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A Study on Impact of Group Cohesion on Social Loafing at Selected IT Companies, Hyderabad

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Abstract: This research investigates how group cohesion impacts social loafing and individual effort. Social loafing, a decrease in individual effort within groups, undermines productivity, while group cohesion, reflecting team unity, may counteract this. Through quantitative analysis of employee survey data, we found a significant negative correlation between cohesion and social loafing, indicating that cohesive groups foster greater individual accountability and motivation. This study highlights the critical role of group cohesion in improving team performance and reducing social loafing in organizational settings.

Keywords: Group Cohesion, Social Loafing, Team Performance, Individual Motivation, Employee Effort, Workplace Dynamics, Organizational Behaviour.

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's collaborative work environments, teamwork is often seen as the driving force behind innovation and organizational success. However, working in groups does not always guarantee equal participation from all members. One common challenge observed in team settings is social loafing—a phenomenon in which individuals tend to put in less effort when working collectively than they would when working alone. This reduced contribution can quietly affect productivity, lower team morale, and hinder the overall success of projects that depend on coordinated effort.

An important factor that may help address this issue is group cohesion, which refers to the sense of unity, trust, and interpersonal connection among team members. When individuals feel closely connected to their team, they are more likely to feel responsible for shared outcomes and motivated to contribute meaningfully. Cohesive teams often foster mutual accountability and a sense of belonging, reducing the likelihood that members will disengage or withhold effort. While prior research highlights the potential of group cohesion to counteract social loafing, the relationship between these two constructs remains complex and influenced by contextual factors—particularly in knowledge-intensive and innovation-driven industries.

This study examines this dynamic within select IT Companies, a biotechnology organization focused on developing innovative bio-based solutions. In such a research-driven environment, collaboration across departments is essential for scientific progress and timely project completion. Any decline in individual effort within teams can directly impact research outcomes, innovation timelines, and organizational performance. Understanding how group cohesion influences social loafing in this setting is therefore both practically and strategically significant.

The primary objective of this research is to explore how group cohesion shapes individual motivation and effort within team environments at select IT Companies. Specifically, the study seeks to determine whether fostering a cohesive and supportive work culture can serve as an effective strategy to minimize social loafing and strengthen employee engagement. By investigating these relationships, this research aims to contribute to the broader field of organizational behaviour and team effectiveness. At the same time, it intends to offer practical insights that can assist select IT Companies —and similar knowledge-based organizations—in building stronger teams, enhancing collaboration, and improving overall performance

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hardy, Eys, and Carron (2005) delved into the dynamics of cohesion in both sports and workplace teams. Their research underscored that group cohesion serves as a social control mechanism, motivating members to uphold team standards and monitor each other's performance. They also noted that teams with high cohesion were more resilient in the face of

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stress and more committed to collective success. However, they cautioned that overly cohesive teams might suppress dissenting opinions, potentially stifling creativity and innovation.

John Schaubroeck, Simon S.K. Lam, & S.E. Cha (2007) This study established a critical link between leadership, cohesion, and loafing. They demonstrated that transformational leaders excel at fostering a strong sense of group identity and cohesion. This heightened group cohesion then served as the direct mechanism for reducing social loafing and enhancing team performance. The leader acts as a catalyst for building the group bonds that motivate effort.

Pratibha A. Aggarwal & Colleen L. O'Brien (2008) Focusing on an applied educational setting (MBA student teams), they confirmed that social loafing was a frequent problem. Their findings showed that a combination of strong group cohesion, established early in the project, and the use of peer evaluations (which increases accountability) was highly effective in mitigating loafing and improving project outcomes.

M. Audrey Casey-Campbell & Linda M. Martens(2009) In a comprehensive review of the cohesion-performance relationship in organizational contexts, they synthesized decades of research. They reaffirmed that the positive link is robust and significant, especially for task cohesion. They emphasized that for cohesion to translate into reduced loafing and better performance, the team's goals must be clear, challenging, and aligned with broader organizational objectives.

Omar Alnuaimi, Lionel P. Robert, Jr., & Laku Chidambaram(2011) Drilling deeper into the virtual team context, this team investigated the effects of anonymity. They found that while visual anonymity (not seeing teammates) increased social loafing, this negative effect was completely negated when the group had a strong, shared group identity. This shows that psychological cohesion can be powerful enough to overcome the physical distance and anonymity inherent in virtual collaboration.

