BITING THE HAND THAT FEEDS YOU:

EMPLOYEES' REACTIONS TO THEIR OWN GOSSIP

ABOUT HIGHLY (UN)SUPPORTIVE SUPERVISORS

By

JULENA MARIE BONNER

Bachelor of Arts in Business Management and Leadership
Southern Virginia University
Buena Vista, VA
2007

Master of Business Administration
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma
2012

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
July, 2016

BITING THE HAND THAT FEEDS YOU:

EMPLOYEES' REACTIONS TO THEIR OWN GOSSIP

ABOUT HIGHLY (UN)SUPPORTIVE SUPERVISORS

Dissertation Approved:

Dr. Rebecca L. Greenbaum

Dissertation Adviser

Dr. Debra L. Nelson

Dr. Cynthia S. Wang

Dr. Isaac J. Washburn

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The road to completing this degree and dissertation has been a long, bumpy one, with plenty of ups and downs. I wish to express my gratitude to those who have helped me along the way. Those who provided me with words of encouragement and support, those who talked me down from the ledge when the bumps seemed too daunting, and those who helped smooth the path by taking time to teach and guide me. I will forever be grateful for my family, friends, and the OSU faculty and doctoral students who provided me with endless amounts of support and guidance.

I would like to especially acknowledge my dissertation chair, Rebecca Greenbaum, who has been a wonderful mentor and friend. I look up to her in so many ways, and am grateful for the time she has taken to help me grow and develop. I want to thank her for her patience, expertise, guidance, support, feedback, and encouragement over the years. I would also like to thank my committee members, Dr. Cynthia Wang, Dr. Debra Nelson, and Dr. Isaac Washburn. Each one of these wonderful faculty members has proved me with support above and beyond involvement in my dissertation. Dr. Wang has taught me the value and wonders of experimental research, which has been an invaluable part of my training. Dr. Nelson has demonstrated to me what it means to be a truly great professor. Dr. Washburn has sat with me on multiple occasions to further my understanding of statistics and methods. Additionally, I want to thank all the faculty members in the Management Department. This was an absolutely wonderful place to be a doctoral student. I could not have asked for a more supportive and helpful department! Additionally, I have been enormously blessed to be around so many remarkable doctoral students. I have learned so much from my fellow students—they are ideal colleagues who have helped and supported me in so many ways, both academically and personally. I truly admire and respect you all!

Most importantly, I want to thank my family. Thank you Mom and Dad for supporting me in all my crazy endeavors. I attribute any level of success in my life to you both and the many ‘character building’ experiences you have ‘provided’ me with over the years. You taught me the value of hard work and commitment. Additionally, I want to thank my amazing siblings. Having you as my support system has enabled me to take risks and strive for more; I know that you will always have my back. Thank you all for your hard-working examples and for not letting me quit! I love you all. Lastly, I would be remiss if I did not thank God for the many blessings He has given me. He blessed me enormously when He sent me to Stillwater, and I will be eternally grateful.

Acknowledgements reflect the views of the author and are not endorsed by committee members or Oklahoma State University.

Name: JULENA M. BONNER

Date of Degree: JULY, 2016

Title of Study: BITING THE HAND THAT FEEDS YOU: EMPLOYEES' REACTIONS TO THEIR OWN GOSSIP ABOUT HIGHLY (UN)SUPPORTIVE SUPERVISORS

Major Field: MANAGEMENT

Abstract: This dissertation delves into the largely unexamined phenomena of workplace gossip. Drawing from deonance theory (Folger, 1998, 2001), I seek to explain the moral implications of gossip for the gossiper, specifically in terms of the moral emotions engagement in gossip elicits. I hypothesize the gossiper will experience shame and fear after gossiping about the supervisor. Furthermore, I examine the moderating role of the gossiper-gossipee relationship to assess the role interpersonal relationships play in relation to these emotional experiences. In an experience sample modeling field study, I find that gossip fails to elicit shame and fear, but it does elicit the less intense emotions of guilt and anxiety. However, the data fail to support the moderation and mediated-moderation hypotheses.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter Page

I. INTRODUCTION 1

Dissertation Proposal Background 1

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT 6

Gossip Literature Review 6
Negative Gossip 7
Functions of Gossip 8
Outcomes of Gossip 9
Hypotheses Development 13
Deontological Ethics 13
Gossip and Deontological Ethics 14
Deontic Reactions as Dissonance 17
Supervisor Context 17
Gossip and Emotions 18
The Influence of the Gossiper's Relationship with the Gossipee 22
Emotional Response and Subsequent Behaviors 25

III. METHODOLOGY 31

Experience Sample Modeling 31
Pilot Study 32
Participants and Procedures 32
Measures 34
Analysis 36
Results 37
Main Study 38
Participants and Procedures 38
Initial Survey Measures 40
Daily Survey 1 Measures 41
Daily Survey 2 Measures 42
Analysis 43
Results 44

Chapter Page

IV. DISCUSSION.....48

Theoretical Implications 49
Practical Implications.....54
Limitations and Future Directions 55
Conclusion 59

REFERENCES 61

APPENDICES 81
Appendix A: Pilot Study Measures.....82
Appendix B: New Main Study Measures 85
Appendix C: Tables 87
Appendix D: Figures.....91

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

Table 1: Pilot Study: Variance Components of Null Models for Supervisor-directed Gossip, Shame, Fear, Helping, and Ostracism.....87
Table 2: Pilot Study: Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Reliabilities Between Study Variables.....88
Table 3: Main Study: Variance Components of Null Models for Supervisor-directed Gossip, Shame, Fear, Helping, and Avoidance 89
Table 4: Main Study: Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Reliabilities Between Study Variables.....90

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Page

Figure 1: Hypothesized Theoretical Model 91
Figure 2: Mediation Path Model Results: H1, H4, & H6 92
Figure 3: Full Path Model Results: H2, H3, H5 & H7 93
Figure 4: Full Path Model Results for Shame without Fear 94
Figure 5: Full Path Model Results for Guilt 95
Figure 6: Full Path Model Results for Fear without Shame 96
Figure 7: Full Path Model Results for Anxiety.....97

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Dissertation Proposal Background

"hey - seems like we aren't the only ones that think kyle is an arrogant asshole anymore – susan told me that on saturday night she had it out with him and doesn't want him around – also, apparently he's been treating dana like shit and it's starting to get noticed by other people – just thought this was an interesting development." Enron employee email (Mitra & Gilbert, 2012)

"David's a loon, talented, but geez once I saw him bring Sally Field to a party and reduce her to tears. Plus remember when he got in trouble for feeling up his transgender nieces [sic] boobs?" Michael De Luca, Columbia Studio executive, in an email to Sony co-chairwoman Amy Pasca (Greene, 2014)

At home, work, or play, people have a tendency to talk about others. The recent security breach at Sony unearthed private emails sent by Sony employees, some of which contained what may clearly be construed as workplace gossip. For instance, several emails from Sony executives contained gossip about movie stars, directors, and even the President of the United States (King, Timberg, & Nakashima, 2014; Russell, 2014). Think about what you say in the workplace about others, when they are not present. Do you speculate about why a coworker comes in late or why his/her performance has been slipping? Do you make comments to others regarding a coworker's "poor behavior" or personal problems? If so, you, along with countless others in the labor force the world over, are engaging in workplace gossip.

Gossip is a common occurrence. Scholars have estimated that between 60% and 70% of our daily conversations entail gossip (Dunbar, 2004; Elmer, 1994). The workplace is no exception; a recent analysis of over 500,000 emails sent by Enron employees revealed that 15% were gossip-related communications (Mitra & Gilbert, 2012). Furthermore, while gossip emails were most prevalent among the rank-and-file, employees at all organizational levels engaged in gossip, with vice presidents and directors being second to the rank-and-file. In fact, gossip (i.e., talking about an absent third party with an evaluative tone) is argued to be one of the most prevalent activities within organizations (Noon & Delbridge, 1993) and as such has the potential to profoundly impact employee attitudes and behaviors. Thus, the occurrence and prevalence of gossip at all levels of the organization, illustrates the need to gain a better understanding of the effect of workplace gossip.

While, the past century has given rise to several anthropological and sociological investigations of gossip, studies of organizational gossip have lagged behind. Beginning in the early twentieth century, Lanz pointed out that gossip exists because people gain satisfaction from realizing the wrongs others have committed and discussing these faults with others; in essence "we are pleased by faults and errors" of others (1936: 494). However, over the succeeding decades, as gossip research progressed, the tone turned more positive. In fact, anthropologist and sociologists began to examine specific functions of gossip and identified value inherent in gossip. Anthropologists argued that gossip is a way to communicate information, maintain norms, and unify groups (Gluckman, 1963). Others found that in addition to being a recreational activity and a means of passing the time, gossip builds group cohesion, reflects public opinion, and

serves as a social motivator (Foster, 2004; Stirling, 1956). Over the past two decades, researchers from multiple disciplines have shown an increased interest in the phenomenon of gossip, particularly the positive value of gossip (Foster, 2004). Perhaps the draw is the relatability of the topic; after all, nearly everyone indulges in gossip from time to time. Or, maybe scholars are seeking scholarly justification for, or trying to change the societal view of gossip. Whatever the reason, gossip has become a phenomenon of interest in many academic disciplines.

As scholarly interest in gossip has increased, the popular press has also devoted considerable attention to workplace gossip. Yet, while scholars have veered toward studying the positive aspects of gossip, the popular press remains generally derogatory on the subject. A Google news search of "workplace gossip" will likely produce a number of popular press articles villainizing gossip and providing tips to business managers on how to minimize workplace gossip. Indeed, a recent article in *Entrepreneur* offers advice on how to stem workplace gossip as it can cause uncomfortable and unproductive work environments (Evans, 2015). This sentiment was echoed in another article, which further argued those who engage in negative gossip are perceived to be worse than blackmailers (Amsinger, 2015).

