ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

Paranoid ideation and emotional instability as drivers of social loafing among civil servants

Tochukwu Matthew OGUEGBE
Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka Anambra State, Nigeria

Nnaemeka Chukwudum ABAMARA
ORCID: 0000-0002-3425-4709
Kampala International University, Western Campus Ishaka-Bushenyi Uganda
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Anambra State Nigeria

Izuchukwu L.G. NDUKAIHE
Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi State Nigeria

Pamela Adaora OGBOZOR
Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu State Nigeria

Leonard Nnaemeka EZEH
Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka Anambra State, Nigeria

Abstract. *Purpose*. The study investigated paranoid ideation and emotional instability as drivers of social loafing among civil servants in Awka Nigeria. *Method*. The participants (N = 129) consist of 24 males and 105 females with an age range of 22 to 44 years and a mean age of 32.5. The study utilized these instruments: Social Loafing Scale developed by P. W. Mulvey and H. J. Klein, Revised Paranoid Thoughts Scale by D. Freeman with colleagues, and Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale by K. L. Gratz and L.Roemer. Correlational design and hierarchical multiple linear regression analysis were used to analyse data. *Findings*. On paranoid ideation, the result at r = .09, p > .05, (M = 16.84 and SD = 4.75) indicated no significant relationship between reference ideation of paranoid ideation and social loafing; while r = .47, p < .001, (M = 23.95 and SD = 6.49) indicated a significant relationship between persecution ideation of paranoid ideation and social loafing. Emotional response non-acceptance, emotional awareness difficulty, emotional regulation difficulty, impulse control difficulty, emotional clarity of emotional instability, and paranoid ideation had a significant driving effect on social loafing. While reference ideation and the goal of emotional instability record no significant driving effect on social loafing among civil servants. *Value of results*. Today, social loafing has become a cancer that destabilizes both organizational and group efforts in private and public organizations. Therefore, this study cross-examined whether paranoid ideation and emotional instability are drivers of social loafing among workers. This study was the first of its kind to explore dimensions of paranoid ideation and emotional instability on workers' social loafing, therefore the researchers submitted that other scholars should re-investigate these variables in a different setting or context to determine the generalization of this study. *Implementation for practice*. The study recommended that organizations develop plans and strategies that are psychologically driven to expose their workers to the knowledge of emotions and paranoid ideation.

Keywords: paranoid ideation; emotional instability; drivers of social loafing; civil servants.

Address: F46V+MW2, Ishaka, Uganda.   **E-mail**: abamaranc@kiu.ac.ug; nc.abamara@unizik.edu.ng

Introducton

The multiplicity of work groups in the Nigerian work environment has seen workers whose deindividuation tends to have an unintended consequence in decreased personal accountability and low exerted effort in a group task. These perhaps have led the workers not to contribute significantly to the overall organisational productivity and well-being. Hence, P. Mefoh and C. Nwanosike submitted that sharing work with co-workers often reduces individual performance which in turn leads to less productivity (Mefoh, Nwanosike, 2012). This tendency of workers, not to exert desired effort in group tasks is known as social loafing.

Social loafing is the reduction in a person's motivation and effort that occurs when an individual works collectively on a task compared to when the same person works alone or coactively on the task (Karau, Williams, 1993). This reduction in effort in team or group settings (when a maximum individual effort is expected) can have debilitating effects on group performance. Similarly, research has shown that social loafing is a robust and pervasive phenomenon that negatively impacts workers and organizational performance (Hardy, 2019; Karau, Williams, 1993). This sap workers' performance (i.e., decreases in effort) due to social loafing has been found in cognitive tasks such as signal detection, brainstorming, and target identification which hinders workers and organizational performance (Brickner, Wingard, 2018; Harkins, Petty, 2012). R. O. Ajiboye and O. Afolabi pointed out that loafing impacts group members with a potential side effect of lack of satisfaction (Ajiboye, Afolabi, 2019). This feeling of lack of satisfaction expressed by a group member will in turn lead him or her to become disappointed and depressed at the end of the task.

Ironically, several reasons explain why workers engage in social loafing. One explanation was that workers socially loaf to avoid the possibility of taking personal blame for organizational failure which is known as "hiding in the crowd," the process of blame avoidance that involves a decrease in a personal effort that is designed to help the individual avoid or reduce personal blame for group (or personal) failure: In other words, the worker attempts to decrease personal identifiability within the organization, when organizational or personal failure is anticipated thereby making it harder for onlookers or organizational members to single out the worker (who is hiding in the crowd) as being responsible for the organizational failure on the task (Karau, Williams, 1993). Moreover, scholars also argued that workers decrease their effort in organizational settings / tasks to save effort for a future task when the worker knows that he or she will be acting alone or acting in a high-identifiability situation where maximum social benefit (e.g., recognition or praise) can be attained (Hardy, 2019). This strategy is labelled as "effort management" and maybe a strategy used by performers whose self-worth is contingent upon receiving praise or recognition from the social environment.

