addition to this, social loafing in online learning has been observed. Several factors were discovered, and evidence supports the claim. Working in a group during online learning requires more time and over-dependence on others, which is frequently at risk with student perceptions of distance education and online learning. Group work poses several issues for students, including, but not limited to, non-contributing group members, unequal workload, scheduling, and personal or social conflicts among group members (Becker et al., 1998).

Most of the past research focuses on the effect of social loafing on students, its impact on motivation, and the consequences of social loafing in online learning. The researcher has observed that social loafing is a common issue that frequently arises in group work, especially in online learning, where students encounter various circumstances. Most students prefer to avoid working in a group due to negative experiences with social loafing and the fact that they have to do too much work and do not receive individual credit. The researchers also observed that when a group member becomes a social loafer, he might lose any opportunity he may have had to further his skills and knowledge and lose his interest and motivation to go on.

In this study, the researcher hopes to establish a trend and an answer to how online learning influences social loafing. This study will advance new knowledge by contributing to the college school's society and give a unique contribution to the existing study done by other researchers. Thus, this research study will be conducted to determine the influences of online learning on social loafing and contribute to the current research.

2. Theoretical Background

This study is based on the theoretical framework of Linda Harasim's Online Collaborative Learning Theory, which is further bolstered by the principles of Latané's Social Impact Theory and the Collective Effort Model developed by Kipling Williams and Steven Karau.

The Main Theory of the study is Online Collaborative Learning Theory, proposed by Harasim (2012). The Online Collaborative Learning Theory presents an approach to learning that "focuses on using the Internet, collaborative learning, and knowledge building to transform formal, non-formal, and informal education for the information era." It focuses solely on the Internet's capabilities as a learning and knowledge-building tool. In addition, Online collaborative learning theory offers a learning event model and explores new ideas. By doing this, they can seek the conceptual knowledge necessary in which teachers enable and encourage students to work together to create knowledge to solve problems rather than simply repeating what they believe to be the correct answer. The teacher is an essential facilitator and participant in the knowledge community being studied (Harasim, 2012).

According to the online collaborative learning theory, peer discourse is essential to learning and is achieved through three stages of group discourse: idea generating, idea organizing, and intellectual Convergence. The first is idea generation, a creative technique that involves gathering groups to develop ideas. Divergent thinking within a group is often referred to as idea generation. It includes brainstorming, verbalizing, creating knowledge, and sharing ideas and viewpoints on a particular issue or problem. Many viewpoints are presented. The instructor's job is to encourage everyone in the group to participate actively and assist in creating

ideas. The next phase is idea organizing, and it is the beginning of conceptual change. Participants start to discuss in a more focused manner to clarify and cluster these numerous thoughts according to their relationship and similarities to one another when they come face to face with the new or different ideas developed by their peers or found in the course readings. Students' discussion and argument for choosing the strongest and eliminating bad ideas exhibit intellectual development and the beginnings of Convergence. During this stage, members frequently argue with one another. The third phase, known as Intellectual Convergence, is typically characterized by the emergence of shared comprehension, a common standpoint (even when disagreements are present), collaborative contributions to forming shared knowledge, and mutual understanding.

The second theory supporting this study is the Social Impact Theory, postulated by Latané et al. (1981). According to this theory, when people collaborate as a group, social influence is shared among the group members, and as the group size grows, each additional person has less impact. As the group grows, newcomers have less of an effect on the group because the first group has already formed a bond. In contrast, the new members are unfamiliar with the group's placement and formation. As a result, members may attribute to social loafing. According to Latané (1979), three factors may contribute to social loafing based on the social impact theory. The Social Impact Theory identifies three factors related to social loafing outcomes. The first is Attribution and Equity, which is the failure of a group member or the leader to distribute the workload evenly. In this case, an individual creates the illusion that their output is superior to others and may slack off because other members are less competent and skilled than they believe. Submaximal Goal Setting follows, in which group members minimize the quality of work produced while increasing the standards of each on what was expected of them. Finally, there is the Lessened Contingency, which occurs when group members need to learn the goal of a said activity because if a member excels in his effort, all members will receive credit. If one makes a social loaf, group members will not blame theirs for their lack of action in the task. Then, one might believe it is better to work on a project alone because the credit for effort and blame is all on the individual.

In addition to the social impact theory, according to Karau and Williams (1993), if a person finds an activity meaningful and essential to them, they will put in much effort. Fostering a high level of task interdependence among group members is critical for the success of any online group. Unfortunately, as an individual's work becomes more dependent on the work of another individual or group of individuals, students may struggle to determine a sense of personal accomplishment.

Furthermore, social impact theory identifies three key characteristics of social impact. The amount of influence a person feels in group settings is determined by the following: (a) the group's strength (power or social standing), (b) proximity (physical or psychological distance), and (c) the number of people in the group wielding social influence. The primary critical factor is the influencing source's salience, importance, or intensity (O'Gorman et al., 2016). The second important factor is proximity in space or time, communication clarity, or filters (Latané, 1981). Finally, the number of influence sources directed at individuals is determined by the number of people in the group. The theoretical emergence of social loafing in online learning can be explained by the second fundamental attribute of social impact, immediacy. Because technology reduces social impact, allowing individuals to disengage from the group, online learning is inherently susceptible to social loafing. Individuals become more isolated, believe their lack of participation is not visible, and exert less effort on the group task. As a result, because it explicitly accounts for the distance between group members, the theory applies to the study of online learning on social loafing (Williams et al., 1981; Kidwell & Bennett, 1993; Chidambaram & Tung, 2005).

The third theory that is associated with the study is the Collective Effort Model, proposed by psychologists Kipling Williams and Steven Karau in 1993, which contends that working on a group task reduces motivation among group members due to lower expectations of successful goal attainment and a decrease in the goal's subjective value.