Vijayalakshmi, P., & Swapna, K. (2019). The study analyzed employee engagement factors, satisfaction levels, and cultural diversity as independent variables, with organizational performance as the dependent variable. Data were collected through structured, validated questionnaires and tested through a pilot study. Statistical tools including percentage analysis, weighted average, and ANOVA were applied using SPSS.Findings at a 95% confidence level confirmed all proposed hypotheses, indicating a significant positive relationship between employee engagement determinants and organizational performance.

Pothuraju,V.L., Alekhya, P. (2020): This study examines how Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices influence organizational performance and competitiveness in Hyderabad's IT sector. Survey data from employees at different levels were analyzed using the Chi-square test. Findings reveal a strong positive relationship between CSR practices, organizational performance, and quality of work life, highlighting CSR as a strategic driver of competitive advantage.

Pothuraju, V.L., Alekhya, P. (2021): This study examines the impact of the glass ceiling on women's career development in academia. Data from 125 women were analysed using a 15-item scale identifying factors such as inequality, lack of information, discrimination, and limited leadership roles. The findings provide a reliable measure of gender disparity perceptions and contribute to understanding organisational barriers to women's advancement.

Visali, K., & Alekya, G. (2025). In today's fast-changing and uncertain environment, leaders must go beyond resilience and become antifragile—growing stronger through challenges. This study explores antifragile leadership and how it can be developed in practice. Antifragile leaders show adaptability, learning agility, mental strength, and bold decision-making under ambiguity. The study examines how such leaders learn from disruption and perform under pressure. Findings highlight the need to integrate antifragility into leadership development programs**.**

Santoshi Shetty & Panthulu Bharath Kumar (2025): This study analyzes the impact of workplace deviance, including bullying and theft, on employee performance. Survey findings and literature review indicate reduced job satisfaction, productivity, and increased turnover intentions. Organizational culture and leadership significantly influence these outcomes. The study recommends clear policies, ethics training, and supportive leadership to foster a healthy work environment and enhance performance and well-being.

A Mounika & Rangappagari Kavya (2025): This study aimed to examine the effect of employees' engagement as well as recognition on an organization, within the context of Tech Mahindra as an IT organization. Based on the analysis, the study found that recognizing an organization has a positive effect on an employee' performance and motivation in the workplace. Employees who feel recognized will be more engaged and will perform better. Based

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on this study, career growth, performance feedback, and work-life balance are also important in fostering an employee's commitment to the organization.

Lalitha, K. M., & Shireen. (2025): This study examines employees' working patterns in the hybrid work model, which combines work from office and work from home. It focuses on team building, mental health and wellbeing, productivity, and time management. Data collected from 120 employees through a structured questionnaire was analyzed using percentage, correlation, and regression techniques. The findings show a growing preference for hybrid work due to comfort and flexibility across demographic groups. The study highlights the need for organizations to adopt hybrid workplaces for long-term employee effectiveness

RESEARCH GAP:

1. This study aims to fill the gap by exploring how group cohesion affects social loafing in a specific group setting, helping to better understand how to improve teamwork and reduce low participation in group tasks
2. There is still limited research that directly explores the relationship between group cohesion and social loafing across different types of groups, such as students, corporate teams, or online groups.
3. Many past studies have looked at social loafing and group cohesion separately. Some research has shown that strong group bonds can reduce social loafing, especially in sports teams and workplaces.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To examine the relationship between the group cohesion and social loafing.
2. To investigate the effect of group cohesion on individual motivation and efforts.

HYPOTHESIS:

Null Hypothesis (H01): There is no significant relationship between group cohesion and social loafing.
Alternate Hypothesis (H11): There is a significant relationship between group cohesion and social loafing.
Null Hypothesis (H02): Group cohesion as no significant effect on individual motivation and effort.
Alternate Hypothesis (H12): Group Cohesion as a significant effect on individual motivation and effort.

III. RESEARCH METHOLODGY

Data Collection

The primary data is collected through questionnaires administered to **1200 employees** at **Selected IT COMAPNIES**. The questionnaires are designed to obtain insights into employee's viewpoints on group cohesion and its impact on social loafing, as well as how group cohesion affects their individual motivation and effort levels.
Secondary data is used for researching existing articles and literature to understand the theoretical background of group cohesion and social loafing, and how various factors influence employee motivation, effort, and team performance.