Although gossip is not illegal, societies in general tend to frown upon it. For instance, Christians and Jews have very strong mandates to avoid gossip, and the moral guidelines of most societies across the world, regardless of religion, condemn gossip (Goodman, 1994). Societal disapproval of gossip can be coupled with deontolgical ethics (Kant, 1797/1991) to further argue that gossip violates moral standards of how we *ought* to treat others. While gossip, by definition, is not only about passing along negative

information about an absent person, it tends to have a negative undertone and reputation in most societies. Simply put, “The common opinion of gossip is inclined to place it rather low on any scale of laudable, profound, or significant human behaviors” (Elmer, 1994: 118). Surprisingly, although gossip is, in general, socially and morally condemned, the majority of people spend a great deal of time gossiping (Foster, 2004).

Society’s negative portrayal of gossip coupled with the rampant use of it is likely to leave workers confused about the acceptability and morality of workplace gossip. Society and morality condemn gossip, yet ‘everyone’ does it and it appears to be accepted. Indeed, many popular press articles include a refrain similar to these: “Nearly everyone is guilty of gossiping”, “Everyone does it” or “Workplace gossip is inevitable”. A recent scholarly article contends that “Gossip is a much denounced but frequently practiced way of communicating” (Erdogan, Bauer, & Walter, 2015: 193). The confusion between the prevalence and positive effects of gossip and the moral condemnation of gossip behavior may result in confusing emotional reactions to one’s own involvement in gossip. The confusion and moral ambivalence toward gossip is likely to trigger moral emotional reactions. The purpose of this research is to understand the emotions elicited by gossip and how those experienced emotions influence subsequent behaviors.

This work is not meant to investigate *why* people gossip, rather it addresses the emotional and behavioral effects of one’s engagement in workplace gossip. Because the majority of people gossip, the prevalence of it requires that we begin to understand not just *why* people gossip, but the consequences of gossip behavior for the gossiping individual (i.e., the gossiper) and the person being gossiped about (i.e., the gossipee). Paine (1967) pointed out that while gossip occurs and has important consequences at the

group level, there is also a great need to examine individual-level effects, such as how gossip behavior may influence gossipers' subsequent emotions and behaviors. Drawing on deonance theory (Folger, 1998, 2012) and cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957), I propose that gossiping about a supervisor results in the gossiper experiencing the self-focused emotional responses of shame and fear, which further influence the gossiper's helping or ostracism behavior toward the supervisor, with both behavioral reactions being important to the organization's vitality (Ferris, Brown, Berry, & Lian, 2008; Koys, 200l; O'Reilly & Robinson, 2009; Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 1997; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000; Williams, 2007). Furthermore, these emotional responses are strengthened by the type of relationship the gossiper has with the gossipee (his/her supervisor). See Figure 1 for a depiction of the theoretical model.

The following is out outline of the dissertation. In Chapter II I review extant gossip literature. I also introduce deontological ethics and deonance theory and propose that engagement in gossip violates moral standards, which elicits self-focused emotional responses (e.g., shame and/or fear) to one's own misconduct (e.g. gossip behavior). Next, I will specifically examine gossip in regards to the employee-supervisor relationship, investigating how this relationship can influence employees' emotional reactions to their own gossip about supervisors. I will then present arguments specifying how these emotional responses influence gossipers' subsequent supervisor-directed behaviors. Specifically, I will address how shame and fear relate to supervisor-directed helping and ostracism behaviors. In Chapter III I will explain my method and test my hypotheses. Lastly, in Chapter IV I discuss the theoretical and practical implications of this research and identify limitations and avenues for future research.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Gossip Literature Review

A widely-accepted and basic definition of gossip is talking about an absent third party (Foster, 2004); however, many researchers argue that the 'talk' must contain some evaluative judgment. For instance, telling a coworker that your boss came in late is not evaluative; yet, making an evaluative judgment such as, "Well, the boss is late, *again*! Is he ever on time?" would constitute gossip. Thus, I define workplace gossip "as informal and evaluative talk in an organization, usually among no more than a few individuals, about another member of that organization who is not present" (Kurland & Pelled, 2000: 429). Gossip is not negative by nature, but it is generally viewed as such. In fact, Mitra and Gilbert (2012) found that negative gossip in one company's emails was 2.7 times more prevalent than positive gossip. Recently, Erdogan, Bauer, and Walter (2015) argued that negative talk about others is typically regarded as gossip. For purposes of this research, I argue that gossip is typically perceived as negative in nature.

Definitionally, the individual disseminating gossip is called the *gossiper*, and the target of the gossip, the person being gossiped about, is called the *gossipee*. While people do gossip about famous people and others with unique personal lives, gossip is most likely to center on the people immediately around us, with whom we interact regularly

(Baumeister et la., 2004; Ben-Ze'ev, 1994). Baumeister and colleagues (2004) found that 85% of gossip stories they observed were about a friend or "someone I know", 11% were about strangers and only 4% were about celebrities. With that in mind, each day people spend a good deal of time at work and, thus, are in regular contact with their supervisor and coworkers, making the supervisor a likely target of gossip among coworkers. In fact, Ellwardt, Labianca, and Wittek (2012), in a social networks study, found that people are more likely to gossip about those in the same work group. Thus, my research investigates employee-supervisor pairs to understand gossiper-gossipee relationships at work.

Negative Gossip

While gossip can entail both positive and negative evaluations of others, it is most often associated with negative 'talk' (Fine & Rosnow, 1978; Foster, 2004). Indeed, the very word gossip has an extremely derogative undertone (Jaeger, Skleder, Rind, & Rosnow, 1994). Positive gossip would include passing along positive evaluations of others (e.g. John's presentation was great, he must have been preparing for weeks), while negative gossip suggests more derogatory evaluations of others (e.g. John's presentation was awful, he must have really procrastinated preparing). Yet, for most people, gossip has a negative association (Gluckman, 1963). Negative gossip appears to be the dominant form of gossip in the workplace (Mitra & Gilbert, 2012). Hence, when people think or speak about gossip it is typically with a negative evaluation. This is not surprising given the notion that 'bad is stronger than good' (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001) and negative events tend to elicit stronger reactions (Taylor, 1991). Thus, it is likely the use of negative gossip that has garnered gossip's negative reputation and universal condemnation.

Religions and societies, the world over, warn against gossip and many even instituted punishments for gossipers. The Bible warns Jews and Christians against gossip and teaches that they ought not to be "talebearers" (Leviticus 19:16) or "busybodies, speaking things which they ought not" (Timothy 5:13). The Qur'an instructs Muslims to refrain from discussing the misdeeds of others (Hibri, 1996). Additionally, in the Middle Ages, Britain laws subjected gossipers to severe discipline, such as wearing an iron mask (Beersma & Van Kleef, 2011; Elmer, 1994).

In today's societies, legal punishments are not meted out for gossiping; however, negative gossip is still considered a nuisance and universally looked down upon in general and in the workplace specifically (Goodman, 1994). Popular press articles link gossip to reduced productivity, increased turnover, and eroded morale (Danziger, 1988; Evans, 2015). Indeed, Michelson and Mouly (2004: 196) determine that "much of the popular business literature tends to treat rumor and gossip as a detrimental activity for organizations. Gossip is assumed to waste time, undermine productivity, and sap employee morale." With this in mind, the present research generally uses the term gossip to refer to negative gossip.

Functions of Gossip

Traditionally, gossip research has focused on understanding *why* people gossip and the role it plays in relationships. For example, anthropologist Robin Dunbar (1994) authored a book discussing the evolution of gossip in which he argued that gossip became a way for humans to maintain social bonds as human social groups became larger. He contended that as humans' social groups became larger, language evolved in order to facilitate interactions between several people at once, allowing people to build and

maintain a greater number of social relationships. Group members were able to exchange information about others, thereby allowing group members to gain information and make social judgments about others without necessarily having to enter a social relationship with them (Dunbar, 1994). For example, when a friend warns you about a third party being unreliable, you may use this information in future interactions with the third party, or, based on this information, you may not cultivate a relationship with the third party (Anderson, Siegel, Bliss-Moreau, & Barrett, 2011; Feinberg, Miller, Stellar, & Keltner, 2012).

Clearly, one important function of gossip is to communicate information about others. This, however, is not its only function. Gossip is also a way to maintain norms, unify groups (Gluckman, 1963), build and maintain relationships (Burt, 2001), exert control and influence (Fine & Rosnow, 1978; Noon & Delbridge, 1993), and pass the time or entertain (Foster, 2004). Furthermore, Stirling (1956) identified several other functions, including news bearing, recreation, identification, cohesion, reflector of public opinion, and social motivator. A recent review of the gossip literature distilled previously identified functions of gossip into four main functions: information, friendship, influence, and entertainment (Foster, 2004). While extant research has devoted considerable attention to understanding the motives underlying gossip, the purpose of this research is to examine how it influences emotions experienced by the gossiper and how those emotional responses influence behavior toward the gossipee (e.g. supervisor-directed behaviors).

Outcomes of Gossip

Despite society's predominately negative view of gossip, the academic literature provides ample evidence depicting the benefits of gossip. For instance, gossip is a way to build and maintain relationships, specifically at work (Burt, 2001; Dunbar, 2004; Noon & Delbridge, 1994), which are instrumental to efficient organizational functioning. While past research focuses mainly on identifying the positive consequences of workplace gossip, less attention has been devoted to understanding the negative consequences. Herein I review the literature on gossip, focusing on both positive and negative outcomes.

Positive outcomes. The study of gossip lends itself nicely to a networks frame, as gossip is spread between individuals in some type of social network. Several researchers have undertaken workplace gossip research in conjunction with social networks, finding that gossip is related to ratings of informal influence (Grosser, Lopex-Kidwell, & Labianca, 2010), the likelihood of building future friendships (Ellwardt, Steglich, & Wittek, 2012), and greater power and influence (Jaeger et al., 1994). In particular, a longitudinal study of friendship networks found that gossip increased informal ties in the organization, and building informal ties with coworkers has numerous positive effects, such as increases in cooperation and productivity (Ellwardt, et al., 2012). Relatedly, a networks analysis found that subordinates have the ability to influence the reputation of a manager through the transmission of manager-related information to others in overlapping and non-overlapping networks (Wong & Boh, 2010). In general, consequences of gossip include building and maintaining friendships and gaining influence with others.

Other studies examine the relationship strengthening effect of gossip. For instance, research has shown that sharing negative attitudes with another promotes

closeness (Weaver & Bosson, 2011) and helps strengthen and maintain social bonds (Baumeiester et al., 2004). In fact, sharing negative attitudes with a stranger about a common third-party increased closeness and liking, serving as a powerful bonding agent (Bosson, Johnson, Niederhoffer, & Swann, 2006). Thus, it appears that negative gossip promotes the closeness inherent in social bonds.