Studies have also reported other potential reasons that explain social loafing which include "effort matching" (where workers lower their effort level to match that of other less-hard-working members of the organization), getting "lost in the crowd" (where workers lower their effort level because they do not feel they can receive due credit for organizational success), and the "free-rider effect" (where workers allow other members of the organization to do the work because there is a belief that organizational success can be obtained without the worker's contribution / effort on the task (Karau, Williams, 1993). Hence, understanding more reasons why workers engage in social loafing is vital since social loafing is an issue raving the work environment today.

However, it is right to say that many attempts have been made by scholars to understand social loafing as an organisational behaviour as reported in the literature. Unfortunately, most of these attempts are centred on the personal and situational disposition of the members with little or no emphasis on the psychological state or well-being of the workers who constitute group members,

especially within Nigerian organisations. Consequently, the present study explores the state of group members' psychological well-being with social loafing by investigating paranoid ideation and emotional instability as predictors of social loafing among Nigerian workers. Paranoia ideation is an instinct or thought process which is believed to be heavily influenced by anxiety or fear, often to the point of delusion and irrationality (Collins, 2009).

Paranoid ideation typically includes persecutory beliefs or beliefs of conspiracy concerning a perceived threat towards oneself. Little wonder, D. Freeman and colleagues suggested that two dimensions make up the continuum of paranoid ideation: ideas of reference and persecutory ideation. They stated that ideas of reference ideation involve suspicious thoughts and feelings that neutral stimuli in one's environment may refer to them. While persecutory ideation involves the feeling that others are out to get you or can cause harm which is rarer and characteristic of clinically significant pathology (Freeman et al., 2005). So, the development of persecutory ideation is predicated on the experience of the increase in the occurrence of suspicious and referential thoughts that may be linked to workers' social loafing (Combs, Penn, 2004; Freeman et al., 2005; Green et al., 2008).

The occurrence of paranoid ideation depends upon affective processes particularly anxiety, perceptual anomalies, and cognitive reasoning biases which could mar a worker's collective effort (Freeman et al., 2005). Such that, in the case of a stressful and anxiety-provoking life event, if and when a worker experiences a confusing anomalous internal state, persecutory ideation at a clinical or delusional level which is more likely to occur in the presence of cognitive reasoning biases might cause workers' social loafing and affect the organizational productivity and effectiveness since defence against a negative threat to self is related to social comparison, social submission and external shame behaviours (Freeman et al., 2002; Freeman et al., 2008; Moritz, Woodward, 2005).

Emotional instability on the other hand is the degree to which emotions fluctuate over time (Larsen, Diener, 1987). It is also usually characterized as a tendency to exhibit rapid, unexpected, and intense affective reactions. Emotion instability is a core feature of disorders that span the internalizing and externalizing spectra (Beauchaine, Thayer, 2015; Hofmann et al., 2012). Researchers have observed links between emotional instability and self-inflicted injury, identity disturbance, substance abuse, depression, conduct problems, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, and borderline personality disorder (Beauchaine et al., 2007; Cappadocia et al., 2009; Crowell et al., 2014; Dvorak et al., 2014; Fossati et al., 2014; Gratz,Tull, 2010; Weiss et al., 2013).

Moreover, workers with emotional instability are more volatile; such workers face an increased risk of reacting violently and with harmful behaviours when coping with stress. These are characterized by strong negative emotions such as fear, worry, distress, and anger which can be injurious to the health and adjustment of the workers if not properly managed. Workers who score high on emotional instability tend to experience such negative feelings as anxiety, embarrassment, inability to adapt, and low self-esteem (Yu et al., 2010). So, emotional instability may impair workers' performances in situations that require flexibility and adaptability on the part of the worker, for emotions are built on the social context. Thus, a worker's emotional instability holds the impact of that worker's social loafing. Yet, workers feel nervous, anxious, frustrated, depressed, and abased when organizational management ignores their emotions. For instance, if workers cannot receive timely motivation from organizational authorities then their emotional instability may result in social loafing and behavioural and adaptation problems (Dickens, 2006). Therefore, emotional instability likely leads to proneness for social loafing tendencies and difficulties in prosocial behaviours expected of a worker (Cole et al., 2009; Koenigsberg, 2010).

Theory of moral disengagement served as a theoretical structure that guided the study variables (social loafing, emotional instability, and paranoid ideation) (Bandura, 1990a). The theory stated that workers are guided by personal standards of ethical behaviour, and most people tend to refrain

from acts that violate their standards of appropriate conduct (social loafing). It emphasized worker's moral evaluation is translated into actions through the self-regulatory mechanisms of moral agency. The two self-regulatory mechanisms are social sanctions and self-sanctions. Social sanctions are theorized to restrain immoral behaviour through the expectation that such behaviour will result in "social censure" and other adverse social consequences. Nevertheless, social sanctions are limited because most immoral behaviours go undetected. Yet people will still refrain from engaging in transgressions because of self-sanctions or self-condemnation. The theory of moral disengagement posits that individuals can suspend the self-regulatory processes that govern their ethical behaviours as suggested by socio-cognitive theory.