According to the Collective Effort Model, two key factors influence individuals' levels of motivation level when working in a group. Their expectations regarding their ability to achieve the goal and the value they place on the plan. Both of these factors combine to lower someone's motivation. Due to this lack of desire, they are likely to contribute less than they can. According to the model, people will only work on a group project if they believe their efforts will contribute to achieving goals that they value individually. Thus, students engage in social loafing because they think that working individually on their desired outcome has a more significant impact than working in a group where all members of the group share outcomes.

Several social loafing models have been developed, such as evaluation potential, social impact, and effort dispensability. However, none are genuinely integrative models, and none consider more than a few conditions where loafing is reduced. Karau and Williams proposed the collective effort model (CEM) to fill this conceptual gap. According to the CEM, social loafing is best understood by combining the motivational principles of expectancy theory with the principles of self-evaluation theory. The CEM emphasizes that individual effort and motivation in collective forms are unaffected if certain factors are met or satisfied.

Many researchers have said that collaborative learning can be a disadvantage. According to Solomon, despite the success of collaborative learning, it becomes a problem when it comes to group activity; common problems are free-riding, sucker effect status sensitivity, and the "ganging up on the task" phenomenon. Many others successfully utilize collaborative techniques in online learning, such as teaching computer science and the teaching of electronics (Solomon et al., 1987).

According to Short, Williams, and Christie (1976), educators face challenges in online learning because the tools and opportunities for discovering students' preconceptions and cultural perspectives are frequently limited by transmission limitations that limit the view of body language and non-verbal visual cues. Some researchers contend that these limitations harm communication effectiveness. Others have argued, and Walther (1996) agrees, that the unique characteristics of online learning (most commonly asynchronous text-based interaction) can lead to enhanced or hyper-communication.

In addition, according to Harasim (2012), in Online Collaborative Learning, the teacher or the instructor plays a vital role in this event; they must act as members of the knowledge community. Students are encouraged to solve problems collaboratively through discourse rather than recite correct answers. Most previous studies have widely regarded Online Collaborative Learning as a practical learning model that positively impacts student's academic achievement.

Moreover, according to Bates (2015), Online Collaborative Learning theory is based on and incorporates cognitive development theories that focus on conversational learning, deep learning conditions, academic knowledge advancement, and knowledge construction. The OCL theory supports an effective teaching strategy for educators, but several design principles must also be considered when educators design courses. Furthermore, Bates stated that when assuring complete integration of fundamental ideas, procedures, and discipline norms within the educational cycle. Teachers and students may encounter various difficulties when using a constructivist approach to creating online learning activities. Instructors can take specific steps to assist students unfamiliar with this learning method.

Even though online learning promises exciting and innovative opportunities, these opportunities come with challenges. Researchers have observed that online learning has influenced social loafing. It is noted that a common complaint of students who enrolled in online learning is participating in a group as they do not have time to collaborate effectively or that there will be an underachiever on their team for whom they will have to compensate (Brindley et al., 2009; Piezon et al., 2008; Wright et al., 2005).

Further, Tsai and Guo (2011), for illustration, had 93 college students participate in their experimental study that looked into how OCL affected learners' performance in an on-campus "Internet Marketing" course. The findings of this study indicated that OCL Has a favorable effect on pupils' academic achievement; it also suggested that more research be conducted in different courses and countries at different educational levels.

Social loafing can be traced by Max Ringelmann, a French agricultural engineer who coined the term Ringelmann effect or, in today's times, social loafing. He researched group performance and discovered that "groups did not meet their potential." The study defines potential as an individual's overall capacity for output or work. In addition, he carried out an experiment known as Ringelmann's Rope-Pulling Experiment. The study discovered that participants exerted less individual effort in a group rope-pulling experiment than they could have if they had done it alone. As the size increased, group performance was lower than expected based on the simple sum of individual performance. He said dyads pulled 93% of their efforts, trios 85%, and groups of eight 49%. Ringelmann deduced from these observations that individuals perform below their potential when working in groups. Ringelmann effect was named after this effect (Kravitz et al., 1986; Latané et al., 1979; Wen et al., 2018).

In addition, Bibb Latané, Kipling Williams, and Stephen Harkins discovered the volume of sound individuals produced while clapping and shouting alone and in groups. According to their findings, "the larger the group size, the less effort each individual puts in." They reasoned that larger groups put less social pressure on each group member. Later that year, Steven Karau and Kipling Williams proposed that social loafing was caused by people "feeling less connected with the reward or recognition they would receive after a project."

Concerning this, it was discovered in a study by Woodman et al. (2011) that lazy people in a group tend to social loaf. They are the people who have a low effort in group performance but excel at working alone, which is why it is attributed to an individual's personality. Narcissistic people's personalities tend to be lazy when working in a group because there is no chance for them to show off their work, and there are fewer chances to be credited. However, these individuals perform well when allowed to highlight their work. This study backs up previous research from Karau and Williams (1993), which found that individuals perform well when their work significantly impacts what the group produces. In other words, such people are eager to work and contribute significantly to the group when given the opportunity.

Several studies and constructs have been developed to explain social loafing in online learning. However, there are few studies— on the impact of online learning on social loafing. The great majority of research has been done in Western countries. Many of these previous studies attempted to ascertain the relationship between online learning and social loafing. In the study, 140 students were randomly assigned to 32 teams in a laboratory to complete a brainstorming task using group systems software. In technology-supported team settings, it is believed that team size and dispersion are the two primary drivers of social loafing. The findings show that team size influences social loafing and is mediated by responsibility diffusion, blame attribution, and dehumanization (Alnuaimi et al., 2010).

In their thorough review of the social loafing literature, Simms and Nichols (2014) systematically break down this phenomenon and pinpoint the variables that have the potential to either amplify or diminish social loafing within group settings. Their extensive research identified areas of potential interest for both structural and interpersonal interventions to reduce social loafing. The researcher's study underscores the potential to enhance an individual's capacity to make a distinct and identifiable contribution to a group by reducing the group's size. This reduction in group size, along with making individual contributions more conspicuous to others, serves as an effective strategies in mitigating social loafing tendencies within teams.