Gossip is also a means of transferring information to individuals who do not have access to certain information about others through direct observation. In a series of reciprocity games, gossip was used as a means of signaling to others those with whom one should cooperate (Sommerfeld, Krambeck, Semmann, & Milinski, 2007). Feinberg, Willer, Stellar, and Keltner, (2012) found that when participants in an economic game observed an antisocial behavior, they were compelled to share that information with others, which deterred selfish behaviors and promoted cooperation. Relatedly, Beersma and Van Kleef (2011) verified that the threat of being gossiped about reduced free-riding and increased individual contributions to the group. In fact, "Knowing that one's group members are unlikely to discuss one's behavior among each other thus seems to make people less afraid to make self-interested decisions" (Beersma & Van Kleef, 2011: 646). Thus, gossip increases contributions to the group and is a tool for reducing self-serving behavior in groups. Another study demonstrated that participants acted more generously when they knew information about their generous or selfish behavior may be passed along via gossip to an acquaintance (Piazza & Bering, 2008). In general, past research suggests that people tend to base decisions about their future behavior on the likelihood of being the target of gossip (Sommerfeld et al., 2007).

The nursing literature highlights the positive implications of gossip in coping with stress and expressing emotions. Waddington's (2005) diary study of nurses identified gossip as a means of expressing emotions and opinions "behind closed doors," which helped employees cope with stress. An analysis of 262 work-related gossip incidents found that gossip was perceived as being pleasant and was associated with feelings of inclusion and group membership (Waddington, 2005). Beersma and Van Kleef (2011) reported similar findings in a scenario-based experiment, in which they found that gossiping about an antisocial behavior can bring the gossiper relief from the negative affect that accompanies observing antisocial behavior. Thus, these studies report the benefits of gossip as a cathartic release.

Negative outcomes. It is interesting to contrast the prevalence of studies examining the positive aspects of gossip, with the shortage of studies identifying the negative consequences. While gossip is generally condemned as negative, scholars have spent a great deal of time examining the positive, perhaps because the negative consequences appear to be obvious and uninteresting. Not surprising, excessive gossip is linked to relationship problems. For example, a high tendency to gossip and a low tendency to help was predictive of poor relationships with supervisors and low network centrality (Erdogan, Bauer, & Walter, 2015). Relatedly, excessive gossiping was found to reduce trust and raise concerns about the gossiper gossiping about oneself (Ellwardt, Steglich, & Wittek, 2012). Similarly, Farley (2011) found that high frequency gossipers were less liked and perceived to be less powerful than low frequency gossipers.

Investigations of gossip consequences have also briefly touched upon more individual implications. Gossip often elicits a negative emotional response (Baumeister et

al., 2004) and is associated with higher levels of anxiety (Jaeger et al., 1994). Cole and Schrivener (2013) found that gossip reduces self-esteem, as the gossiper may evaluate him/herself more harshly after sharing negative information about others. Furthermore, a social networks study found that gossip activity was negatively related to supervisor ratings of performance (Grosser et al., 2010). Lastly, McAndrew and Milenkovic (2002) provided evidence that gossip is used to promote one's self-interest, thus illustrating the selfish nature of gossip.

Despite all the research presented above, we still know relatively little about gossip in the workplace (Grosser et al., 2010; Mills, 2010), specifically regarding negative organizational and individual consequences. Gossip is a choice; individuals choose to pass along valence information or judgments about others. As with any choice there are consequences; this research is meant to examine some of the negative consequences of employee engagement in workplace gossip, specifically the gossipers' emotional reactions to their own norm-violating behavior (i.e., gossip). Interestingly, I suggest that gossip not only impacts the gossiper, but also, via the gossipers' emotional reactions, has, perhaps unintended, workplace consequences for the gossipee.

Hypotheses Development

Deontological Ethics

Deon is a Greek word referring to duty or obligation; thus, deontological ethics concerns how we ought to behave (i.e. overarching moral standards) and our duty or obligation to others (Folger, 1998, 2001). Deonance theory is grounded in Kant's (1797/1991) work on duty (e.g. action to which we are bound) and the categorical imperative (e.g. whether an action is suitable to become a universal law). Kant argued

that “The supreme doctrine of morals” is to act in accordance with maxims (i.e. general truths or rules for conduct) that can also be a universal law (e.g. how everyone should act). He further argued that “Any maxim that does not so qualify is contrary to morals” (Kant, 1797/1991: 51). The categorical imperative provides rational for moral behavior being guided by duty and how one ‘ought’ to behave. As gossip is a behavior that societies in general tend to condemn (e.g. one *ought* not to gossip), I use deontological ethics, specifically Kant’s work, and deonance theory (Folger, 1998, 2001), to better understand people’s reactions to their own gossip (moral norm violating) behavior.

Traditionally, deonance theory (Folger, 1998, 2001) has been used to understand people’s negative emotional reactions to observed moral violations. The basic tenets of deonance theory, however, can also be used to explain people’s negative emotional reactions to their own moral violations. I argue that one’s own engagement in gossip, which serves as a violation of the “human respect” duty, results in a negative response toward the self. Engaging in gossip violates the generally-accepted moral norm of interpersonal behavior—that all people should be treated with dignity and respect (Kant, 1797/1991). As a result, gossip is likely to impact the gossipers’ subsequent emotional and behavioral reactions, which are also moderated by certain conditions.

Gossip and Deontological Ethics

Kant (1785/2011) articulated duty as the necessity of an action, meaning one must engage in or refrain from engaging in certain actions. A duty is something that is required or proper in terms of a moral obligation (Folger, 2012). Duties and obligations are instrumental in influencing behavior. Consistent with Heider’s (1958) concept of ‘oughts’ and obligations, deonance theory argues that ‘oughts’ and obligations play an important

role in evaluating and determining behaviors and consequences (Folger, 2012). For instance, the deontological concept of bounded autonomy (Folger, 1998) argues that behaviors may be curtailed by duty (e.g. what one ought to do) or deonance. Deonance implies there are behaviors people ought not to engage in, because the behavior violates moral norms, which are typically in place to restrict one's ability to simply do whatever he/she wants to do. Furthermore, deonance may also act as a motivational force to punish or harm agents who violate ethical norms (Cropanzano, Goldman, & Folger, 2003; Greenabaum, Mawritz, Mayer, & Priesemuth, 2013; Rupp & Bell, 2010).

One important duty Kant (1797/1991) mentions, is the duty to respect each other; all men can claim respect and must give respect to others. This means treating others with dignity and respect and not using them as a means to an end. Furthermore, to deny others, even a depraved and vicious individual, dignity and respect is a violation of duty, because judging another as worthless is to deny him/her the respect owed to humans in general (Kant, 1797/1991). Thus, we have a duty to treat others with dignity and respect, no matter what they may have done.

In addition to respect, Kant (1797/1991) identifies defamation and ridicule as two important vices that contribute to violations of the duty to respect others. He argued that we have the duty to respect others, "a duty not to censure his errors by calling them absurdities, poor judgement and so forth, but rather to suppose that his judgment must yet contain some truth and to seek this out" (Kant, 1797/1991: 255-6). Gossip often centers on the foibles and follies of others; yet, Kant argues this is a violation of the duty to show respect for man. Thus, as individuals engage in gossip, they may experience discomfort from exhibiting disrespect to another human being. In particular "the intentional

spreading of something that detracts from another's honor—even if it is not a matter of public justice, and even if what is said is true—diminishes respect for humanity…It is therefore, a duty of virtue not to take malicious pleasure in exposing the faults of others" (Kant, 1797/1991: 258). In this vein, negative gossip violates the duty to treat others with dignity and respect. Hence, I seek to understand the implications of gossip using deontological theorizing, which includes deonance theory (Folger, 1998; 2001).

As deonance theory (Folger, 1998, 2001) argues, we have expectations for how people 'ought' to behave, in terms of adhering to universal principles of morality, and we hold others accountable based on standards of appropriate or 'right' behavior. When others fail to uphold moral standards, the observer of such misconduct is likely to respond unfavorably toward the norm violator (Cropanzano et al. 2003; Greenbaum et al., 2013). Deonance theory argues that when people witness these standards being violated, they experience emotional reactions, such as anger, resentment, or disgust (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997), and engage in behavior to punish the violator (i.e., the agent violating the standard). For example, witnessing injustice, or personally experiencing it, is likely to provoke a desire to retaliate or punish the perpetrator (Skarlicki & Folger, 1997). Thus, when people experience mistreatment themselves, or witness another person receiving mistreatment, they experience emotional reactions that influence subsequent behaviors.

Currently, deonance theory focuses mainly on *witnessed* mistreatment; however, the basic tenets can be used to understand people's reactions to their own moral violations. More specifically, I draw on deonance theory to understand people's reactions

to their engagement in workplace gossip, which violates the duty to treat others with dignity and respect.

Deontic Reactions as Dissonance

In general, deontological ethics argues there are standards of behavior (e.g., how one ought to behave), which are based on "duties" or moral obligations regarding appropriate interpersonal treatment (e.g., how one treats others). When these standards are violated, people experience a deontic reaction. Folger (2001) describes deontic reactions in terms of cognitive dissonance, which occurs when people engage in behaviors that conflict with some criterion of judgment (e.g., moral standards) (Stone & Cooper, 2001). For example, when actual behaviors are contrary to normative standards (i.e., duty to treat others with respect), people are likely to experience dissonance. This dissonance entails emotional reactions (e.g., emotional arousal) such as feeling shameful, embarrassed, fearful, threatened (Higgins, 1987), angry, or disgusted (Cropanzano et al., 2003). People who *observe* moral transgressions may manage their emotional arousal (e.g., anger, disgust) by retaliating against, or harming the perpetrator (Cropanzo et al., 2003; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997). For example, extant research has shown that people are willing to forgo their own rewards to punish an unfair third party (Cropanzaon et al., 2003; Turillo, Folger, Lavelle, Umphress, & Gee, 2002). I argue that people also respond to their own moral transgressions by experiencing emotional arousal, which affects subsequent behaviors. In particular, gossipers may respond to their own behavior by experiencing emotional arousal that then instigates corrective or destructive behaviors, depending on the context.

