

Relationship of Organizational Anxiety and Paranoia with Tendency to Gossip and Personal Anxiety in the Mobarake-Steel Company's employees

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper was the study of relationship between organizational anxiety and organizational paranoia with tendency to gossip in organizations and personal anxiety in the Mobarake-Steel Company's employees. For this purpose, 131 Mobarake-Steel Company's staff selected with the simple randomized sampling manner. They answered to a questionnaire package include: the organizational anxiety and paranoia subscales of the Kamkar's Assessment of Organizational Mental Disorders, the anxiety subscale of The General Health Questionnaire (GHQ₂₈) and the Tendency to Gossip Questionnaire (TGQ). In this research, the data analyzed with the Statistical Package for Social Science 18 software (spss18) and the Pearson correlation and multiple linear regressions used for examine relationships. The finding argued that: organizational anxiety and organizational paranoia had significant positive correlations with personal anxiety ($p < 0.001$), and according to the standardized coefficients (β), organizational anxiety predicted 27% of gossip tendency ($p < 0.05$). In addition, organizational anxiety had ability to predict personal anxiety ($p < 0.001$). Organizational anxiety and paranoia can affect personal anxiety of employees.

KEYWORDS: Organizational anxiety, Organizational paranoia, Gossip

1. INTRODUCTION

Critical and psychodynamic approaches to organizations provide us with a better way of understanding these organizations [1]. In order to do this, we must acknowledge and critique the organization's privileging of the 'rational' voice, separating emotion from emotional performance, emotion from irrationality and irrationality from dysfunctional behaviors. Kets de Vries and Miller, 1986, 1984) has developed a particularly useful way on understanding emotion in organizations, based on the concept of the neurotic organization. The neurotic style of the top executive strongly influences the overall functioning of the organization, including its strategy, culture, and structure, and the nature of group and interpersonal relations, such that individual pathology becomes organizational pathology. Neurotic organization theory has a number of valuable strengths for studying organizations as well as crisis management. They describe five specific neurotic organizational profiles - paranoid, compulsive, dramatic, depressive and schizoid - each with their own characteristics, motives, fantasies and dangers. Each of these neurotic styles is in turn related to five common types of organizational function and dysfunction. Each style has its own strategic, cultural, structural, and decision-making features [2].

For instance, the paranoid organization has *persecution* as its major fantasy. Management suspicion and mistrust are articulated in extensive methods for monitoring and controlling both internal and external processes, events, and people, such as sophisticated information systems, elaborate budgets and cost accounting procedures. The compulsive organization has *control* as its major fantasy. Based on a perpetual fear of losing control, the organization becomes preoccupied with perfectionism, ritual, and controlling every last detail of organizational life. Like the paranoid organization, the compulsive firm has extensive formal control mechanisms, but the focus is on internal rather than external monitoring [3].

In order to discuss Melges's (1982) approach toward problems with time and the personal future in psychiatric disorders, it seems appropriate to consider only a selection of psychiatric disorders, i.e. schizophrenia, paranoia and depression. This selection of disorders also reflects on the types of organizational problem syndromes [4].

In fact, workplace-related anxieties are often connected with sick leave. There is a moderate relation between mental disorders or primary anxiety disorders and work-related anxiety [5]. Fourteen percent of the participants did only suffer from workplace-related anxiety and did not report any other anxiety disorder outside the workplace situation. There are various types of workplace-related anxieties. They are partly independent clinical phenomena deserving special diagnostic and therapeutic attention [6]. Researchers found that good mental health is essential for maintaining a sufficient and productive

workforce. Mental health and wellbeing promotion in the workplace has health, social and productivity benefits [7]. On the other hand Distrust and suspicion are common and recurring problems within many organizations and it can reflect on information exchange [8].

Researchers argue that gossip is an informal system for information exchange in paranoia organizations. Explores the issue of rumour and gossip in organizations, given that rumour and gossip can break the harmony of the workplace unless well managed, it is rather surprising that they have not been sufficiently examined in management and organizational studies [9]. Rumor is a way for information exchange. The tendency to rumor depends on many factors such as age, sex and personality characteristics [10].

Rumours influence how people make decisions in an emergency-affected environment. Conversely, the development of situation is affected by public action as well [11]. There are several reasons for why people may be motivated to engage in gossip, such as group protection, status enhancement, and social bonding [12]. Results indicate that, negative gossip is positively related to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and negatively correlated with job engagement [13].

Gossip is an important aspect of organizational functioning. While gossip is expected to occur in a stressful environment where people work closely [14] it has not been studied in relation to other organizational manifestations such as organizational anxiety and neurotic organizations. The purpose of this study was to examine the associations between gossip, organizational anxiety and organizational paranoia.

We hypothesized that:

H₁. Individual anxiety will be related to organization anxiety.

H₂. Individual anxiety will be related to organization paranoia.

H₃. Individual anxiety will be related to tendency to gossip.