Furthermore, the theory suggests that when a worker engages in a behaviour that is inconsistent with his or her beliefs or his or her self-esteem, a state of psychological tension (emotional instability and paranoid ideation) is induced, as suggested by the theory of cognitive dissonance (Cooper, 2007). This tension results in emotional instability and paranoid ideation, resulting in workers seeking to reduce the dissonance between the behaviour and the belief. Hence, moral disengagement serves as a tool to reduce such dissonance by employing cognitive mechanisms that align with the worker's beliefs about his or her behaviour (social loafing).

In the context of exploring drivers of social loafing, emotional instability, paranoid ideation and three mechanisms of moral disengagement may play an important role. Specifically, the theory suggests that the mechanisms of diffusion of responsibility, dehumanization, and attribution of blame are important enablers of social loafing. To achieve the purpose of the study, which examines paranoid ideation and emotional instability which would serve as drivers of social loafing among workers. The following hypotheses were postulated in tandem with the theoretical framework in the study.

1. *There will be a significant driving impact of paranoid ideation dimensions on social loafing among civil servants.*
2. *Emotional instability dimensions will significantly drive social loafing among civil servant.*

Methodology

Participants

A total number of hundred and twenty-nine (129) civil servants from grade level 5 to 16 of Awka Anambra State Nigeria secretariat served as the participants in the study. A simple random sampling technique utilizing the balloting was used to select the participants. Wrapped paper ballots of twelve (12) which comprised of six (6) Yes and six (6) No in a plastic basket were tendered before 20 Ministries in the state except the ministry of education which was given wrapped ballots of eighteen (18) in plastic baskets, making it a total of 21 Ministries in the state. The first six civil servants in 20 ministries across the grade levels that picked yes were selected for the study. For the Ministry of Education, wrapped nine (9) yes and wrapped nine (9) no making it a total of eighteen were tendered to civil servants across the grade levels, those that picked yes were selected for the study and this tallies to the number of 129 participants. They consist of 24 (18.6%) males and 105 (81.4%) females. The ages of the participants ranged from 22 to 44 years and their mean age was 32.48 with a standard deviation of 6.36. Their marital status indicated that 98(76.0%) were married and 31 (24.0%) were unmarried. Their educational level shows that 34 (26.4%) have master's degrees (M.Sc.), 26 (21.7%) have bachelor's degree (B.Sc.) certificates, 28 (21.7) have higher diploma degree (HND) certificates, 19 (14.7%) have National Certificate Examination (NCE), while 22 (17.1%) have senior secondary school certificate examination (SSCE) respectively.

The Anambra State secretariat in the capital city of Awka housed various ministries of the state and the occupations of the workers are civil servants. The civil service of Anambra state in the capital city of Awka is dominated by women and hence the sample size is skewed towards female civil servants.

Measures

Social loafing

This variable was measured using a ***Social Loafing Scale*** (Mulvey, Klein, 1998). This is a 13-item instrument comprised of three scales used to measure perceived social loafing, anticipated lower effort, and sucker effect. Agreement with the entire item was measured on a 5-point Likert scale anchored from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The scale was adapted to Nigeria using a sample size of 100 participants from a sister state from south east geopolitical zone and the result recorded a Cronbach alpha reliability of .84 to .92 for the present study.

Paranoid ideation

This variable was measured using the ***Revised Paranoid Thoughts Scale*** (Freeman et al., 2019). An 18-item self-report measure of paranoia, designed for both clinical and non-clinical populations (Greenall, 2008). Part A assesses ideas of reference (e.g. 'it was hard to stop thinking about people talking about me behind my back') and Part B assesses ideas of persecution (e.g. 'I was convinced there was a conspiracy against me'). Each item is rated on a five-point scale (1–5). Scores on each scale can range from 16 to 80. Higher scores indicate greater levels of paranoid thinking. The overall scale has a reliability of 0.95, while the subscale has internal consistency for reference = 0.637 and for Persecution = 0.675 respectively. Using a Nigerian sample of 100 participants from a sister state in south east geopolitical zone of Nigeria for adaptation, the overall scale recorded a reliability of 0.97.

Emotional instability

Emotional instability was measured using the ***Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale*** by K. L. Gratz and L. Roemer: A 36-item, self-report measure developed to assess clinically relevant difficulties in emotion regulation as lack of goals, impulse, strategies, awareness, clarity, and non-acceptance (Gratz, Roemer, 2004). The items of the subscales are Non-acceptance of emotional responses (NONACCEPT): 11, 12, 21, 23, 25, 29; Difficulty engaging in Goal-directed behaviour (GOALS): 13, 18, 20R, 26, 33; Impulse control difficulties (IMPULSE): 3, 14, 19, 24R, 27, 32; Lack of emotional awareness (AWARENESS): 2R, 6R, 8R, 10R, 17R, 34R; Limited access to emotion regulation strategies (STRATEGIES): 15, 16, 22R, 28, 30, 31, 35, 36 and Lack of emotional clarity (CLARITY): 1R, 4, 5, 7R, 9. Participants were asked to indicate how often the items apply to themselves, with responses ranging from 1 to 5, where «1» is "almost never (0-10%)," «2» is "sometimes (11-35%)," «3» is "about half the time (36-65%)," «4» is "most of the time (66-90%)," and «5» is "almost always (91-100%)." The scale had high internal consistency α = 0.93. All of the DERS subscales also had adequate internal consistency, with Cronbach's α of .80 for each subscale. The overall reliability using a Nigerian sample population of 100 participants from as sister state in south east geopolitical zone of Nigeria stood at α reliability coefficient of 0.92.