Supervisor Context

Gossipers' emotional arousal is likely to be influenced by characteristics of the gossipee (i.e., the target of gossip), such as the gossipee's position within the organization. People tend to gossip about those with whom they interact with regularly (Baumeister et la., 2004; Ben-Ze'ev, 1994), which would make supervisors, in particular, a likely target of workplace gossip. A supervisory context may serve as an especially relevant context for understanding gossipers' reactions to their own gossip about a supervisor. Supervisors provide employees with physical (e.g., promotion, pay, rewards) and emotional (e.g., acceptance, praise) resources. Employees have an innate need to provide for themselves and their families (i.e., a need for physical resources) and a need to belong and to feel accepted (i.e., a need for emotional resources) (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). As supervisors have power over employees and control over important resources (Berscheid, Graziano, Monson, & Dermer, 1976; Magee & Galinskey, 2008), gossiping about a supervisor may result in the loss of resources, reputation, or acceptance. Hence, to gossip about a supervisor is to "bite the hand that feeds you," which may intensify the gossiper's emotional arousal. For purposes of this research, I will focus on gossipers' emotional and behavioral reactions to gossiping about their supervisor, as the gossipee. Furthermore, the quality of the relationship between the gossiper and gossipee (employee-supervisor) may affect the gossiper's emotional arousal and subsequent behaviors.

Gossip and Emotions

As previously established, religious and societal norms, as well as the universal standard of respect for others, generally condemn negative gossip as an immoral behavior. Thus, in line with deonance theorizing, engagement in negative gossip is likely

to elicit an emotional response. However, when people evaluate their own misdeeds, such as their own gossip behavior, their emotional responses will be different than if they witnessed an interpersonal transgression. Specifically, the gossiper's emotional response will be directed toward the self rather than towards a third-party transgressor. Whereas emotions directed towards others' transgressions often entail anger and disgust (Cropanzano et al., 2003), people are expected to respond to their own gossip with self-focused emotions, such as shame and fear.

Shame is a self-focused, moral emotion typically experienced in conjunction with a moral violation (Haidt, 2003). Engagement in misconduct, such as lying, stealing, cheating or failing to help others, is likely to elicit guilt and/or shame as moral emotions (Tangney, Stuewig, & Mashek, 2007). Guilt tends to emanate from people's concern regarding the appropriateness of their behaviors, whereas shame is more self-evaluative, reflecting people's judgments regarding their personal character after a moral transgression (Leith & Baumesiter, 1998; Lewis, 1971; Smith, Webster, Parrott, & Eyre, 2002). In other words, feelings of guilt are likely to come from seeing the *behavior* as bad, while feelings of shame are likely to come from seeing the *self* as bad. Deonance theory focuses on emotional reactions *directed toward the perpetrator*, such as feelings of resentment, anger, or disgust (Folger, 1998, 2012; Folger & Cropanzo, 1998; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997). In a similar vein, I argue that perpetrators respond to their own misdeeds with emotional reactions that are *directed toward the self*, as would occur with feelings of shame. Hence, this research examines shame as a self-focused emotion, rather than guilt, a behavior-focused emotion. In particular, an employee's engagement in gossip violates moral standards and thus produces feelings of shame.

On the other hand, fear manifests when an individual perceives some kind of threat towards the self (Kish-Gephart, Deter, Treviño, & Edmondson, 2009; Plutchik, 1980). The evolutionary purpose of fear is to protect humans against threats, physical or psychological (Ohman, 2008). The threat of danger is often associated with physical well-being (e.g., a threat to one's life or health). However, fear is also greatly associated with threats to self-esteem, stability, social standing, or achievement (Izard, 1991; Kish-Gephart et al., 2009). In fact, extant research has found that social exclusion instigates fear in the same way as physical threat (MacDonald, Kingsbury, & Shaw, 2005, p 80). Additionally, fear is most often triggered by a cognitive assessment of a situation as dangerous: the situation does not necessarily need to be dangerous, it only needs to be perceived by the individual as being dangerous (Tomkins, 1963). Thus, fear may result from imagining possible harm or from anticipating harm.

Gossip behavior directed toward a supervisor may be particularly relevant in terms of eliciting the gossiper's fear reaction. Kish-Gephart et al. (2009) argue that employees may be fearful of authority figures (e.g., supervisors), as they perceive authority figures to have the power to punish them, even if this perception is not necessarily true (e.g., even if the supervisor does not have the power to harm them). Therefore, gossip may result in the fear of being punished or losing resources or acceptance by those who have power over such things (i.e., supervisors). Furthermore, gossipers may be mindful of the fact that their behavior could result in social punishment and/or a loss of valued resources (e.g., Ellwardt, Steglich, et al., 2012; MacDonald & Leary, 2005). To gossip about a supervisor, in particular, is expected to have a strong

effect on gossipers' fear reactions, as supervisors are in a position of authority and capable of punishing employees and/or withholding resources.

In summary, employees' supervisor-directed gossip behavior is likely to trigger both shame and fear in employees as a response to their moral violation. The gossiper's shame response is more focused on what that behavior says about the moral self (e.g., I did something bad, I am a bad person), while the gossiper's fear response is more focused on the threat of punishment for having violated a moral standard (e.g., I did something bad, I may be punished). Both emotions are self-focused, however shame focuses on the moral implications to the self, while fear focuses on the physical or psychological threats associated with the violation of a moral standard. While these are two distinct emotions (Izard, 1991), research shows that people tend to experience a blend of emotions (e.g., fear *and* excitement) about an event rather than one specific emotion (e.g., fear *or* excitement) (Fong, 2006; Scherer & Tannenbaum, 1986). Furthermore, emotionally complex situations are likely to result in the simultaneous experience of multiple emotions (i.e., emotional ambivalence) (Larsen, McGraw, Meilers, & Cacioppo, 2004). The emotionally complex nature of gossip, being both commonly practiced and morally condemned, could result in the experience of emotions, such as shame and fear, simultaneously. Or, it could be that people are more likely to experience one emotional reaction more than the other, based on social context, as I suggest moving forward. I am not necessarily arguing that both emotions occur together, or separately, but to explain that either of these emotions could result from one's own gossip behavior. Overall, for the above arguments, I hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 1: Gossip about one's supervisor will positively influence feelings of (a) shame and (b) fear.

It should be noted that there is a difference between emotional states and emotional dispositions (e.g., emotional traits). Dispositional emotions (i.e., shame proneness) refer to people's tendencies to experience certain emotions across time and situations, whereas state emotions (i.e., shame and fear) refer to temporary emotional responses (Lerner & Keltner, 2000, 2001). Most prior research examines dispositional emotions, such as shame-proneness, and places less emphasis on state emotions (e.g. Cohen, Wolf, Panter, & Insko, 2011; Flynn & Schaumberg, 2012). This research is unique in that it seeks to understand how gossip influences proximal emotional reactions, rather than a general proneness towards an emotion.

The Influence of the Gossiper's Relationship with the Gossipee

Although I predict that people respond to their own gossip by experiencing shame and fear, I also expect the strength of these predictions to vary depending on the gossiper's relationship with the gossipee. To gossip about a supervisor is to essentially "bite the hand that feeds you," which may intensify both shame and fear reactions. Specifically, I examine gossiper-gossipee relationships as being supportive or unsupportive in nature (i.e., "[not] providing encouragement or emotional help"). Gossipers are expected to experience different levels, and different types, of emotional reactions to their own gossip, depending on their relationship with the gossipee. In the context of employee-supervisor relationships, I operationalize supportive relationships using leader-member exchange (LMX) and unsupportive relationships using abusive supervision.

Leader-member exchange (LMX) focuses on employee-supervisor exchange relationships (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). High LMX captures a high-quality employee-supervisor relationship that results in mutual trust, respect, and obligation. Employees with high LMX relationships are included in the supervisor's 'in-group,' are granted greater responsibility and access to resources, and tend to have higher performance (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009). Conversely, low LMX is indicative of an employee's low-quality relationship with the supervisor, such that the employee is in the 'out-group' and receives less responsibility and resources (Avolio et al., 2009; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Employees and supervisors in high LMX relationships typically reciprocate good behavior towards each other in order to maintain the positive exchange relationship (Ilies, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007). As such, employees in high LMX relationships are expected to engage in favorable supervisor-directed behaviors that build trust, support, and respect (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

Negative gossip about a supervisor does not build trust, support, or respect. In fact, the employee's gossip about a high LMX supervisor undermines the "good" relationship. Such gossip not only violates reciprocity norms (as in exchanging good behaviors in kind), but it also strengthens the likelihood that a moral obligation has been violated. In such situations the gossiper is likely to judge the self even more harshly as he/she has violated the duty of respect and reciprocity. Furthermore, while gossip alone is a moral violation regarding treating others with dignity, when it is undeserved (as in a high-quality relationship) the gossiper is likely to experience greater shame, as he/she has violated a moral standard towards an undeserving, otherwise supportive person. As such, an employee's gossip about a high LMX supervisor will exacerbate feelings of shame.

Hypothesis 2: LMX will moderate the relationship between gossip and shame, such that the relationship will be strengthened (weakened) when LMX is high (low).

While LMX characterizes a supportive employee-supervisor relationship, abusive supervision serves as an illustration of a dysfunctional, unsupportive employee-supervisor relationship. Abusive supervision is defined as "subordinates' perceptions of the extent to which supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact." (Tepper, 2000: 178). Abusive supervisors engage in angry outbursts toward subordinates, publicly ridicule subordinates, and/or scapegoats subordinates (Tepper, 2007). As supervisors are in a position to punish subordinates, a gossiper may perceive that an abusive supervisor, with a history of engaging in hostile behaviors, will punish the gossiper even more severely. Thus, gossipers of abusive supervisors are exposing themselves to greater levels of threat. Because fear reactions are intensified depending on the perceived level of threat (Kish-Gephart et al., 2009), the gossiper should experience heightened fear arousal as the supervisor's past points to particularly harsh and demeaning punishments.