Ferree's (2008) study delved into the perceptions of social loafing within online learning groups. The study's specific goal is to determine whether social loafing is perceived to exist in online education. A random sample of 227 online learning students who participated in online learning groups was chosen for the study. Given that online courses require group projects, there needs to be more consistency in the project nature. The size of naturally occurring groups ranged from two to nine members. Each group made its own decisions regarding individual and group goals, team composition, and group roles. After the group project, each member was asked to complete a Web-based survey about their feelings about the project. Following the study's findings, participants admitted to social loafing during group activities based on their self-reported social loafing. 35.7% of the 227 people polled believed other group members were social loafing. Only 8% of NWC students thought other group members were wasting their time, whereas 77.4% of public university students thought other group members were wasting their time. This study shows that social loafing exists and may be expected in online learning classrooms. The issues raised in previous studies of face-to-face classes are similar to those observed in this study of online group projects. Because the distance learning environment already has other potential distractions for group work, social loafing can impede the effectiveness of group work in an online learning environment.

In a separate study, Donald and Piezon (2005) examined student-group interactions in the context of online groups and their relation to social loafing. This research uncovers ways to improve the online learning experience through collaborative groups. The study presented a variety of theories and related literature to support its claim. Both traditional and distance education courses are affected by social loafing. On the other hand, distance education courses should be considered because group interaction becomes a more significant issue. Online group activities are significantly more challenging to organize and execute efficiently due to the physical separation, social isolation, and temporal distance associated with distance education courses.

A different study conducted by Robert Jr. (2020) on Behavior-Output Control Theory, Trust, and Social Loafing in Virtual Teams aims to investigate the role of control and trust in social loafing in virtual teams. Researchers developed and tested a multi-level research model that demonstrates how team controls, trust, social loafing, and team performance are related. For each item, a seven-point Likert scale was used. Following one study, team monitoring is inversely related to individual social loafing. The findings show that control and trust, both alone and in combination, reduce social loafing. Under the study, social loafing is a significant issue for virtual teams. The reasons cited are a lack of social control, an inability to observe or trust that others are working, geographic dispersion, and reliance on electronic communications. However, little is known about control and trust's effects on virtual teams' social loafing. With the study's findings, the key to understanding the relationship between authority, confidence, and social loafing in virtual teams is to consider the type of trust. This study adds to our understanding of social loafing in virtual teams.

In a study of Perceptions of Social Loafing in Online Learning Groups: A survey of Public University and U.S. Naval War College students. This study on online learning students surveyed 227 students involved in group work in an online setting. They sought to discover the difference between a face-to-face class and online learning. They found that the antecedents located in a face-to-face setting have similarities in online learning, with both the perception of social loafing in online learning groups and the perception of social loafing in face-to-face environments having similarities of social loafing.

Jackson and Harkins (1985) conducted a study in which participants' expectations of how hard their coworkers would work were manipulated. They discovered that individuals with low expectations of coworkers reduced their efforts to maintain equity. This implies that social loafing is more prone to happen within a group of high-achievers, as an individual may tend to reduce their efforts and assign the majority of the workload to other capable members of the group.

Moreover, instructors and teachers should consider how improved technology can help facilitate and track group performance. Recent advancements in synchronous classroom technology, LMS extensions, and collaborative software are intended to facilitate collaborative learning and improve student tracking. Individual group members, faculty, and administration must collaborate to ensure that the system fosters an environment conducive to successful goal achievement. Furthermore, as stated by Covington and Muller (2001), rewards such as grades communicate about a student's progress and competence while increasing the likelihood of certain behaviors.

In the Philippines, a study on social loafing was conducted on all of the consistent dean lists at the University of Immaculate Conception (UIC). According to the study, students engage in social loafing when they believe their group members are not contributing to the group activity (Rogers et al., 2013).

3. Objective of the Study

This research aimed to investigate the impact of online learning on social loafing within the student body of the University of Cebu's Main Campus during the academic year 2022-2023. In particular, the study aimed to delve into college students' encounters with social loafing in the context of online learning, identify the factors within online learning that promote social loafing, and assess the implications of these factors on participants' engagement in social loafing during online learning.

4. Methodology

This section discussed an outline of the research methods being followed in the study. It provides the specific research design chosen by the researchers based on the reasons for the choice and a description of where the research will mainly occur. It also includes the names of the participants and how they were sampled, instruments used for data collection, and procedures followed to carry out this study. The researcher also discusses how to collect and analyze the data.

4.1 Research Design

This research used a qualitative research method that utilized the Phenomenological Research Design. Phenomenological research design is a qualitative approach to research that seeks to comprehend and characterize the universal essence of a phenomenon. Phenomenology helps to explicate experiences that may be unfamiliar yet not well understood.

Furthermore, phenomenology is a research approach to eliminate biases and preconceived notions regarding human experiences, emotions, and responses to specific situations. The researchers opted for this research design as it affords a comprehensive exploration of a specific phenomenon within a defined context. It enables the collection of data and an in-depth analysis of the intricate details and the significance of these experiences. The researchers were committed to providing data to analyze the identified variables comprehensively.

4.2 Research Environment

The researchers studied at the University of Cebu-Main Campus on Sanciangko Street in Cebu City, Philippines. This campus offers a wide range of college programs, including engineering, business and accountancy, criminology, computer studies, customs administration, education, hospitality management, and arts and sciences. In addition to college programs, UC-Main Campus provides education services for preschool, grade school, junior and senior high school, and undergraduate and post-graduate degrees.

The University of Cebu, commonly known as U.C., is a private educational institution in the Visayas region, particularly in Cebu City, Philippines. They were founded in 1964 by Atty. Augusto W. Go initially operated under the name Cebu College of Commerce (CCC) with a small number of enrolled students, eventually growing and renamed Cebu Central Colleges. U.C. has consistently produced high-achieving students in various fields, with top performances in Board exams for engineering, maritime studies, marine engineering, naval architecture, nursing, accounting, criminology, and customs administration. Notably, the U.C. has made significant contributions to maritime education through partnerships with organizations such as the Norwegian Shipowner's Association, offering free education and guaranteed employment to maritime scholars.