Procedure

Before the commencement of the study, the authors discussed and explain the title of the study to the participants to secure their consent to participate. The participants selected signed consent forms to be included in the study. The consent form spelled out clearly that they have the right to withdraw at any time they deem fit in the course of the study. In the study, a simple random sampling technique was used to select the offices and the participants. However, before the pursuance and

distribution of the copies of the questionnaires; the researchers secured permission from the selected offices. This enabled the researchers to gain access to the participants used in the study. Over 145 questionnaires were distributed out of which 129 copies were returned and currently filled. The process took the researchers seven working days to complete.

Design and statistics

The study was cross-sectional research that adopted a Correlational design for the study because the objective of the study was to establish the relationship that exists between paranoid ideation, emotional instability, and social loafing. Hierarchical multiple linear regression analysis was used in testing the driving effect of the independent variables (paranoid ideation and emotional instability) on dependent variables (social loafing).

Results

Results from Tables 1 and 2 above among the demographic variables, at $r = .04$, $p > .05$, ($M = 1.81$ and $SD = 0.39$) indicated no significant relationship between gender and social loafing; $r = -.16$, $p < .05$, ($M = 32.48$ and $SD = 6.36$) indicated a significant negative relationship between age and social loafing; $r = .17$, $p < .05$, ($M = 2.76$ and $SD = 1.43$) indicated a significant relationship between educational qualification and social loafing; while $r = .49$, $p < .001$, ($M = 1.24$ and $SD = 0.43$) indicated a significant relationship between marital status and social loafing.

Table 1. Summary of descriptive statistics of social loafing, paranoid ideation and emotional instability

Sources	Mean	Std. Dev.	N
1. Social loafing	26.12	6.26	129
2. Gender	1.81	.39	129
3. Age	32.48	6.36	129
4. Educational qualification	2.76	1.43	129
5. Marital status	1.24	.43	129
6. Reference ideation	16.84	4.75	129
7. Persecution ideation	23.95	6.49	129
8. Emotional response non-acceptance	13.08	3.01	129
9. Goal difficulty	10.37	2.65	129
10. Impulse control difficulty	8.99	4.13	129
11. Emotional awareness difficulty	11.67	2.71	129
12. Emotional regulation difficulty	16.64	2.92	129
13. Emotional clarity difficulty	9.43	2.12	129

On paranoid ideation, the result at $r = .09$, $p > .05$, ($M = 16.84$ and $SD = 4.75$) indicated no significant relationship between reference ideation of paranoid ideation and social loafing; while $r = .47$, $p < .001$, ($M = 23.95$ and $SD = 6.49$) indicated a significant relationship between persecution ideation of paranoid ideation and social loafing.

On emotional instability, the result at $r = -.53$, $p < .001$, ($M = 13.08$ and $SD = 3.01$) indicated a significant negative relationship between emotional response non-acceptance of emotional instability and social loafing; $r = -.13$, $p > .05$, ($M = 10.37$ and $SD = 2.65$) indicated no significant relationship between goal difficulty of emotional instability and social loafing; $r = -.19$, $p < .05$, ($M = 8.99$ and $SD = 4.13$) indicated a significant negative relationship between impulse control difficulty of emotional instability and social loafing; $r = .03$, $p > .05$, ($M = 11.67$ and $SD = 2.71$) indicated no significant relationship between emotional awareness difficulty of emotional instability and social loafing; $r = -.35$, $p < .001$, ($M = 16.64$ and $SD = 2.92$) indicated a significant negative relationship

between the emotional regulation difficulty of emotional instability and social loafing; and $r = .39$, $p < .001$, ($M = 9.43$ and $SD = 2.12$) indicated a significant relationship between emotional clarity difficulty of emotional instability and social loafing.

Table 2. Zero-order matrix correlational coefficient of social loafing, paranoid ideation and emotional instability

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Social loafing	1.00												
2. Gender	.04	1.00											
3. Age	−.16*	−.04	1.00										
4. EQ	.17*	−.08	.59**	1.00									
5. MS	.49**	−.10	−.07	.27**	1.00								
6. RI	.09	−.35**	−.20*	.05	.21*	1.00							
7. PI	.47**	.15*	−.11	−.06	.23*	.32**	1.00						
8. ERN	−.53**	.17*	.35**	−.06	−.38**	−.11	−.26*	1.00					
9. GD	−.13	.25*	.54**	.40**	−.10	−.05	.08	.50**	1.00				
10. ICD	−.19*	.19*	.15*	−.02	−.27**	−.09	−.29**	.60**	.50**	1.00			
11. EAD	.03	−.17*	.20*	.03	−.16*	.27**	−.13	.55**	.41**	.61**	1.00		
12. ERD	−.35**	−.39**	.11	.06	−.09	.19*	−.54**	.44**	.24*	.49**	.34**	1.00	
13. ECD	.39**	−.20*	−.23*	.15*	.06	−.11	−.18*	−.45**	−.63**	−.19*	−.14	−.14	1.00