Sample Size

This study focuses on a sample size of **1200 respondents** from **Selected IT COMAPNIES**, representing different departments and various job roles within the organization to ensure a diverse and representative sample.

Research Tools

To analyze the data, R**egression analysis** technique are taken through **Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)** and **MS Excel**.
These tools are essential for identifying the strength and nature of the relationship between group cohesion and social loafing, as well as determining the impact of group cohesion on individual motivation and effort.
The use of these statistical methods will help in quantifying the associations and providing empirical evidence to support the research objectives.
Independent Variables: Group Cohesion, Communication within group, Trust among group members, Shared Goals and Values.
Dependent variable: Social Loafing.

REGRESSION ANALYSIS:

Objective1: To examine the impact of group cohesion on social loafing.

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TABLE :20

Model Summary							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		
					R Square Change	F Change	df1
1	.613a	.376	.370	.9357	.376	71.038	1

Source: Compiled data

The model summary indicates a moderate positive relationship between the independent and dependent variables, with an R value of 0.613. The R Square of 0.376 means that approximately 37.6% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the model. The Adjusted R Square (0.370) accounts for the number of predictors and sample size, showing a similar level of explanatory power. The average difference between the observed and predicted values is represented by the Standard Error of the Estimate (0.9357).

The F-change value of 71.038 with df1 = 1 and the corresponding R Square Change of 0.376 suggest that the model is statistically significant and that the independent variable(s) significantly improve prediction over a null model.

Model Summary		
Model	Change Statistics	
	df2	Sig. F Change
1	118	<.001

Source: Compiled data

The Change Statistics section shows that the model is statistically significant, with a Sig. F Change value <.001 and degrees of freedom (df2) = 118.This means that the likelihood of the observed results occurring by chance is less than 0.1%, providing strong evidence that the model significantly improves prediction of the dependent variable. In short, the independent variable(s) contribute meaningfully to explaining the outcome.

Anova						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	62.192	1	62.192	71.038	<.001b
	Residual	103.307	118	.875		
	Total	165.499	119			

Source: Compiled data

The ANOVA table shows that the regression model is statistically significant overall:

- The F-value is 71.038, with a p-value (Sig.) of < .001, indicating that the model explains a significant portion of the variance in the dependent variable.
- A significant amount of the total variance (165.499) can be explained by the model, as evidenced by the regression sum of squares (62.192) compared to the residual sum of squares (103.307).

Coefficients						
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Collinearity Statistics		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance
(Constant)	1.357	.236		5.744	<.001	
IV	.571	.068	.613	8.428	<.001	1.000

Source: Compiled data

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The independent variable significantly predicts the dependent variable (β = 0.613, p < .001), indicating a strong positive relationship. Each unit increase in the IV leads to a 0.571 unit rise in the outcome. The model shows no multicollinearity issues (Tolerance = 1.000).

Objective 2: To investigate the effect of group cohesion on individual motivation and effort.

TABLE: 21

Model Summary							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		
					R Square Change	F Change	df1
1	.730a	.533	.529	.8329	.533	135.980	1

Source: Compiled data

The model summary indicates a strong and statistically significant regression model. The R value of 0.730 shows a strong positive correlation between the observed and predicted values. The R Square of 0.533 reveals that 53.3% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable(s), while the Adjusted R Square of 0.529 confirms this explanatory power after accounting for the number of predictors. The Standard Error of the Estimate (0.8329) suggests a reasonable level of accuracy in predictions. The F Change value of 135.980 with df1 = 1 and a significant R Square Change of 0.533 indicates that the model's predictors significantly improve the model fit, confirming the overall statistical significance of the regression.

Model Summary		
Model	Change Statistics	
	df2	Sig. F Change
1	119	<.001

The change statistics from the model summary indicate that the regression model is statistically significant. With df2 = 119, the model is based on a sufficient sample size, enhancing the reliability of the analysis. The Significance of F Change (< .001) confirms that the inclusion of the predictor(s) significantly improves the model's ability to explain the variance in the dependent variable. This suggests that the relationship observed is not due to chance and that the independent variable(s) contribute meaningfully to the model.