The University of Cebu gained recognition as one of the top 10 universities in the country, with numerous accredited programs acknowledged by the Commission on Accreditation of the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities (PACU-COA) in 2004. It was awarded ISO and Det Norske Veritas (DNV) accreditation in 1998, which played a crucial role in enabling Filipino seafarers to work on international vessels and facilitating the flow of overseas remittances. The university operates across four campuses: UC-Main, UC Lapu-Lapu, U.C. Mandaue, UC Mambaling, and UC Banilad.

This study specifically involved the College of Teacher Education, and it focused on 3rd-year students pursuing a Bachelor of Secondary Education. The College of Teacher Education is one of the accredited programs within the University of Cebu and is led by Dr. Rex Argate. The college offers Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) and Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) courses. The BSEd courses offer majors in various subjects, including Biology, English, Filipino, Mathematics, Music, Arts, Physical Education and Health, Physical Science, and Social Studies.

4.3 Research Participants

The research participants were third-year Bachelor of Secondary Education student leaders in the College of Teacher Education at the University of Cebu—Main Campus. A selective sample was chosen through purposive sampling until data saturation was obtained. The researchers employed this sampling technique for specific reasons: they established clear criteria each participant needed to meet to be included in the study. The criteria revolved around selecting leaders with firsthand experience with online learning. They could provide valuable insights for the research while ensuring a diversity of characteristics and individual experiences related to the phenomenon under investigation.

4.4 Research Instruments

The researcher employed a guided, semi-structured interview approach, which included open-ended questions designed to elicit information and data regarding the impact of online learning on social loafing. Furthermore, the researchers developed open-ended questions to obtain insights into the participants' thoughts, feelings, and opinions. Notably, the research instruments were scrutinized for approval by the research advisor prior to their distribution, and a proposal hearing, validated by three experts, was conducted to ensure the validity of the study's methodology.

4.5 Research Procedures

In this section, we delve into the presentation of the data collection and data analysis processes. Here, we outline the methods and procedures employed to gather relevant information and the techniques and tools used to analyze the collected data. This portion of the study provides a comprehensive view of how the research was conducted, emphasizing the steps taken to ensure the accuracy and validity of the data. It serves as a critical bridge between the raw data obtained and the insights and conclusions drawn, shedding light on the rigorous process to make meaningful sense of the information gathered.

4.5.1 Data Collection.

Data collection involved a combination of face-to-face, one-on-one, and group interviews. The study's participants were third-year Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) students from the College of Teacher Education. After receiving approval from the Dean of the College of Teacher Education, the researchers contacted the selected participants through Messenger or in-person interactions. This approach allowed for a multifaceted exploration of the research topic, leveraging both individual perspectives and group dynamics.

The researcher ensured that each participant was provided with informed consent and allowed them to sign the document, acknowledging their agreement with the terms outlined. Upon obtaining the participants' permission, the interviews were audio recorded to capture the discussions comprehensively. It was emphasized that participants were expected to answer the questions honestly. The researchers formulated an open-ended, semi-structured interview with the assistance of three (3) experts to guide the inquiry effectively. During the interviews, the researcher also paid close attention to the participants' significant nonverbal cues, which could offer insights into their emotions and sentiments. Upon concluding the interviews, the researchers appreciated the participants' valuable contributions to the study. They also reassured the participants that all the data collected would be securely stored and used exclusively for research purposes.

Subsequently, the researchers transcribed the recorded interview files into Word documents. Each participant was provided a copy of their transcribed responses, ensuring that the written data accurately represented their perspectives and statements. This transparency and feedback mechanism aimed to maintain the accuracy and integrity of the participant's contributions to the research.

4.5.2 Data Analysis.

Upon the completion of data collection, the researchers embarked on a rigorous analysis process to extract pertinent and accurate information from the participants, thereby obtaining the required results. They meticulously reviewed all the data gathered, including recorded interviews and their notes taken during the interviews. During this phase, the researchers systematically documented and highlighted crucial details and insights related to the study's objectives, ensuring a clear understanding of the findings.

To perform the analysis, the researchers employed Thematic Analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke in 2006. Thematic analysis is a method designed to identify patterns or themes within qualitative data. Its primary objective is to uncover significant and noteworthy themes or patterns in the data, which can then be used to draw conclusions or insights regarding a particular issue. This approach allowed the researchers to effectively summarize and structure the data obtained from the study's participants. They identified commonalities and distinctions within the responses, discerning overarching themes and further delineating sub-themes as needed. Thematic analysis proved valuable in organizing and making sense of the rich qualitative data collected.

5. Results and Discussion
This section encapsulates the findings from the interviews with the selected participants based on their responses to the pertinent questions. The data collected has undergone a comprehensive analysis using the thematic analysis method as delineated by Braun and Clarke in 2006. This rigorous analysis has been instrumental in organizing and synthesizing the information to fully comprehend the study's objectives.

In this qualitative study, a profound understanding of the selected participants' transcribed responses served as the research's cornerstone. Each participant's responses were meticulously examined and comprehended to distill the essence of the content and establish its relevance to the study's objectives. From the transcripts of the interviews and questionnaires, the researchers extracted, documented, and encoded significant statements. These significant statements were systematically encoded to ensure adequate tracking and categorization, each assigned a unique number of responses and linked to the corresponding participant number. A total of 144 critical statements emerged, representing the experiences of BSED students regarding social loafing and the influence of online learning across the third-year levels. The researchers constructed meanings and interpretations for these 144 critical statements derived from the transcripts. The result was 144 coded and well-defined meanings that offered a straightforward and insightful elucidation of the participants' experiences.