Note: EQ — Educational qualification; MS — Marital status; RI — Reference ideation; PI — Persecution ideation; ERN — Emotional response non-acceptance; GD — Goal difficulty; ICD — Impulse control difficulty; EAD — Emotional awareness difficulty; ERD — Emotional regulation difficulty; ECD — Emotional clarity difficulty; * — p < 0.05; ** — p < 0.01.

Table 3. Summary of hierarchical multiple linear regressions analysis of social loafing,paranoid ideation and emotional instability

Model	R	R²	Adjusted R²	Std. Err.	df	F	B	t	p
M1	.532a	.283	.260	5.39	4	12.25			
Gender							.09	1.12	.264
Age							−.25	−2.54	.012
EQ							.21	2.06	.042
MS							.42	5.07	.000
M2	.672b	.452	.425	4.75	6	16.75			
RI							−.22	−2.71	.068
PI							.47	6.11	.000
M3	.901c	.811	.791	2.86	12	41.49			
ERN							−.72	−9.20	.000
GD							−.18	−1.56	.122
ICD							−.22	−2.99	.003
EAD							.79	9.36	.000
ERD							.52	5.75	.000
ECD							.22	2.45	.014

Note: EQ — Educational qualification; MS — Marital status; RI — Reference ideation; PI — Persecution ideation; ERN — Emotional response non-acceptance; GD — Goal difficulty; ICD — Impulse control difficulty; EAD — Emotional awareness difficulty; ERD — Emotional regulation difficulty; ECD — Emotional clarity difficulty.

Results from Table 3 above, indicated that ***Model 1***: Which is the demographic variables of the workers accounted for 28.3% of social loafing, with $R = .532$, $R^2 = .283$, adjusted $R^2 = .260$, (F4, 124) = 12.25, $p < .001$. Gender of workers is not a significant driver of social loafing at (F4, 124), $\beta = .09$, $t = 1.12$, $p > .05$; while the other demographic variables of workers are significant drivers of social loafing at (F4, 124), $\beta = −25$, $t = −2.54$, $p < .05$ for age; (F4, 124), $\beta = .21$, $t = 2.06$, $p < .05$ for educational qualification; and (F4, 124), $\beta = .42$, $t = 5.07$, $p < .001$ for marital status respectively.

Results also indicated that **Model 2:** Which is reference ideation and persecution ideation of workers accounted for 16.8% of social loafing, with $R = .672$, $R^2 = .452$, adjusted $R^2 = .425$, $(F6, 122) = 16.75$, $p < .001$. Reference ideation of workers is nota significant driver of social loafing at $(F6, 122)$, $\beta = -.22$, $t = -2.71$, $p > .001$; while persecution ideation of workers is a significant driver of social loafing at $(F6, 122)$, $\beta = .47$, $t = 6.11$, $p < .001$.

Model 3: Overall accounted for 35.9% of social loafing, with $R = .901$, $R^2 = .811$, adjusted $R^2 = .791$, $(F12, 116) = 41.49$, $p < .001$. Emotional response non-acceptance of emotional instability of workers significantly and negatively drives social loafing at $(F12, 116)$, $\beta = -.72$, $t = -9.20$, $p < .001$; goal difficulty of emotional instability of workers did not drive social loafing at $(F12, 116)$, $\beta = -.18$, $t = -1.56$, $p > .05$; impulse control difficulty of emotional instability of workers significantly and negatively drives social loafing at $(F12, 116)$, $\beta = -.22$, $t = -2.99$, $p < .05$; emotional awareness difficulty of emotional instability of workers significantly drives social loafing at $(F12, 116)$, $\beta = .79$, $t = 9.34$, $p < .001$; the emotional regulation difficulty of emotional instability of workers significantly drives social loafing at $(F12, 116)$, $\beta = .52$, $t = 5.75$, $p < .001$, and emotional clarity difficulty of emotional instability of workers also significantly drives social loafing at $(F12, 116)$, $\beta = .22$, $t = 2.49$, $p < .05$.

Discussion

The study contributes to the literature by examining drivers of social loafing among workers in Awka Anambra state, Nigeria, focusing on the psychological enablers of paranoid ideation and emotional instability. The study outcome indicated that hypothesis one which stated that there will be a significant driving impact of paranoid ideation on social loafing among workers was partly confirmed. The findings indicated that persecution ideation drives social loafing, while reference ideation did not drive social loafing among workers. This shows that as reference ideation decreases, social loafing among workers decreases, on the other hand, as persecution ideation increases social loafing among workers increases. This probably might be the cause for the level of suspicious belief of these workers that one of their co-workers may be planning to harm them or jeopardise their career or chances of relevance hence, the worker resorts to putting in less effort in organizational or group work. This often has debilitating effects on the workers and organizational performance.