Fear is meant to alert one to physical or psychological threats, and the brain triggers a fear reaction when a threat is detected (Ohman, 2008). One such threat cue may be gossiping about an abusive supervisor, as the past behaviors of an abusive supervisor (e.g., yelling, ridicule, etc.) confirm the threat of future physical and psychological harm. Abusive supervisors are known to yell at, ridicule, and belittle subordinates, which challenges subordinates' social standing and self-worth, resulting in psychological threat (Aquino & Thau, 2009; Tepper, 2007). Abusive supervisors also cause physical threat

through elevated levels of distress (Richman, Flaherty, Rospenda, & Christensen, 1992) and somatic complaints (Duffy, Ganster, & Pagon, 2002; Tepper, 2000). Hence, gossiping about an abusive supervisor should result in the heightened threats of physical and psychological harm through the anticipation of greater punishment and damaging behaviors. This threat should exacerbate the fear an employee experiences as a consequence of negatively gossiping about his/her supervisor. Hence, gossiping about an abusive supervisor is expected to result in greater fear than if the supervisor were not abusive.

Hypothesis 3: Abusive supervision will moderate the relationship between gossip and fear, such that the relationship will be strengthened (weakened) when abusive supervision is high (low).

Emotional Response and Subsequent Behaviors

In general, emotions trigger changes in cognition, physiology, and behavior (Lerner & Keltner, 2001). Furthermore, emotions often extend beyond the triggering situation, meaning a situation may elicit an emotion, but that emotion may extend and exert influence on events and actions beyond the original emotion-eliciting event (Lerner & Keltner, 2000). In a series of studies Lerner and Keltner (2000, 2001) found that emotions influence future judgments and choices. Thus, emotions elicited by engagement in gossip impact future cognitions and behaviors.

Gossipers who engage in negative gossip about a leader with whom they have a supportive relationship may perceive themselves as having reciprocated positive behavior (e.g. high LMX) with negative behavior (e.g. gossip), thus resulting in feelings of shame. Shame can be described as a moral (Haidt, 2003), dejection-related (Higgins, 1987), or

self-conscious emotion that is "elicited when some aspect of the self is scrutinized and evaluated with respect to moral standards" (Tangney et al., 2007: 361).

Shame is referred to as a self-conscious emotion because it causes one to reflect upon the self. In fact, Tangney, Miller, Flicker, and Barlow (1996: 1264) argued that shame arises "from personally relevant failures or transgressions" and involves "a substantial degree of self-evaluation or self-reflection." Furthermore, self-conscious emotions provide feedback on one's moral and social acceptability (Tangney et al., 2007) and often lead to self-focused reactions (Tangney, 1991). In fact, shame tends to affect feelings of the whole self and often results in painful judgments, such as thinking one is a terrible person (Joireman, 2004), higher levels of self-oriented distress, and turning one's attention and focus inward, on the self (Leith & Baumeister, 1998; Tangney, 1991). For example, shame reduces perspective taking (Leith & Baumeister, 1998) and other-oriented empathy (Tangney, 1991), increases avoidance (Tangney et al., 1996), and leads to a negative overall self-evaluation (Lewis, 1971). Thus, shame results in employees being more self-focused, turning their attention inward and enhancing self-reflection (Leary, 2007; Tangney, 1991, 1999; Tangney et al., 2007).

As the gossiper's attention is turned inward, he/she is more likely to think about the gossip behavior and what engaging in that behavior is saying about the self. Therefore, when the gossiper (i.e. employee) and gossipee (i.e. supervisor) have a good relationship (e.g. high LMX), the gossiper is more likely to experience shame, turning the gossiper's attention inward. Because shame results in people focusing on themselves, they will be less likely to attend to the needs of those around them. De Dreu and Nauta (2009: 913) argue that "Self-concern is known to stimulate information search and

processing of individual-level attributes and self-relevant consequences." This is particularly likely if those experiencing the shame feel like they lost something of value, such as their standing as a moral person. Hence, self-concern seems to increase attention given to the self, and in turn reduces concern directed toward others. In this vein, the gossiper who is experiencing shame becomes so self-focused that he/she will be less likely to attend to the needs of his/her supervisor. In particular, the employee is expected to reduce his/her contributions to the supervisor in the form of less supervisor-directed helping behaviors.

Furthermore, while the self-focused nature of shame results in reduced empathy, it also increases avoidance (Tangney, 1991; Tangney et al., 1996). Ostracism, defined as being ignored and excluded (Williams, 2007), may be a way of putting distance between the gossiper and gossipee. Past research demonstrates that shame is associated with avoidance and withdrawal tactics (Tangney et al., 1996; Wicker, Payne, & Morgan, 1983). Specifically, Tangney et al. (1996) found that those experiencing shame felt compelled to hide or avoid others. Schamder and Lickel (2006) echoed these findings in a recent experiment that revealed participants ruminating about a past shameful experience reported high avoidance motives, such as not wanting to be associated with the shameful event, or distancing the self from the event. Thus, feeling shame is likely to lead to avoiding or ignoring the event, or, in this case, the employee (i.e., the gossiper) is likely to distance him/herself from the supervisor (i.e., the gossipee). In line with this reasoning, I hypothesize that shame is negatively related to supervisor-directed helping, and positively related to supervisor-directed ostracism.

Hypothesis 4: Shame will be negatively related to (a) helping directed toward one's supervisor, and positively related to (b) ostracism toward one's supervisor.

Furthermore, in conjunction with past theorizing, I suggest that when gossiping about a supervisor with whom one has a supportive relationship (e.g. high LMX), the gossiper is likely to feel greater levels of shame, which turns his/her attention inward. The self-focused nature of shame blocks the gossiper from noticing the needs and concerns of the supervisor, thus resulting in less supervisor-directed helping behavior. Furthermore, shame associated with gossiping about a supportive leader may also lead the gossiper to avoid contact (e.g. ostracism behaviors) with the gossipee as a means of escaping being reminded of his/her past poor behavior. However, gossiping about an unsupportive supervisor (e.g. low LMX) is likely to weaken shame feelings, resulting in a weakened influence of shame on supervisor-directed helping and ostracism. Following these arguments, I hypothesis a model of moderated-mediation.

Hypothesis 5: Shame mediates the relationship between the interactive effect of gossip about one's supervisor and LMX onto (a) supervisor-directed helping behavior, and (b) supervisor-directed ostracism, such that the indirect effect is stronger when LMX is high as opposed to low.

Both shame and fear are negative-valence emotions, and past research generally finds that negative emotional states are indicative of avoidance or withdrawal, while positive states are generally characterized by approach and goal pursuit (Carver, Sutton, & Scheier, 2000). Fear results from some kind of physical or psychological threat in the environment (Kish-Gephart et al., 2009), and activates an impulse to flee, or an urge to escape, specifically to flee from the threat causing the fear (Ellsworth & Smith, 1988;

Lazarus, 1991; Plutchik, 1980). At other times fear leads people to worry about problems or situations (Adler, Rosen, & Silverstein, 1998).

In general, fear is a distracting and overwhelming force (Kish-Gephart et al., 2009), pushing people's thoughts away from others, with attention instead given to how to avoid or to escape the threat. Frijda (1986) argues that inherent in fear is a desire to withdraw or separate the self from the threat (e.g., the supervisor), or to create distance between the self and the threat. Thus, fear motivates avoidance (e.g. reduced supervisor-helping) or withdrawal behaviors (e.g. supervisor-directed ostracism). I argue the fear response results in self-protective actions, such as avoiding the object of fear (e.g. the supervisor). In this instance, the gossiper would avoid contact with the supervisor. Avoidance of the supervisor means the gossiper will not be around the supervisor as much and, therefore, less likely to notice the supervisor's need for help, or to help the supervisor in general. Furthermore, research findings show that negative emotions, such as fear and anger, actually produce narrower thinking, whereas positive emotions broaden thinking (Fredrickson, 2001). The narrower thinking associate with fear prevents the gossiper from noticing the supervisor's need for help.

Fear is also accompanied by cognitive, behavioral and physiological changes (Fredrickson, 2001; Lerner & Keltner, 2000; Ohman, 2008). For example, fear may result in an increased heart rate (Lang, Levin, Miller & Kozak, 1983), or in preparing bodily systems to flee (e.g. to run; Fredrickson, 2001). In general, fear is specifically associated with escape, withdrawal and avoidance (Ohman, 2008). The gossiper is likely to withdraw from the supervisor as he/she may be considered a threat. Withdrawal from the supervisor may include ostracism behaviors, such as leaving the room when the

supervisor enters, avoiding eye contact with the supervisor, or not including the supervisor in conversations or group activities (Ferris et al., 2008). Thus, fear may lead to less supervisor-directed helping and more supervisor-directed ostracism, as the gossiper avoids and withdraws from the supervisor.

Hypothesis 6: Fear will be negatively related to (a) helping directed toward one's supervisor, and positively related to (b) ostracism toward one's supervisor.

In support of the entire model and past theorizing, I also propose that gossiping about an abusive supervisor is likely to result in greater fear as the gossip behavior and abusive supervisor may be perceived as especially threatening to the self. Fear serves to increase avoidance and withdrawal behaviors, which prevents the gossiper from attending to the needs of the supervisor, or wanting to be around the supervisor, thereby reducing supervisor-directed helping and increasing ostracism. However, gossip about a non-abusive supervisor (i.e. low abusive supervision) is less likely to be perceived as a threat, weakening the influence of fear on supervisor-directed helping and ostracism. Therefore, I propose a moderated-mediation relationship.

Hypothesis 7: Fear mediates the relationship between the interactive effect of gossip about one's supervisor and abusive supervision onto (a) supervisor-directed helping behavior, and (b) supervisor-directed ostracism, such that the indirect effect is stronger when abusive supervision is high as opposed to low.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Having theoretically justified several hypotheses, I tested my theoretical model utilizing a sample of working adults. I first conducted a pilot study to test variability in my proposed measures. Then I conducted a two week survey study to test my hypothesized model. This chapter contains my procedures and a discussion regarding data analysis and results.