The initial basic meanings were organized into clusters based on shared patterns of concepts and structure. These clusters of meanings were further consolidated to create 16 cluster themes. Subsequently, the cluster themes were refined and regrouped, with some merging to form 12 sub-themes. Finally, the 12 sub-themes were clustered together to shape the overarching themes known as emergent themes. Ten (10) emergent themes represented the significant themes elucidating the study's three (3) main research questions or problems. These emergent themes served as a means of providing comprehensive meaning and insight into the core issues explored in the study.

Throughout the data analysis process, conducted with a meticulous and in-depth application of the thematic analysis method by Braun and Clarke (2006), the researchers developed sixteen (16) cluster themes. These cluster themes were subsequently reorganized into twelve (12) sub-themes, which, in turn, were further distilled into ten (10) significant themes, referred to as emergent themes. These emergent themes were then categorized into three (3) overarching points, each contributing significant meaning to the study's sub-problems. The following is an overview of the primary themes along with their associated emergent themes:

I. The experiences of the participants on Social loafing in an Online learning
   1. Relying on the group leaders.
   2. Absence of collaboration.
   3. Poor prioritization.
II. Factors of Online learning that contributes to Social loafing.
   1. Group size
   2. Internet Connectivity Issue
   3. Digital distractions
   4. Types of leaders
III. Significance of the participant's contribution to Social loafing in online learning.
   1. Affecting Group's quality of performance and grades.
   2. Affecting mental health.
   3. Affecting groups relationship

The themes were created to describe and explain the study's answers to the questions. Each of the three (3) primary themes with different emergent themes is discussed here.

5.1 The experiences of the participants on Social loafing in Online learning.
The themes constructed with main themes described participants' experiences of social loafing as they faced and adapted to the changes in a group activity during online learning.

The following are the three (3) themes developed to describe the responses of the study's key participants to sub-problem number 1:

5.1.1 Relying on the Group Leaders

Relying on the group leaders. The theme obtained from the participant's response demonstrated the overall well-being of each student, where the participant wanted to pass the group activity on time and shoulder all the work. This emergent theme describes the participants' experiences during the group activity in online learning, in which they face difficulties and challenges in balancing the task and finishing it on time.

Participant 1 was asked about the experiences she faced during online learning, and she answered:

> So, during the uhhh online learning activities, uhhhh there are some where everyone is not cooperative, and there are some where they have contributed. As a leader in an online learning activity, I have experienced that it is really not easy, especially for those students who are not cooperative. As a result, you're the one who did the task. As a leader, you are responsible for everything. *(During online learning activities, there are some where everyone is not cooperative, and there are some where they have contributed. As a leader in an online learning activity, I have experienced that it is not easy, especially for those students who are not cooperative. As a result, you're the one who did the task. As a leader, you are responsible for everything.)*

Participant 11 added that:

> Ahmm...My experience during online class, there is a certain person or a group member that doesn't do his part in making the activity. He will only depend on others when he sees that there are more bright and hardworking than him. *(My experience during online class, there is a certain person or a group member that doesn't do his part in making the activity. He will only depend on others when he sees that they are brighter and more hardworking than him.)*

Participant 13 said:

> My latest experience with social loafing in a group during our online learning activities was a huge adjustments as I need to take over the things that were being missed. It was totally a struggle. *(My latest experience with social loafing in a group during our online learning activities was a huge adjustment as I needed to take over the things that were being missed. It was totally a struggle.)*

This emergent theme is aligned with the Online Collaborative Learning Theory by Linda Harasim. Online Collaborative Learning theory actively involves the Internet's communication capabilities (Hiltz & Turoff, 1978). They have based their instruction on knowledge construction, the gradual construction of knowledge primarily through asynchronous online discussion among students and between students and an instructor. In connection with this theme, based on the participants' experiences with the asynchronous discussion, they faced difficulties in which members needed help understanding the instructions, which resulted in group leaders stepping up on the task alone. Many members will only contribute to the group activity if they know the leader can. For instance, leaders need to monitor the members since they are in online learning due to limited internet access and interaction/socialization between group members. The members know that even if they cannot contribute, it will not affect the group activity because the group leader will do it. Like the theory, the group members need help understanding the task in which they want to avoid cooperating and want to depend on the leaders. They need help handling the group members during the online learning activity; in this way, social loafing occurs mainly during online learning, and many members will exert less effort in the group.

5.1.2 Absence of collaboration

Absence of collaboration. This emergent theme describes the latest experience and observation of the participant during online learning, where they face difficulties in handling the group due to social loafing and the limited interaction and cooperation among group members.

Participant 4 was asked about her experiences during the online learning, and she answered:

> So you know, just like that, so hmm....latest experience of me during online that involves something like that is through group activities like reporting. So there is a lot of latest experience, and mostly, the leaders

will always have to sacrifice; since I also experience it before, I am having a hard time to collaborate with my members, it is because mostly they will not call back. Mostly with our group... a lot... 5 to 6 members, but even if in that small group, but still each members still matter.... its because they have a specific...task, specially in research; it is still online setting during our research before. Yes, so it is difficult during research because not all of us will do the tasks. *(So you know, just like that, the latest experience of me online that involves something like that is through group activities like reporting. So, there is a lot of latest experience, and the leaders will always have to sacrifice. Since I have also experienced it before, I am having difficulty collaborating with my members because they will not call back. Mostly, our group has only 5 to 6 members, but even if in that small group, each member still matters because they have a specific task, especially in research. It was still an online setting during our research. Yes, so it is difficult during research because not all of us will do the tasks.)*

Participant 6 said:

My experience with online learning last year was..... that there was a report on my major subject. He refused to cooperate, even though we had already given him everything, so we proceeded with our report. *(My experience with online learning last year was that there was a report on my major subject. He refused to cooperate, even though we had already given him everything, so we proceeded with our report.)*

Participant 10 added:

Ahmm...in online, there was a certain time...where we are tasked to report and compile a portfolio. In my group that time, not only is she ahmm...unreachable, she is also constantly absent. *(In online, there was a certain time...where we are tasked to report and compile a portfolio. In my group at that time, not only was she unreachable, but she was also constantly absent.)*

The Social Impact Theory by Latané supports this emergent theme. This theory explains that when people collaborate as a group, social influence is shared among the group members, and as the group size grows, each additional person has less impact. As the group grows, newcomers have less of an effect on the group because the first group has already formed a bond. In contrast, the new members are unfamiliar with the group's placement and formation. As a result, members may attribute to social loafing. In connection with this theme, based on the participants' experiences during online learning, group members are having difficulties collaborating within the group, wherein they develop a behavior of depending on the leader's work. They assume they know a lot more than they think. Like the theory, the participant's group experience difficulties with members not contributing to the task, leading to the leader shouldering all the work.