The outcome of hypothesis one is in partial agreement with the work of A. C. Ezekwueme on the amount of work, perceived social support, and paranoid ideation as predictors of burnout among brewery employees (Ezekwueme, 2021). They found out that the workload and paranoid ideation positively predicted burnout among the brewery workers studied. To this end, burnout or stressors may trigger paranoid ideation among workers (civil servants) and invariably may lead to social loafing of staff in an organisation.

On the other hand, the impact of persecution ideation on workers' social loafing may also include a lack of clarity on organizational goals, values, interests, and norms. Workers with a loafer attitude usually work in the lonely side of the organization where they work without knowing the happenings in the place they worked for. This condition certainly makes organizational, and group work ineffective and undesirable and brings about unwholesome behaviour that can damage the organizational image. The moral disengagement theory by A. Bandura stipulates that when a worker engages in behaviour that is inconsistent with his or her beliefs or his or her self-esteem, a state of psychological tension (paranoid ideation) is induced (Bandura, 1990a). This tension results in persecution ideation, leading the worker to seek a reduction in effort due to his or her belief.

Hypothesis two which stated that emotional instability dimensions will significantly drive social loafing among workers was also partly accepted. Because emotional awareness difficulty, emotional

regulation difficulty and emotional clarity of emotional instability showed a positive prediction of social loafing, while emotional response non-acceptance and impulse control difficulty indicated a negative prediction of social loafing. Conversely, goal difficulty of emotional instability is not a factor that fosters social loafing among workers. By implication, an increase in emotional awareness difficulty, emotional regulation difficulty and emotional clarity of emotional instability means an increase in social loafing, and a decrease in emotional response non-acceptance and impulse control difficulty is an increase in social loafing.

More so, a decrease in goal difficulty of emotional instability connotes a decrease in social loafing. This happens may be due to instability in emotional awareness, regulation, acceptance, and clarity on the part of the workers justifying the fact that when people are not emotionally equipped they tend to have an issue with teamwork or collective responsibility. Hence, when these workers fail in emotional stability their loafing behaviour may gear into the worst stage which might lead to feelings of fear, worry, low self-esteem, anxiety, violent, distress and anger which is injurious to the health, social relationship, performance, and proper workplace adjustment (Bandura, 1990b).

Conclusion

Today, social loafing has become a cancer that destabilizes both organizational and group efforts in private and public organizations. Therefore, this study cross-examined whether paranoid ideation and emotional instability are drivers of social loafing among workers. The outcome indicated that emotional response non-acceptance, emotional awareness difficulty, emotional regulation difficulty, impulse control difficulty and emotional clarity of emotional instability dimensions, and persecution ideation increase social loafing, while reference ideation and goal of emotional instability were not factors that drive social loafing among workers.

The study encountered limitations that majorly dwelt on the survey method adopted: The majority of the constructs in the study centred on an individual's subjective feelings which have the potential to undermine the accuracy of responses. However, the researchers attempted to reduce this bias by controlling for social desirability and explaining some of the constructs in the questionnaire. Subsequently, the researchers recommended the need for organizations to develop psychological strategies to expose their workers to the knowledge of emotions and paranoid (persecution) ideation. Since, factors like emotional response non-acceptance, emotional awareness difficulty, emotional regulation difficulty, impulse control difficulty and emotional clarity of emotional instability and persecution ideation increase social loafing: So, developing these strategic plans on emotions and paranoid (persecution) ideation and enlightening the workers about it will likely reduce social loafing among workers.

Secondly, social loafing is not something desirable and admirable. Therefore, workers should avail themselves of the opportunity for undergoing personal training and development on positive stable emotions since every unstable or difficult emotion and the existence of ideations in connection with social loafing will stand as a parasite for their effective personal growth and productivity in their place of work.

Finally, this study was the first of its kind to explore dimensions of paranoid ideation and emotional instability on workers' social loafing, therefore the researchers submitted that other scholars should re-investigate these variables in a different setting or context to determine the generalization of this study.

Conflict of Interest

The authors of this article declare no conflict of interest.

References

Ajiboye, R. O., Afolabi, O. (2019). Self-efficacy, collectivism, and social loafing of university workers in southwest Nigeria: Implications for staff-students social interactions. *KIU Journal of Humanities 4*(4), 327–326.

Bandura, A. (1990a). Mechanisms of moral disengagement. In W. Reich (ed.), *Origins of terrorism: Psychologies, ideologies, theologies, states of mind* (161–191). Cambridge University Press.

Bandura, A. (1990b). Selective activation and disengagement of moral control. *Journal of Social Issues 46*(1), 27–46.

Beauchaine, T. P., Gatzke-Kopp, L., Mead, H. K. (2007). Polyvagal theory and developmental psychopathology: emotion dysregulation and conduct problems from preschool to adolescence. *Biological Psychology, 7*(4), 174–184.

Beauchaine, T. P., Thayer, J. F. (2015). Heart rate variability as a transdiagnostic biomarker of psychopathology. *International Journal of Psychophysiology, 1*(3), 21–22.

