

Social Facilitation

Psychology

Why an audience improves simple tasks and worsens complex ones.

The presence of others increases arousal, which enhances the dominant response.

audience → arousal → dominant response strengthened

Well-learnt, simple task

Dominant response is correct.

Performance improves

Novel, complex task

Dominant response is wrong.

Performance worsens

Social loafing

When individual contribution is not identifiable.

Effort falls in groups

THE COMMON MISTAKE

✗ **Assuming groups always help or always hinder**

✓ **Checking whether the task is well learnt**

Zajonc's account explains both the facilitation and the impairment findings with one mechanism.

Social loafing is the opposite problem: making individual contributions identifiable removes most of it.