5.1.3 Poor prioritization.
This emergent theme describes the latest experience of the participant during a group activity during online learning. In which the participants have different priorities in life and, enable them to focus on a specific task.

Participant 2 stated that:

If it's online learning, it is challenging to reach out to group mates cause,   of course, it is easy to ignore the group chat, and if your group mate doesn't want to communicate with you, it's easy to turn off data. There's nothing you can do because it's also not always good to call them every minute, so gathering the group is tough if it's online. *(In online learning, it is a challenge to reach out and gather my members. They will ignore and will not communicate in the group chat. I can do nothing because it is not good to call their attention constantly.)*

Participant 4 said:

So, as I said a while ago, mostly of the members are that...there are few updates of them; since we are in the online learning activity, it is very easy to see the message, and there are no replies, that is it. Then, all I do is rant in the GC, but no one will do the task at all. Unless in face to face, you can approach the person, that is all. *(As I have said, there are just a few updates from my members. Since we are in the online learning activity, it is easy to see the message. There are no replies. Then, all I do is rant in the GC, but no one will do the task. Unless face-to-face, you can approach the person, that is all.)*

Participant 10 added about when she felt that members are not focus on the task:

> Ahmm...in online, there was a certain time...where we are tasked to report and compile a portfolio. In my group that time, not only is she ahmm...unreachable, she is also constantly absent. *(In online, there was a specific time... when we were tasked to report and compile a portfolio. In my group at that time, not only was she unreachable, but she is also constantly absent.)*

This emergent theme is associated with the Online Collaborative Learning Theory by Linda Harasim. This theory focuses solely on the Internet's capabilities as a learning and knowledge-building tool. In connection with this theme, based on the participants' experiences, online learning affected the group members to focus on the task alone. In many instances, students need help with the Internet, household chores that need to be done, laziness, and the influence of online applications that lead them to social loafing in a group activity.

5.2 Factors of Online learning that Contributes to Social loafing
This overall theme has four (4) emergent themes describing the key participants' online learning factors contributing to social loafing. These four (4) emergent themes characterized the factors of Online learning that contribute to social loafing with this study's sub-problem number.

5.2.1 Group size.
This emergent theme explains how different factors about social loafing during online learning in terms of group activity affected the group. This is the most challenging part, in which students are grouped depending on the group sizes the teachers prefer.

During the one-on-one interview, Participant 8 asked under what circumstances do social loafing usually occur? answered:

> When there is a group project that has a lot of members. *(When there is a group project that has a lot of members.)*

Furthermore, Participant 11 was asked in a one-on-one interview the same question on the occurrence of social loafing replied:

> Sa... ahmm...in online, there are many of them than in face to face it is because, in face to face, you can easily approach them. Probably the large number size in a group because the bigger the group members are, they just depend on them. *(In online, there are many more than in face to face it is because, in face to face, you can easily approach them. Probably the large number size in a group because the more significant the group members are, the more they depend on them.)*

Participant 16 added:

> It is identifiable social loafing occurs in setting where there are more individuals engage in a particular task, group activities, team buildings, work place, etc. this mostly happens when there are a lot of members in a group. *(It is identifiable that social loafing occurs in settings where there are more individuals engaged in a particular task, group activities, team buildings, workplace, etc.; this mostly happens when there are a lot of members in a group.)*

The theme obtained from the participant's responses about the importance of a group size greatly affected the group members' behavior based on their experiences.

This emergent theme is aligned with the Social Impact Theory by Latane's (1981); social impact theory identifies three key characteristics of social impact. The amount of influence a person feels in group settings is determined by the following: (a) the group's strength (power or social standing), (b) proximity (physical or psychological distance), and (c) the number of people in the group determines the influence sources directed at individuals. In connection with this theme, group size plays an essential role in groups in which it identifies individuals' connection. Like the theory, it is crucial that if the group size is big, leaders cannot handle and monitor the members appropriately, resulting in social loafing.

5.2.2 Internet connectivity Issue
This emergent theme explains the participants' experiences during online learning on social loafing in a group activity, where they realize and discover that internet connection plays a challenging role for all students.

When asked Participant 9 what was her preference on doing a group activity and what was the factors why members can't cooperate with the group, answered:

> In online learning, it's hard to interact with your members, and one reason is the internet connection because not everyone has a stable connection. *(In online learning, it's hard to interact with your members, and one reason is the internet connection because not everyone has a stable connection.)*

Participant 10 added:

> There are a lot during online when the group member is having poor signal or connection. *(There are a lot online when the group member is having poor signal or connection.)*

Participant 13 respectfully stated that:

> It usually occurs in every group activity, online, as there are some members of the group who have no wi-fi and at the province which has poor signal. *(It usually occurs in every group activity, online, as some group members have no wi-fi and at the province, which needs a better signal.)*

This theme explains the difficulties faced by the participants and members of the group during online learning that affected the members' attention to cooperate.

The Online Collaborative Learning Theory supports this emergent theme. It focused heavily on Internet communication (Hiltz & Turoff, 1978). In particular, the invention and adoption of the internet presented a paradigm shift and had profound consequences for teaching and learning. The creation of knowledge, not just the transmission of knowledge, has become the primary method for learning in today's collaborative online environment. In connection with the theme, the internet is the main component of online learning. Due to the intermittent connection here in the Philippines, students have difficulties connecting and logging in to websites, leaving them out of the discussion. Like the theory, participants discovered that if the problems faced with the internet continue, social loafing in online learning will also keep growing.