Brickner, M. A., Wingard, K. (2018). *Social identity and self-motivation: Improvements in productivity. Unpublished manuscript*. Akron, OH: University of Akron.

Cappadocia, M., Desrocher, M., Pepler, D., Schroeder, J. H. (2009). Contextualizing the neurobiology of conduct disorder in an emotion dysregulation framework. *Clinical Psychology Review, 2*(9), 506–518.

Cole, P. M., Llera, S. J., Pemberton, C. K. (2009). Emotional instability, poor emotional awareness, and the development of borderline Personality. *Development and Psychopathology, 2*(1), 1293–1310.

Collins, W. (2009). *Collins English Dictionary: Complete and Unabridged 10th Edition.* William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd. 3. Informal sense: intense fear or suspicion, esp when unfounded.

Combs, D. R., Penn, D. L. (2004). The role of subclinical paranoia on social perception and behaviour. *Schizophrenia Research 69*(1), 93–104.

Cooper, J. (2007). *Cognitive dissonance: Fifty years of a classic theory*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Crowell, S. E., Baucom, B. R., Yaptangco, M., Bride, D., Hsiao, R., McCauley, E., Beauchaine, T. P. (2014). Emotion dysregulation and dyadic conflict in depressed and typical adolescents: evaluating concordance across psychophysiological and observational measures. *Biological Psychology, 2*(4), 2–13.

Dickens, W. T. (2006). Cognitive ability, the new dictionary of economics. Steve Durlauf, EfatNB (Eds) Benefits of Facebook friends: Social capital and College Students' use of Online Social Network Sites. *Journal of Computer-mediated communication, 12*(4), 1–9.

Dvorak, R. D., Sargent, E. M., Kilwein, T. M., Stevenson, B. L., Kuvaas, N. J., Williams, T. J. (2014). Alcohol use and alcohol-related consequences: associations with emotion regulation difficulties. *The American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse, 40*(2), 125–130.

Ezekwueme, A. C. (2021). Amount of work, perceived social support, and paranoid ideation as predictors of burnout among brewery employees. *Journal of Psychology and Behavioural Disciplines, COOU, 1*(1).

Forsyth, D. R. (2009). *Group dynamics*. New York: Wadsworth.

Fossati, A., Feeney, J., Maffei, C., Borroni, S. (2014). Thinking about feelings: affective statementalization, attachment styles, and borderline personality disorder features among Italian nonclinical adolescents. *Psychoanalytic Psychology, 3*(1), 41–67.

Freeman, D., Garety, P. A., Bebbington, P. E., Smith, B., Rollinson, R., Fowler, D., Dunn, G. (2005). Psychological investigation of the structure of paranoia in a non-clinical population. *The British Journal of Psychiatry, 186*(5), 427–435.

Freeman, D., Garety, P. A., Bebbington, P., Slater, M., Kuipers, E., Fowler, D. . . . Dunn, G. (2005). The psychology of persecutory ideation II: a virtual reality new study. *The Journal of nervous and mental disease, 193*(5), 309–315.

Freeman, D., Garety, P. A., Kuipers, E., Fowler, D., Bebbington, P. E. (2002). A cognitive model of persecutory delusions. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology, 41*(4), 331–347.

Freeman, D., Gittins, M., Pugh, K., Antley, A., Slater, M., Dunn, G. (2008). What makes one person paranoid and another person anxious? The differential prediction of social anxiety and persecutory ideation in an experimental situation. *Psychological Medicine, 38*(08), 1121–1132.

Freeman, D., Loe, S. B., Kingdon, D., Startup, H., Molodynski, A., Rosebrock, L., Brown, P., Sheaves, B., Felicity Waite, F., Bird, J.C. (2019). The revised Green et al., Paranoid Thoughts Scale(R-GPTS): psychometric properties, severity ranges, and clinical cut-offs. *Psychological Medicine*, 1–10.

Freeman, D., Pugh, K., Antley, A., Slater, M., Bebbington, P., Gittins, M. . . .Garety, P. (2008). Virtual reality study of paranoid thinking in the general population. *The British Journal of Psychiatry, 192*(4), 258–263.

Gratz, K. L., Roemer, L. (2004). Multidimensional assessment of emotion regulation and dysregulation: Development, factor structure, and initial validation of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale. *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioural Assessment, 26*, 41–54.

Gratz, K. L., Tull, M. T. (2010). The relationship between emotion dysregulation and deliberate self-harm among inpatients with substance use disorders. *Cognitive Therapy and Research, 3*(4), 544–553.

Green, C., Freeman, D., Kuipers, E., Bebbington, P., Fowler, D., Dunn, G., Garety, P. (2008). Measuring ideas of persecution and social reference: the Green et al. Paranoid Thought Scales (GPTS). *Psychological medicine, 38*(01), 101–111.

Hardy, C. J. (2019). Social loafing: Motivational losses in collective performance. *International Journal of Sport Psychology, 2*(1), 305–327.