Experience Sample Modeling

In an effort to fully examine the model, I used experience sample modeling (ESM), which is a helpful method to examine constructs such as feelings and behaviors that are more temporary and vary over time (Fisher & To, 2012), such as state emotions (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). As this research seeks to understand emotional reactions (as opposed to emotional dispositions) to workplace gossip and subsequent behaviors, it is necessary to assess emotions proximal to the gossip behaviors. While gossip in general may occur frequently, negative gossip, and more specifically supervisor-directed negative gossip, may occur less frequently (Dunbar, Marriott, & Duncan, 1997; Foster, 2004). However, when this type of gossip does occur, I expect the emotions experienced to be temporary in nature, and occurring soon after the gossip behavior (Lerner & Keltner, 2000, 2001). To properly capture the dynamic nature of the influence of gossip and

emotions on behaviors, I collected responses over multiple time periods.

By collecting responses from participants over several days, ESM allows for a more dynamic longitudinal study of within-person processes, affect, and behavior in the workplace. Furthermore, it allows for both within- and between-individual analyses. This method has several features that make it preferable to cross-sectional survey data (Beal, 2015). First, rather than relying on participants to recall behaviors and experienced emotions over the past week, month, six months (whatever the desired time frame may be), ESM is designed to capture and assess experiences closer to the moment they occur. Recent research even suggests that reporting aggregated emotions over a long interval (e.g. a month) reflects between-individual differences rather than within-individual differences (Robinson & Clore, 2002). Thus, ESM is preferable to recall methods in order to properly assess differences in individual responses to events (within-person variance) (Beal, 2015). Second, ESM provides greater ecological validity as this method assesses experiences as they occur, as opposed to capturing the behavior and affect in a manipulated lab setting. Finally, using repeated measures over a period of time, ESM captures the ebb and flow of emotions and experiences allowing for a more representative sample of each individual's actual experiences. Thus, as this study will be examining individual affective and behavioral responses to gossip behaviors, ESM provides an appropriate framework for assessing these reactions.

Pilot Study

Participants and Procedures

As I am interested in within-individual fluctuations in emotions (shame and fear) and behaviors (gossip and supervisor-directed helping and ostracism), it is important that

individual variables vary from day-to-day, otherwise these variables would be considered time-invariant and a different type of data collection and analyses would need to be conducted (Hoffman, 2015). Thus, in order to assess the amount of daily variance in my proposed measures, I conducted a pilot study. In exchange for extra credit, 273 undergraduate management students at a Midwestern state university were invited to recruit an adult working 30 or more hours a week to participate in a week long daily-survey study. Students were instructed to ask a working adult to participate and then provide me with the email address of the working adult. I directly contacted recruited adults and provided them with study details and the survey links; specifically I informed them that they would be asked to complete one short survey at the end of each work day for one work week. Students recruited 142 full-time employees of which 122 completed the initial survey and 99 completed three or more days of surveys. Participants were from various organizations, representing a broad range of industries, ranging from health care to oil and gas to education. In terms of demographics, 51% of participants were female, 75% were Caucasian, 7% were African American, 7% were Asian, 2% were Hispanic, 3% were Native American, and 6% were other. Furthermore, on average participants had been with their organization for 6.75 (*SD* = 7.64) years and were 39.23 (*SD* = 12.85) years old.

Participants were sent an email with instructions and information regarding the study, specifically, that this was a week-long study that entailed taking a survey at the end of each work day for five days. If they agreed to participate in the study, they were directed to the initial survey, which included demographic questions and measures for the moderators (LMX and abusive supervision) in addition to the daily survey measures

(gossip, emotions, and supervisor-directed helping and ostracism). As the current study focuses on employees' gossip about their supervisors and behaviors toward their supervisors, it was important that participants had daily interaction with both their coworkers and their supervisors, providing them an opportunity to both gossip and engage in supervisor-directed behaviors. Thus, I asked participants to report if they had interacted with their coworkers and supervisors that day. If they answered 'no' to either of these questions, they were sent to the end of the survey and informed they would be sent a survey at the end of the next work day. If they indicated they had interacted with their coworkers and supervisors that day, they continued on to the questionnaire.

Measures

The survey was sent out each day around 4:00 PM, toward the end of the employee's workday. This survey asked participants to report their gossip behaviors, emotions, and supervisor-directed behaviors for that day. Unless otherwise noted, all scales were assessed using a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = *to a very small extent*, 5 = *to a very large extent*). To see a list of all items in each measure please see Appendix A.

Leader-member exchange. As recommended by Graen and Uhl-Bien's (1995), LMX was measured using Scandura and Graen's (1984) seven-item measure. This is the most commonly used measure of LMX and has been shown to be valid and reliable (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Participants were instructed to think of their current supervisor and indicate how strongly they agreed with the statements (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*). Sample items are, "I can count on my manager to support me even when I'm in a tough situation at work" and "I feel that my manager understands my problems and needs" ($\alpha = .93$).

Abusive supervision. Abusive supervision was assessed using Tepper's (2000) 15-item measure of abusive supervision. Participants were instructed to think of their current supervisor and rate the frequency of supervisor abusive behaviors assessed on a five-point scale (1 = *never*, 5 = *very often*). Sample items are, "My supervisor tells me my thoughts or feelings are stupid" and "My supervisor puts me down in front of others" (α = .95).

Gossip. To measure supervisor-directed gossip behavior, I adapted Erdogan, Bauer, and Walter's (2015) four-item measure of gossip. Participants were instructed to indicate the extent to which they engaged in gossip about their supervisor during the day. Sample items are, "I talked to others about my supervisor's work mistakes" and "I spoke to others regarding something bad about my supervisor" (α = .91).

Shame. Shame was assessed using three items from Watson and Clark's (1994) PANAS-X. Participants rated the extent to which they felt specific shame emotions that day. Shame emotion items are: ashamed, disgusted with self, and dissatisfied with self (α = .76).

Fear. Fear was captured using Watson and Clark's (1994) six-item measure. Participants rated the frequency with which they experienced fear emotions that day. Example items include, afraid, scared, and fearful (α = .96).

Helping. To assess helping behavior I used a modified six-item scale developed by Van Dyne and LePine (1998). On a five-point scale, participants rated the extent to which they engaged in helping behavior directed toward their supervisor that day. Original scale items were modified to reflect the employee's helping behavior directed toward the supervisor. Additionally, the original scale includes seven items, but I omitted

one item that did not fit the context of this study, namely “I help orient new employee to this group”. I omitted this item because it is not relevant to helping a supervisor; it relates more to helping coworkers. Of the remaining six items, example items include, “I volunteered to do things for my supervisor” and “I assisted my supervisor with his/her work” ($\alpha = .96$).

***Ostracism*.** Workplace ostracism was assessed using a 10-item measure developed by Ferris, Brown, Berry, and Lian (2008). Participants rated how often they had intentionally engaged in ostracism behaviors directed toward their supervisor that day. Example items include, “I intentionally ignored my supervisor at work” and “I intentionally left the area when my supervisor entered” ($\alpha = .96$).

Analysis

In my analyses, I included only those participants who completed three or more daily surveys. As previously noted, 99 employees completed three or more daily surveys, which resulted in a total of 406 observations. Variables that were captured at the within-level were gossip, shame, fear, and supervisor-directed helping and ostracism. Between-level variables were LMX and abusive supervision. As is common practice with multilevel models, I centered the within-person predictor variable (gossip) at each individual’s mean value and grand-mean centered the between-level (LMX and abusive supervision) variables (Hofmann, 2015).

An examination of the variables revealed low variance between individuals in some of the study variables (see Table 1). For example, the between-person variability for shame and gossip are quite low, 37% and 22%. When a variable has low between-person variability it means that the variable can only show a within-individual effect

(Hoffman, 2015). As a result, because some of my hypotheses deal with between-level analyses, the lack of between-individual variance can have ramifications in terms of data analysis. Additionally, some of the measures had items that were not likely to vary too much day-to-day. For instance, one of the ostracism items, “Let my supervisor involuntarily sit alone in a crowded lunchroom at work”, is a behavior that can only occur once a day and is thus less likely to vary.

Results

The means, standard deviations, correlations, and reliabilities between study variables are displayed in Table 2. It should be noted that the low between-person variance for gossip and shame may present problems in terms of data analysis, as variables with little between-person variation can show only within-individual effects (Hoffman, 2015); yet my hypothesized model is meant to test between-person effects (moderation hypotheses), as well as within-person effects. Furthermore, Preacher, Zhang, and Zyphur (2010) warn that “if a model is estimated using a variable with a very small ICC, the estimation algorithm may not converge to a proper solution” (p. 215). Therefore, when I ran the data using multilevel path analysis (Preacher et al., 2010), a technique that allows for analysis at multiple levels, in Mplus (Muthén & Muthén, 2014), the model did not converge properly and the results were uninterpretable.

Taking the results from this study (e.g., lack of model convergence) into account and in hopes of increasing variability in the next study, I searched the literature for related measures that had previously been used in similar ESM studies. Specifically, in the next study I identified alternative measures for gossip, ostracism (supervisor-directed avoidance), helping (supervisor-directed OCB), shame (self-reflective measure of

shame), and fear. Furthermore, I recruited adults to complete 10 days of surveys to increase variability in study variables.

Main Study

Participants and Procedures

For my main study, I recruited online MBA and online senior level management undergraduate students to participate. I chose to recruit from this group of students because many non-traditional, online students tend to be employed full-time. Students were sent an email offering them course extra credit and a cash payment in exchange for participating in a two week study in which they would be asked to respond to two surveys a day for two weeks (Monday through Friday of each week). To qualify for the study, students were told they must be employed full-time and have daily contact with their supervisor and coworkers. As I am interested in supervisor-directed gossip, it was necessary for employees to be in an environment that put them in daily, close proximity with their coworkers and supervisors. As gossip tends to occur between people who work in close proximity (Baumeister et la., 2004; Ben-Ze'ev, 1994), having daily interaction with coworkers and supervisors provides an atmosphere where supervisor-directed gossip can occur. If the student did not meet these two qualifications, they were invited to recruit an adult working 30 or more hours a week who did meet the requirements.

Prior research indicates that two weeks provides a general representation of an employee's life (Beal, 2015; Scott, Barnes, & Wagner, 2012; Wheeler & Reis, 1991). However, due to the intense nature of ESM studies (e.g., completing two surveys a day for two weeks) it is likely that some participants may miss days. Students were told they would receive full extra credit points if they completed at least 5 days of both daily

surveys, and if they completed 9-10 days of both daily surveys, they would also receive a $20 cash payment in addition to their extra credit. Utilizing this method, I hoped to encourage participants to participate the full two weeks, but at the least I would have one week of both daily surveys; prior research indicates that one week is also an acceptable time frame for ESM studies (Beal, 2015; Scollon, Kim-Prieto, & Diener, 2003).