5.2.3 Digital Distractions.
This emergent theme explains the participant's experiences of social loafing during online learning, where they have recognized that other digital platforms can distract group members.

During the one-on-one interview, Participant 5 was asked to elaborate on his experiences.

> Ahhh, online too.... Online as well as at home. Even at home, although we have a lot to do, we can be easily distracted. So, sometimes, there are many responsibilities at home. Sometimes, our attention is half. Instead of doing what should be done, like, for example, in our home. Our research is distracting because the rest of our team is theirs. Their bed is close to their working table. So, they seem to be tempted... It's more comfortable and tempting for them to just sleep. So that's him. *(Online learning has a lot of distractions, especially when we are at home. Sometimes our attention is half because there are many responsibilities at home also. Some of my members working table is their bed, so its tempting to just sleep.)*

Participant 13 stated that:

> When it comes to online learning, students' are just being lazy because of technology; they don't need to study because they can readily search for the answers. While face-to-face, they are being hard working as it is so hard to pass if we won't study. *(When it comes to online learning, students were just lazy because of the technology, like they don't need to study because they can readily search for the answers. While face-to-face, they are hard-working as it is hard to pass if we don't study.)*

Participant 15 said:

> One of the circumstances in which social loafing usually occurs is the students focus on social media or online games. *(One of the circumstances in which social loafing usually occurs is the students focus on social media or online games.)*

Similar to the findings of the theme, this emergent theme is consistent with Online Collaborative learning. It focused heavily on Internet communication (Hiltz & Turoff, 1978). Concerning this theme, based on the participant's experience during online learning, the participant realizes that the Internet can greatly help students. However, it also influences a lot of distractions for other digital applications, resulting in a loss of focus on the task. As the theory suggests, this causes them to lose focus on the task because they can easily switch to other applications that will satisfy their pleasure, which they do not want to cooperate and they are too lazy to do the task in groups.

5.2.4 Types of leader

This emergent theme describes the participant's experiences during online learning on social loafing, which affects the group's output. This is the most challenging experience where the leader and the group members struggle. This theme discusses the different types of leaders in a group, which will assist other leaders in dealing with the group members.

When the researcher interviewed Participant 4 about the most challenging experience in online learning that highly affected the group activity, replied:

> Ahmm...it is seldom seen face to face, but not really; I would say mostly,   in my own opinion, during online class, yeah...because they just depend on chu, chu, chu, chu. Also, it will depend on the leader cause there are leaders who are just chill. *(It is seldom seen face to face, but not really, I would say mostly, in my own opinion, during online class because they depend on. Also, it will depend on the leader because there are leaders who are just chill.)*

Participant 9 stated that:

> In online learning, when you are in a group with a studious classmate, you will just depend on him, and the leader is okay with that as they also want to work alone. *(In online learning, when you are in a group with a studious classmate, you will just depend on him, and the leader is okay with that as they also want to work alone.)*

Participant 12 respectfully added that:

> During online classes, then every grouping. It also depends on the leader if they are strict with the deadline. *(During the online class, then every grouping. It also depends on the leader if they are strict with the deadline.)*

The theme obtained from the participant response demonstrated the importance of a leader who will transform you as a learner and guide you in the activity. This helps stop social loafing in online learning.

This emergent theme is also associated with the Social Impact Theory. According to Latané (1979), three factors may contribute to social loafing based on the social impact theory. One of the three factors is Attribution and Equity, which is the failure of a group member or the leader to distribute the workload evenly. In this case, an individual creates the illusion that their output is superior to others and may slack off because other members are less competent and skilled than they believe. In connection with the theme, the participant has the authority to give the task evenly to the members; it is the leader's job to monitor and supervise the members if they do their given task; if the leader fails to do that, then it will have resulted to an unorganized group. Like the theory, it is in the hands of the leaders how they can help the members, transforming them, coaching them, and leading them to better learning.

5.3 Significance of the participants contribution to Social loafing during online learning.

This overall theme describes the study's sub-problem: what are the involvement of the contributions of the participants to social loafing during online learning.
Three (3) compelling themes were generated from the responses of the key participants. The three (3) compelling themes are as follows:

5.3.1 Affecting Group's Quality of Performance and Grades

This emergent theme describes the effects of social loafing in the participant's group activity during online learning. Poor quality performance due to the lack of members' collaboration and cohesiveness within the group would result in poor grades.

During the one-on-one interview of Participant 1, asked how did social loafers affect the group activity during online learning, answered:

Uhmm, the effect of social loafing on my activity during online learning is that the outcome is far from my expectations. Sometimes, the bad side is that there is no unity within the group. It would depend as well on the leader and how he will stand for the group to be united. The outcome will be good if the leader will take responsibility for those students who did not contribute and if the leader will want to have a better outcome even if it's unfair on the part of the leader. Yes, it affects my grade because, as a group, you need to have unity so that all of you are supporting each other. *(The effect of social loafing on my activity during online learning is that the outcome is far from my expectations. Sometimes, the wrong side is that there is no unity within the group. It would also depend on the leader and how he will stand for the group to be united. The outcome will be good if the leader takes responsibility for those students who did not contribute and if the leader wants a better outcome, even if it's unfair on the part of the leader. Yes, it affects my grade because, as a group, you need to have unity so that all of you support each other.)*

Participant 11 also answered with her way on how social loafing affected the group activity:

Ahmm... the activity will be delayed if the members are slow or if they will not do their part. It will be affected especially to the grades and the performance. *(The activity will be delayed if the members are slow or if they will not do their part. It will be affected significantly to affect grades and performance.*

Participant 15 added that:

The activity will not be finished in time, and it will also affect your performance in your group. *(The activity will be finished after some time and will also affect your performance in your group.)*

The member's deficiency in the task that attunes with poor performance quality leads to the group's poor grades.