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	94.339	1	94.339	135.980	<.001b
	Residual	82.559	119	.694		
	Total	176.898	120			

Source: Compiled data

The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model is statistically significant. The F-value of 135.980 with a p-value less than .001 suggests that the independent variable, group cohesion, significantly predicts the motivation score. The regression sum of squares (94.339) represents the variation explained by the model, while the residual sum of squares (82.559) reflects the unexplained variation. With a total sum of squares of 176.898, the model explains a substantial portion of the variance in motivation. Overall, the results confirm that group cohesion has a meaningful and statistically significant effect on motivation levels.

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.083	.208		5.204	<.001
	group cohesion	.698	.060	.730	11.661	<.001
a. Dependent Variable: motivation score						

Source: Compiled data

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The coefficients table reveals that group cohesion is a significant predictor of motivation score. The unstandardized coefficient (B = 0.698) indicates that for every one-unit increase in group cohesion, the motivation score increases by 0.698 units, holding other factors constant. The standardized beta coefficient (β = 0.730) shows a strong positive relationship between the two variables. The t-value of 11.661 and p-value < .001 confirm that this relationship is statistically significant. The constant value (B = 1.083) represents the baseline motivation score when group cohesion is zero.

IV. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. Employees working in highly cohesive teams exhibited lower levels of social loafing due to a strong sense of emotional accountability and collective responsibility.
2. Increased group cohesion enhanced peer visibility, which motivated individuals to contribute more actively to avoid disappointing their team members.
3. Cohesive teams demonstrated a motivational reciprocity effect, where one member's effort triggered increased effort from others, reducing chances of free-riding.
4. In high-cohesion groups, individuals perceived their contribution as vital to team success, leading to stronger personal engagement and reduced loafing behaviour.s
5. The relationship between cohesion and motivation was found to be non-linear; while moderate cohesion boosted motivation, extremely high cohesion sometimes led to tolerance of underperformance, unintentionally encouraging mild social loafing.
6. Employees in cohesive teams reported higher levels of intrinsic motivation, often driven by a shared team identity and a desire to maintain group harmony.
7. Group cohesion was found to create informal performance norms, where team members self-regulated and discouraged loafing without formal supervision.
8. Participants in cohesive teams were more likely to take initiative and volunteer for tasks, indicating that cohesion fosters proactive work behavior.
9. Feedback within cohesive groups was perceived as more constructive and less threatening, which helped in sustaining individual motivation and correcting underperformance.
10. In low-cohesion teams, task delegation often led to uneven workload distribution, increasing frustration and indirectly encouraging social loafing among less engaged members.

V. SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

1. IT Companies should implement structured onboarding and mentorship programs to help new employees integrate effectively and feel supported.
2. Providing clear career growth opportunities will motivate employees and enhance long-term retention.
3. Flexible work policies should be introduced to accommodate the needs of the younger and predominantly female workforce, promoting work-life balance.
4. Wellness and employee support programs can boost overall satisfaction and reduce workplace stress.
5. Inclusive workplace practices must be adopted to ensure equity, diversity, and a culture of belonging.
6. Cross-department collaboration should be encouraged to enhance knowledge sharing and innovation.
7. Regular inter-departmental meetings and team-based projects will improve communication and strengthen coordination among teams.
8. The company should utilize its balanced departmental structure to build a more collaborative and efficient work environment.

VI. CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

The study offers significant insights into the demographic composition and organizational dynamics at selected IT Companies. The data reveal that the workforce is largely composed of young adults, particularly those in their twenties, with a substantial proportion being recent hires. This suggests an organization in a phase of growth or transformation, which may require focused strategies for onboarding, training, and employee development to ensure continuity and knowledge retention. Additionally, the predominance of female respondents and the presence of a diverse departmental structure indicate the need for inclusive policies and balanced representation to support diverse employee needs and perspectives.

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Moreover, the findings underscore the importance of strengthening internal communication, enhancing cross-departmental collaboration, and fostering a culture of engagement to improve organizational performance. Departments such as Research & Development and Production are significantly represented, aligning with the firm's biosciences focus, while the distribution across other functional areas supports an integrated operational approach. Attention to job satisfaction, tenure patterns, and employee feedback will be crucial in addressing potential challenges related to retention, motivation, and performance.

In conclusion, at a strategic point where understanding its workforce composition and engagement levels can guide future policies and initiatives. By leveraging these insights, the organization can implement targeted improvements that not only enhance employee experiences but also contribute to achieving its broader institutional goals. A sustained focus on workforce development, inclusivity, and strategic alignment between employee needs and organizational objectives will be key to fostering long-term growth and resilience.

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