Students in six online MBA courses and one online upper level management course were invited to participate. Those who agreed to participate were sent an initial survey containing demographic and work schedule information, basic information about the employee and his or her workplace, and the employee's email address. Specifically, the initial survey collected the moderation variables: LMX and abusive supervision. Participants were given one work week to complete the initial survey.

The following Monday participants received the first daily survey around 11 AM asking about their supervisor-directed gossip behaviors and emotions that day. Participants were instructed to complete the survey midway through their work day (e.g., if they worked 8 AM to 5 PM, they should complete the survey around noon). Participants were located in multiple times zones and emails with the survey link were scheduled to be sent out around the middle of the participant's workday.

The second daily survey was sent out at the end of the work day, typically around 4:00 PM, asking participants about their supervisor-directed OCBs and avoidance behaviors throughout the day. Participants were instructed to complete this survey at the end of their work day or before they began work the next day. Gossip and emotions (i.e., shame and fear), reported in the first daily survey, were analyzed with the criterion variables (i.e., supervisor-directed behaviors) reported in the second daily survey. The

temporal separation between the predictor and criterion variables is desirable for addressing concerns relating to causality and same source bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Podsakoff, 2012).

The number of students invited to participate was approximately 452. Of those, 240 indicated they met the requirements for participation or recruited a working adult who did meet the requirements. Two-hundred-eighteen participants completed the initial survey; 202 participants completed at least 3 days of both surveys, while 81 participants completed 8-10 days of both daily surveys. Furthermore, I assessed the time stamps for both surveys and retained responses only where there was at least a three hour time gap between the completion of the first daily survey and the beginning of the second. In my data analyses, I chose to include participants who passed the time check and completed three or more days of both surveys, thus the final sample size was 198 participants for a total of 1,118 observations.

Initial Survey Measures

Participants completed the general survey during the initial recruitment process. This survey contained demographic information and measures for the moderator variables (e.g., LMX and abusive supervision). LMX was measured with the same items used in the Pilot Study, and participants were instructed to think of their current supervisor and indicate how strongly they agreed with the statements (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*) ($\alpha = .90$). Abusive supervision was assessed using the same items from the Pilot Study and participants rated the frequency of supervisor abusive behaviors assessed on a five-point scale (1 = *never*, 5 = *very often*) ($\alpha = .90$).

Daily Survey 1 Measures

Daily Survey 1 was sent out each day around mid-way through the employee's workday (11 AM), and a reminder email was sent out an hour and a half later. This survey asked participants to report engagement in supervisor-directed gossip and emotional experiences. To view all the items for each of the new measures used in the main study, please see Appendix A.

***Gossip*.** To measure supervisor-directed gossip behavior, I used 10 items adapted from Wittek and Wielers's (1998) measure of gossip. Participants were instructed to indicate the extent to which they engaged in gossip about their supervisor during the day on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = *to a very small extent*, 5 = *to a very large extent*). Sample items are, "I talked to others about my supervisor's work mistakes" and "I spoke to others regarding something bad about my supervisor" ($\alpha = .92$).

***Shame*.** Shame was assessed using items from Watson and Clark's (1994) PANAS-X. Participants rated the frequency with which they felt specific shame emotions, using a five-point scale (1 = *never*, 5 = *very often*). Shame emotion items are: angry at self, disgusted with self, and dissatisfied with self ($\alpha = .86$).

***Fear*.** Fear was captured using Fredrickson Tugade, Waugh, and Larkin's (2003) three-item measure. Participants also rated the frequency with which they experienced fear emotions, using the same five-point scale from above. Fear emotions items are: afraid, scared, and fearful ($\alpha = .95$).

Supplemental measures. In order to conduct supplemental analyses, I also included two alternative emotion scales, specifically measures for guilt and anxiety. Guilt was measured using three items typically associated with guilt in the literature (Eisenberg, 2000; Izard, Libero, Putnam, & Haynes, 1993; Marschall, Sanftner, &

Tangney, 1994; Smith et al., 2002; Tangney, 1996), namely, blameworthy, regret, and remorse (α = .82). Anxiety was measured using a three-item scale from Warr (1990), namely tense, uneasy, and worried (α = .86).

Daily Survey 2 Measures

Daily Survey 2 was sent out each day around 4:00 pm and requested participants complete it before work the next day. A reminder email was sent out about an hour and a half later. In this survey, participants reported on their supervisor-direct helping and avoidance behaviors. After examination of the Pilot Study, I determined to use two different, but related, measures of helping and ostracism to help increase variance. As noted previously, the ostracism measure in particular was problematic as behaviors in the scale items were not likely to occur repeatedly throughout the day, such as "Let my supervisor involuntarily sit alone in a crowded lunchroom at work" and "Did not invite or ask my supervisor if he/she wanted anything when I went out for a coffee break". Therefore, in order to identify measures that would have more daily variability, I searched the literature for helping and avoidance measures with items that could occur frequently throughout the day. I identified and used a supervisor-direct OCB and avoidance measure in this study.

Supervisor-directed OCB. In this study, helping behavior was assessed with four items from Fox, Spector, Goh, Bruursema, and Kessler's (2012) OCB scale. On a five-point scale, participants were asked to rate the frequency with which they engaged in supervisor-directed OCBs today (1 = *never*, 5 = *four or more times*). Example items include, "Helped my supervisor when he/she had too much to do" and "Took time to advise or help my supervisor" (α = .79)

Supervisor-direct avoidance. Supervisor-avoidance was assessed using three items developed by Ferris, Yan, Lim, Chen, and Fatimah (2015). Using a five-point scale (1 = *never*, 5 = *four or more times*), participants rated how frequently they engaged in avoidance behaviors directed toward their supervisor. Example items include, "I purposely avoided my supervisor" and "I kept as much distance from my supervisor as possible" (α = .84).

Analyses

Due to the multilevel nature of ESM data, where days are nested within employees, I used a multilevel approach for hypothesis testing. Repeated measures data violates the assumption of homoscedasticity and independence and must, therefore, be analyzed using a method that allows for non-equal variance and violation of the assumption of independence of observations. A multilevel model, such as *multilevel path analysis* allows for hypothesis testing when these assumptions are not met.

Furthermore, multilevel analysis provides a more accurate assessment of the data as it uses both within- and between-person models to assess the data, whereas other multilevel methods, such as hierarchical linear modeling, focus on differences between individuals rather than within individuals. In multilevel research the data is collected at two levels; level 1 includes the variables that vary within the individual, and level 2 comprises the variables that vary between individuals. In this research, level 1 variables include gossip behavior and the interaction terms. These variables vary within the individual, as they change from day-to-day. Level 2 variables are the moderators, LMX and abusive supervision: these will be assessed at one point in time and will vary between individuals. As for the remaining variables (shame, fear, supervisor-directed OCB and

avoidance), multilevel analysis considers all outcome variables at both the within and between levels. Furthermore, in order to properly test my hypotheses, I centered the Level 1 predictor variable (gossip) at each individual's mean and grand-mean centered the Level 2 variables (LMX and abusive supervision) (Hoffman, 2015).

Before testing the hypotheses, I assessed the within- and between-individual variance in the study variables. The results presented in Table 3 show the proportion of total variance in each variable attributed to within- and between-individual variance. As reported, the between-individual variance for supervisor-directed gossip is low, 20%, which is similar to the measures used in the Pilot Study in terms of between-individual variance (22%). However, the new shame measure has much higher between-individual variability (63%) than the shame measure used in the Pilot Study (38%).

Results

The means, standard deviations, and correlations are presented in Table 4. As the data is multilevel, I present both within-individual and between-individual correlations. Utilizing a multilevel analysis (Preacher et al., 2010), I first tested Hypotheses 1, 4 and 6 with a model capturing the full model without the between-level moderators. Results show that Hypothesis 1a and 1b were not supported. Hypothesis 1 predicted that employee supervisor-directed gossip would be positively related to feelings of (a) shame (B = .05, *ns*) and (b) fear (B = -0.11, *ns*). In regards to H4a and H4b, shame was not a significant predictor of supervisor-directed helping (B = .04, *ns*) or ostracism (B = .05, *ns*). However, there was some support for Hypothesis 6. Although fear was not a significant predictor of supervisor-directed helping (B = .12, *ns*), it was a significant predictor of supervisor-directed avoidance (B = .11, p < .05), providing support for

Hypothesis 6b, but not 6a. Figure 2 displays the estimated path coefficients for the within-level analyses.

Next, I tested Hypotheses 2, 3, 5, and 7 using the full model with the between-level moderators added (see Figure 3). Hypotheses 2 and 3 predicted that leader supportiveness, as captured by LMX and abusive supervision, would moderate the within-individual relationships between gossip and emotions. In particular, Hypothesis 2 predicted that LMX would moderate the gossip-shame relationship; however, results do not support this hypothesis as the interaction term was not significant (*B* = .08, *ns*). Although not hypothesized, it is worth noting the direct effect of LMX on shame was not significant (*B* = -.03, *ns*). Hypothesis 3 predicted that abusive supervision would moderate the gossip-fear relationship. The results do not support this relationship as the interaction term was not significant (*B* = .13, *ns*). Additionally, the direct effect of abusive supervision on fear was not significant (*B* = .13, *ns*). Furthermore, because the interaction terms were not significant, Hypotheses 5 and 7 were not supported for moderated mediation.

Overall, my hypothesized model did not receive support. In fact, the only relationship that was significant was the fear to avoidance relationship. Thus, I conducted some supplemental analyses to better assess specific paths. I analyzed two separate moderated-mediation models (gossip x LMX → shame → outcome variables; gossip x abusive supervision → fear → outcome variables), and I also examined the direct relationship between the predictor and outcome variables. When shame is run as a single mediator (without fear included in the model), the gossip-shame relationship was still not significant (*B* = .07, *ns*). Shame was positively related to supervisor-directed avoidance

(B = .09, $p \leq .01$) but not helping (B = .06, *ns*). Subsequently, the indirect effect of gossip onto helping (B = .00, *ns*) and avoidance (B = .00, *ns*) via shame was not significant. The interaction term (gossip x LMX) was still not significant (B = .08, *ns*). Interestingly, however, the results show a positive and significant direct effect of gossip onto helping (B = .22, $p < .05$) but not onto avoidance (B = .12, *ns*) (see Figure 4).