This emerging theme aligns with the principles of the Social Impact Theory, which pertains to the influence exerted on an individual's emotions, cognitions, or actions due to the actual, suggested, or perceived presence or actions of others. The application of social impact varies from the diffusion of responsibility to social loafing, stage fright, or persuasive communication. Concerning this theme, based on the participants' experiences during online learning, group members experienced a decrease in the quality of their performance because many members needed to cooperate and relied on the leaders' actions, which will eventually decrease grades. Like the theory, the participants experience an influence by another source; it may be by their peers or any source that will let them inhibit this behavior.

5.3.2 Affecting Mental Health
This emergent theme describes the study's sub-problem. This theme describes how the participants were affected mentally and developed mental stress and anxiety for shouldering all the tasks within the group activity during online learning.

During the one-on-one interview of the Participant 9, asked the effects of social loafing within the group during the online learning group activity, answered:

It would really affect me mentally because it is really stressful, and it would also affect my grades. *(It would affect me mentally because it is stressful, and it would also affect my grades.)*

Participant 16 stated:

It is evident that effects of social loafing in group activity during online learning is negative additional stress and overall encouragement of discontinuance to finish the task. *(It is evident that the effects of social loafing in group activity during online learning are negative additional stress and overall encouragement of discontinuance to finish the task.)*

This emergent theme explains the participants' issues that affected their mental stability, such as overthinking, which led to anxiety and stress.

This emergent theme is supported by the Cannon-Bard theory of Emotion by Walter Cannon and Philip Bard, suggesting that physiological responses can produce diverse emotions. With the theme, emerging mental health issues impacted the participants' mental and physical health. The participants reported having stress, another mental issue that affected their concentration.

5.3.3 Affecting groups relationship

This emergent theme explains the issues the participants faced that affected their group during online learning, resulting in an unorganized group and conflict among the members.

When the researcher interviewed Participant 2 about the most challenging experience that highly affected their group activity, replied:

> So, suppose we were in a group on the previous task, and he practiced social loafing. In that case, if we were group mates again on the next group task and he showed the same performance as before, I won't give him a second chance because it's difficult to give chances, and he'll just abuse it. *(Supposedly, we were in a group on that previous task, and he practiced social loafing. If we were group mates again on the next group task and he showed the same performance as before, I wouldn't give him a second chance because it's challenging to give chances, and he'll abuse it.)*

Participant 6 added that:

> It's really bad to say that I'm going to condemn, but that's the only way to stop social loafing. *(It's bad to say that I'm going to condemn, but that's the only way to stop social loafing.)*

Participant 12 stated that:

> Ahmm...I will exclude them to the group, exclude the group members who did not contribute and those who are belong to this social loafing. *(I will exclude them from the group, excluding the group members who did not contribute and those who belong to this social loafing.)*

This emergent theme is associated with the Social Impact Theory by Latané, defined by Latané et al. (1981). According to the idea, when people collaborate as a group, social influence is shared among the group members, and as the group size grows, each additional person has less impact. As the group grows, newcomers have less of an effect on the group because the first group has already formed a bond. In contrast, the new members are unfamiliar with the group's placement and formation. As a result, members may attribute to social loafing. Concerning the theme, emerging issues in the group where members did not cooperate resulted in disorganization and lack of group unity. As stated in theory, if the group's relationship has been harmed, it is difficult to collaborate and form bonds because the members are social loafers who do not want to be a part of the group because they feel excluded.

6. Conclusion

The objective of this research was to examine the impact of online learning on the phenomenon of social loafing among college students at the University of Cebu - Main Campus during the academic year 2022-2023. This study specifically investigated the experiences of college students who exhibit social loafing behavior in an online learning environment. It also explored the factors that lead to social loafing in online learning and the potential consequences of this behavior on the students.

The research findings revealed a total of sixteen cluster themes, further categorized into twelve sub-themes and organized into ten emergent themes, which were then distilled into three overarching themes that shed light on the sub-problems at hand. In exploring college students' experiences of social loafing in online learning, the overarching theme "The Latest Experience of Participants During Online Learning" encompassed three emergent themes: "Relying on Group Leaders," "Absence of Collaboration," and "Poor Prioritization." Additionally, an examination of factors contributing to social loafing identified four overarching themes, namely "Group Size," "Internet Connectivity Issues," "Digital Distractions," and "Types of Leaders." Lastly, the implications of participants' contributions to social loafing in online learning were encapsulated by the overarching theme "Implication of Participants' Contribution to Social Loafing in Online Learning," which included three emergent themes: "Affecting the Group's Quality of Performance and Grades," "Affecting Mental Health," and "Affecting Group Relationships."

Based on the findings of this study, to foster a safer communication environment in online learning, it is crucial for group leaders to proactively engage with all members, facilitating effective communication and problem-solving. Group leaders should also monitor progress and motivate to enhance the sense of achievement among group members, thereby boosting their self-esteem. Additionally, educators should aim to make learning enjoyable and engaging, employing group activities that inspire student participation and reduce instances of social loafing. Encouraging students to use daily planners and time management techniques can help them stay focused and motivated, ultimately improving their academic performance. Furthermore, institutions should establish clear standards for online resources, teaching and learning guidelines, and student performance evaluation while actively supporting instructors in adopting innovative online teaching methods. Training and support for distance learning teachers,

students, and parents are essential. Lastly, focusing on students' mental health and offering support when needed is paramount in creating a holistic and practical online learning environment.

The study specifically delved into the social loafing experiences of student leaders within the College of Teacher Education, but it did not encompass regular students, who are also susceptible to social loafing, nor did it account for colleges where male students predominantly dominate the student body.

The researcher proposes three potential avenues for future research. First, a quantitative study is recommended to assess how online learning affects students' academic performance, emphasizing its connection to social loafing. Second, a research focus should shift to the perspectives of social loafers, delving into the motivations and factors driving their behavior. Lastly, investigating the influence of motivation on social loafing in blended learning environments can provide valuable insights for educators and institutions seeking to mitigate this phenomenon and enhance the overall learning experience.

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