H₄. Organizational paranoia will be related to tendency to gossip.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

For this purpose, 131 Mobarake-Steel Company's staff selected with the simple randomized sampling manner among 2730 person. They answered to a questionnaire package include: The organizational anxiety and paranoia subscales of the Kamkar's Assessment of Organizational Mental Disorders. The assessment of organizational mental disorders, at first, was a checklist that prepared by Kets de Vries and Miller in 1984 [2] then developed and normalized by Kamkar and et al (2006) [15] at Esfahan industries. They identified 6 factors. The Cronbach alpha has been reported 0.90 by them for both organizational anxiety and organizational paranoia factors. The anxiety subscale of The General Health Questionnaire (GHQ₂₈). Its Cronbach's alpha was estimated to be 0.904. One of the other materials utilized in this research was the Tendency to Gossip Questionnaire (TGQ) which provided by present researchers. This Questionnaire had 14 sentences and had a good reliability and validity, the Cronbach's alpha for assessing its internal reliability has been estimated to be 0.79-0.89. In this research. In order to determine the validity of the present test, the method of factor analysis has been used. The value of Kaiser-Meiner-Olkin (K.M.O) obtained was 0.74. In this survey the data analyzed with the Statistical Package for Social Science 18 software (SPSS18) and the Pearson correlation and multiple linear regressions used for examine relationships.

3. RESULTS

As it was mentioned, we assessed organizational anxiety and paranoia as the predictor variables. Mean descriptive index, standard deviation and the Pearson's correlations between variables are presented on table 1. As it is shown, Organizational anxiety has significant and positive correlation with organizational paranoia and personal anxiety. Organizational paranoia, also, has significant and positive correlation with personal anxiety.

Table 1. Mean, standard deviation of predictor and criterion variables and the Pearson's correlations between variables

	Mean	SD	OA	OP	TG	PA
OA¹	18.78	2.37	1	-	-	-
OP²	19.83	5.51	0.71***	1	-	-
TG³	41.45	5.45	0.15	0.02	1	-
PA⁴	2.86	2.86	0.52***	0.38***	-0.005	1

¹ Organizational anxiety, ² Organizational paranoia, ³ Tendency to gossip, ⁴ Personal anxiety, ***P<0.001

We used organizational paranoia and anxiety as the predictor variables into the models under study. As well as tendency to gossip and personal anxiety used as criterion variables of each model (T.2). After analyzing regression on research data, we observed the model.1 (see T.2) explains about 17 percent of TG and the model.2 explains, also, about 29 percent of PA. Therefore, these models are statistically significant. We used also, statistical T test to calculate significance of the calculated

beta coefficients of every predictor variable of each model. The results show that organizational anxiety with beta 0.27 is a positive predictor of employees' TG. Furthermore, it is a positive predictor of employees' TG (beta= 0.51). However, organizational paranoia cannot predict employees' TG and PA.

Table2. Amount of F, R², B, β , T and significance tests in under study models 1 and 2 (relationship between organizational anxiety and paranoia with tendency to gossip and personal anxiety).

Variable	F	Significant Level	R ²	B	β	T	Significant Level
TG (model.1)							
Equation constant	8.51	0.04*	0.17	36.82	-	9.21	<0.001
OP				-0.15	-0.15	-1.19	0.24
OA				0.28	0.27	2.19	0.03*
PA (model.2)							
Equation constant	12.75	<0.001***	0.29	-0.21	-	-0.12	0/90
OP				-0.008	-0.01	-0.15	0.88
OA				0.25	0.51	4.75	<0.001***

OA: Organizational anxiety, OP: Organizational paranoia, TG: Tendency to gossip, PA: Personal anxiety, *P<0.001, ***P<0.001

4. DISCUSSION

As it was mentioned in finding section, statistical analysis showed organizational paranoia wasn't a significant predictor for TG and PA (H.1 and H.3). Likely paranoid atmosphere in organizations causes the employees to focus on protect themselves from their coworkers and avoid deep relationships at work. Although was few studies that directly related to our study variables, some of them supported this finding. For example, Ellwardt (2011) [16], argued that trust is an important aspect of tendency to gossip. Menzer and et al (2013) [17], Observed gossip between best friends moderated the association between anxious withdrawal and perceptions of friendship quality, when gossip between best friends was infrequent, the greater the anxious withdrawal the lower the perceived friendship conflict; but when gossip was frequent, the greater the anxious withdrawal the greater the friendship conflict. They suggest that gossip may have both positive and negative consequences for the friendships.

In the other hands, as expected organizational anxiety was a strong predictor for TG and PA (H.2 and H.4). Often employees cannot access complete information about managerial actions and decisions, which may lead to insecurity at the workplace [16]. Studies showed negative gossip is positively related to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and negatively correlated with job engagement even after controlling for burnout and negative gossip is positively related to event reporting at work [17]. Although some studies results showed gossip has either positive or negative effects [18], [19]. For example; Noon and Delbridge (1993) [20] argued that gossip is intrinsic to organizational life and helps to protect and perpetuate organizations. But other studies showed that organizational gossip is expected to occur in a stressful environment where people work closely and can act as an early warning of system dysfunction and failure [21]. Some studies, also, link gossip to negative outcomes such as decreased productivity, eroded morale, hurt feelings and reputations, and the turnover of valued employees and negative gossip can be considered as bullying [22]. In addition gossip behavior can depend on certain psychological traits, like anxiety. Actually high anxiety and low need for social approval were identified as factors increasing an individuals' tendency to gossip [23].

Reuman and et al (2015) [23], revealed that higher threat situations, and those in which uncertainty was made explicit, provoked higher ratings of anxiety and urge to perform a safety behavior. As it mentioned organizational anxiety caused anxious in employees. Anxiety spared from managers to all levels of the organization hierarchy, even to employees' families (work- family spillover). An anxious manager makes Subordinate anxious, eventually anxiety can become an organizational cutler [24]. Anxiety and gossip are an important aspect of organizational dysfunctions. However, it has been rarely studied about organizational disorders and gossip, and their relations with employees' mental health. Therefore, it demands greater attention in the future in terms of theory and empirical research.

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