Harkins, S. G., Petty, R. E. (2012). Effect of task difficulty and task uniqueness on social loafing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 4*(3), 1214–1229.

Hofmann, S. G., Sawyer, A. T., Fang, A., Asnaani, A. (2012). Emotion dysregulation model of mood and anxiety disorders. *Depression and Anxiety, 2*(9), 409–416.

Karau, S. J., Williams, K. D. (1993). Social loafing: A meta-analytic review and theoretical integration. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 6*(5), 681–706.

Koenigsberg, H. W. (2010). Affective instability: Toward an integration of neuroscience and psychological perspectives. *Journal of Personality Disorders, 2*(4), 60–82.

Larsen, R. J., Diener, E. (1987). Affect intensity as an individual difference characteristic: A review. *Journal of Research in Personality, 2*(1), 1–39.

Mefoh, P. C., Nwanosike, C. L (2012). Effects of group size and expectancy of reward on social loafing. *Ife Psychologia, 20*(1), 299–239.

Moritz, S., Woodward, T. S. (2005). Jumping to conclusions in delusional and non-delusional schizophrenic patients. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology, 44*(2), 193–207.

Mulvey, P. W., Klein, H. J. (1998). The impact of perceived loafing and collective efficacy on group goal processes and group performance. *Organizational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes, 74*(1), 62–87.

Weiss, N. H., Tull, M. T., Anestis, M. D., Gratz, K. L. (2013). The relative and unique contributions of emotion dysregulation and impulsivity to posttraumatic stress disorder among substance-dependent inpatients. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence, 12*(8), 45–51.

Yu, A., Tian, Y., S. W., Vogel, D., Kwok, R. C. (2010). Can learning be virtually boosted? An investigation of online social networking impacts. *Computers and Education, 5*(5), 1494–1503.

Параноидальное мышление и эмоциональная нестабильность как причины социальной лености среди госслужащих

ОГЕГБЕ Точукву Мэтью
Университет Ннамди Азикиве, штат Авка Анамбра, Нигерия

АБАМАРА Ннаэмека Чуквудум
ORCID: 0000-0002-3425-4709
Кампальский международный университет, Западный кампус Ишака-Бушени, Уганда

НДУКАИХЕ Изучукву Л.Г.
Федеральный университет Алекса Эквуеме в Ндуфу-Алике, штат Эбони, Нигерия

ОГБОЗОР Памела Адаора
Государственный университет науки и технологий Энугу, штат Энугу, Нигерия

ЭЗЕ Леонард Ннаемека
Университет Ннамди Азикиве, штат Авка Анамбра, Нигерия

Аннотация. *Цель*. В исследовании изучались параноидальные мысли и эмоциональная неста-бильность как причины социальной лености среди государственных служащих в штате Авка, Нигерия. *Метод*. В выборку (*N* = 129) вошли 24 мужчины и 105 женщин в возрасте от 22 до 44 лет, средний возраст 32,5 года. В исследовании использовались следующие инструменты: «Шкала социальной лености», разработанная П. У. Малви и Х. Дж. Кляйном, «Переработанная шкала параноидальных мыслей», предложенная Д. Фрименом с коллегами, и «Шкала трудно-стей в регулировании эмоций» К. Л. Граца и Л. Ремера. Для анализа данных использовались корреляционный анализ и построение иерархической множественной линейной регрессии. *Выводы*. Что касается параноидального мышления, результат при *r* = 0,09, *p* > 0,05 (*M* = 16,84 и *SD* = 4,75) не указал на существенную связь между эталонным мышлением параноидаль-ного мышления и социальной леностью; в то время как *r* = 0,47, *p* < 0,001 (*M* = 23,95 и *SD* = 6,49) указывали на значительную связь между идеями преследования или параноидальными идеями и социальной леностью. Непринятие эмоциональных реакций, трудности с эмоциональ-ным осознанием, трудности с эмоциональной регуляцией, трудности с контролем импульсов, эмоциональная неясность, эмоциональная нестабильность и параноидальное мышление показали значительный вклад в социальную леность. В то время как бред отношений и эмоци-ональной нестабильности не оказывают существенного эффекта на социальную леность среди государственных служащих. *Ценность результатов*. Сегодня социальная леность преврати-лась в раковую опухоль, дестабилизирующую как организационные, так и групповые усилия в частных и государственных организациях. В этом исследовании был проведён перекрестный анализ того, являются ли параноидальные идеи и эмоциональная нестабильность движущими силами социальной лености среди сотрудников. Это исследование было первым в своем роде, в котором изучались аспекты параноидального мышления и эмоциональной нестабильности среди социальной лености сотрудников, поэтому другим учёным следует повторно изучить эти переменные в другой обстановке или контексте, чтобы определить границы обобщения результатов этого исследования. *Реализация на практике*. По итогам исследование органи-зациям рекомендуется разработать планы и стратегии, психологически направленные на то, чтобы познакомить своих работников с эмоциями и параноидальным мышлением.

Ключевые слова: параноидальное мышление; эмоциональная нестабильность; социальная леность; государственные служащие.