One possible limitation of my original predictions is that shame is a powerful and intense emotion (Ausubel, 1955; Niedenthal, Tangney, & Gavanski, 1994; Tangney et al., 1996) and may not be experienced frequently enough to vary day-to-day, and gossiping about one's supervisor may not be intense enough to elicit shame. Related to shame, guilt is also a moral emotion, but entails a sense of tension, remorse and regret over something bad one has done (Tangney, 1996). The focus of guilt is on one's bad behavior, whereas with shame the focus is on the self (Lewis, 1971; Tangney et al., 2007). I also collected guilt emotions (blameworthy, regret, remorseful), which I tested as a mediator in place of shame. When run without fear included in the model, the gossip-guilt path was positive and statistically significant (B = .16, $p \leq .01$), and guilt was also positively related to supervisor-directed avoidance (B = .10, $p < .01$) but not helping (B = .00, *ns*). Subsequently, the indirect effect of gossip onto helping via guilt was not significant (B = .00, *ns*); however, the indirect effect of gossip onto avoidance via guilt was directional and approached significance (B = .02, p = .12). Additionally, the interaction term was not significant (B = .06, *ns*). Lastly, again, the results do show a positive, significant relationship between gossip and helping (B = .24, $p \leq .05$), but not for avoidance (B = .09, *ns*) (see Figure 5).

Next, I examined the mediating role of fear, without shame, or guilt included in the model. The gossip-fear path was not significant (*B* = -.04, *ns*), yet fear was positively related to supervisor-directed avoidance (*B* = .11, *p* < .05) but not helping (*B* = .12, *ns*). Next, the indirect effect of gossip onto helping via fear was not significant (*B* = .00, *ns*), nor was the indirect effect of gossip onto avoidance via fear (*B* = .00, *ns*). Moreover, the interaction term (gossip x abusive supervision) was not significant (*B* = .13, *ns*). Lastly, in this model the direct effect of gossip onto helping was positive and significant (*B* = .22, *p* < .05), but not onto avoidance (*B* = .13, *ns*) (see Figure 6).

Fear can also be an intense emotion (Adler, Rosen, & Silverstein, 1998), and thus it may be less likely to be aroused except in serious or extreme circumstances. Gossiping about one's supervisor may not be serious enough to arouse fear, but it may elicit a similar but less intense form of fear, namely anxiety. In my data collection, I also included a 3-item measure of anxiety (Warr, 1990) (tense, uneasy, worried), which I used as a mediator in place of fear. The gossip-anxiety path approached statistical significance (*B* = .24, *p* < .10), and anxiety onto supervisor-directed helping (*B* = .07, *p* < .10) and avoidance (*B* = .05, *p* = .11) were positive and approached statistical significance. Subsequently, the indirect effect of gossip onto helping via anxiety was directional but not significant (*B* = .02, *ns*), and the indirect effect of gossip onto avoidance via anxiety was not significant (*B* = .01, *ns*). Additionally, the interaction term (gossip x abusive supervision) onto anxiety was not significant (*B* = .08, *ns*). Lastly, again, the results show a positive, significant relationship between gossip and helping (*B* = .22, *p* < .05), but not avoidance (*B* = .11, *ns*) (see Figure 7).

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Taken together, the results from this study provide some insights into employees' reactions to their own supervisor-directed gossip. Although the originally hypothesized model was not supported, portions of the model were supported when examining less intense emotional reactions as mediators (i.e., guilt instead of shame, anxiety instead of fear). Post hoc analyses showed that supervisor-directed gossip is positively related to employee's guilt and anxiety. Subsequently, guilt was positively related to supervisor-directed avoidance, but not supervisor-directed helping, and anxiety was positively related to helping, but not avoidance. Yet, while there was support for these direct relationships, I did not find statistical support for any indirect effects. Moreover, the data did not support the notion that the type of employee-supervisor relationship (e.g., LMX or abusive supervision) moderated the emotional experience of gossiping employees. Specifically, the gossip-LMX interaction did not significantly moderate employee experiences of shame or guilt. Relatedly, the gossip-abusive supervision interaction did not moderate employee experiences of fear or anxiety.

Overall, my original hypothesized model failed to garner empirical support. While this is unfortunate, in retrospect, it may not be surprising given the ambiguous nature of gossip. Although gossip is frowned upon by society (Goodman, 1994), it is still

frequently observed in others, it may be easier to justify one's own gossip behavior as commonplace and harmless (Bandura, 1986, 1999).

I originally argued that moral violations trigger emotional responses, such as shame and fear. However, shame and fear are both more intense emotions (Adler et al., 1998; Ausubel, 1955; Niedenthal et al., 1994; Tangney et al., 1996) and less likely to be aroused in commonplace circumstances. Consequently, shame and fear may be less likely to be triggered because gossip may be viewed as a minor or trivial moral violation. To assess this explanation, I tested my predictions with similar, but less intense emotions, namely guilt and anxiety, as mediators in my hypothesized model. The results showed that gossip was positively and significantly related to guilt ($B = .16$, $p \leq .01$) and approached significance in relation to anxiety ($B = .24$, $p < .10$), but mediation effects were not supported. Even so, these results support the notion that gossip, as a less severe moral violation, may not be strong enough to elicit shame and fear, but may elicit guilt and anxiety.

Theoretical Implications

The current research was meant to elucidate knowledge regarding how people respond to their own moral violations in the form of gossip behavior. Drawing from deonance theory (Folger, 1998, 2001), I provided arguments explaining the emotional response employees may have to their own moral violations. Specifically, I argued that gossip, as a moral violation, would trigger shame, as a self-evaluative emotion. As a moral emotion, shame provides feedback regarding the social and moral appropriateness of one's character (Lewis, 1971; Smith et al., 2002; Tangney et al., 2007). When employees violate a moral standard, they are likely to feel ashamed because of what their

behaviors say about their moral character and the self as a whole (Leary, 2007). Thus, shame is more focused on the self and what one's gossip behavior says about the self. On the other hand, guilt is also a moral emotion, but it provides feedback regarding the moral appropriateness of one's *behavior* (Lewis, 1971; Tangeny et al. 2007).

What my research shows it that gossip may not be a strong enough moral violation to trigger strong negative self-evaluations in terms of one's moral character (i.e., shame). After all, "everyone gossips," so it may not reflect as poorly on the self, due to the fact that it is a widely practiced phenomenon. However, supplemental analyses show that gossip does appear to prompt guilt as a negative evaluation of one's behavior. Thus, similar to my initial predictions, one's gossip, as a moral violation, does prompt self-conscious emotions, but the evaluation appears to be about one's behavior (i.e., guilt), rather than about one's enduring moral character (i.e., shame).

Although my supplemental analyses did not produce statistically significant results for the mediating role of guilt, I did find that guilt was related to avoidance behaviors, but not helping behaviors. These findings are interesting because guilt is typically characterized as a beneficial emotion as it alerts employees to their ethical failings and motivates them to take corrective action through reparative behaviors (Eisenberg, 2000; Tangney et al., 2007). In fact, past research finds that guilt is associated with reparative or compensatory behaviors that are aimed at correcting a wrong or making up for a failure (Jordan, Mullen, & Murnighan, 2011; Mazar & Zhong, 2010; Zhong & Liljenquist 2006). Hence, I would have expected guilt to be positively related to helping behavior rather than avoidance. On the other hand, shame is typically related to avoidance behaviors because they allow perpetrators to hide from those around

them, thus reducing the chances of being “found out” (Eisenberg, 2000; Tangney et al., 1996). Yet, the results from this study show that guilt, rather than shame, influences supervisor-directed avoidance. It may be that my measure of guilt is actually capturing a more general negative self-evaluation, such as self-condemnation. One limitation of examining my theoretical model with guilt as the mediator is that the guilt measure does not specifically refer to evaluations of one’s behavior (i.e., blameworthy, regretful, and remorseful). Thus, although guilt is conceptualized as being about one’s behavior, perhaps these items, specifically, are tapping into general negative emotions, or self-condemnation, that would make sense in terms of relating to avoidance.

Albeit not hypothesized, in my supplemental analyses, I examined the direct relationship between gossip and supervisor-directed helping and avoidance. Interestingly, gossip was positively, and significantly, related to supervisor-directed helping, but was not significantly related to avoidance. The relationship between gossip and helping was the opposite of what I would have expected, in that I originally predicted that because of shameful reactions, employees would respond to their gossip by becoming very self-focused and thus would not pay attention to the needs of the supervisor. A possible explanation for my findings is that employees respond to their supervisor-directed gossip by trying to save themselves in the event that the gossip is exposed. By engaging in helping behaviors, the employee would be able to signal to the boss that he/she still is supportive of the boss (Bolino, Turnley, Boodgood, 2002), in spite of gossip behaviors. Indeed, the self-presentation literature argues that people will often respond to their moral violations by trying to “save face” through other, self-enhancing behaviors that demonstrate that they are still good, supportive people (Leary, 2002; Leary & Miller,

2000). It could be that gossip produces concern with reputation that then motivates helping behaviors as a way of preserving one's reputation, especially in the eyes of the supervisor.

One reason I chose to focus on the supervisor-employee relationship is that supervisors have power and control over employees and resources (Berscheid et al, 1976; Magee & Galinskey, 2008). Conceivably, one reason the moderation hypotheses failed to garner support is because the variables I examined (LMX and abusive supervision) were not specific enough in terms of capturing power and control of resources. It could be that a supervisor's level of power can affect employees' emotional reactions to gossip, as the employee may feel more concerned about the gossip being found out and the powerful supervisor subsequently withholding resources. Thus, the power dynamics between the supervisor and employee may have made for a better moderator of gossip to emotional reactions. French and Raven (1959) identify five types of power: reward (control over rewards), coercive (control over punishments), legitimate (right to control behavior), referent (interpersonal attraction), and expert (knowledge or expertise). It could be that under a highly coercive supervisor, employees feel even more anxious about their gossip because if exposed, it could result in particularly harsh punishments. Perhaps, too, a supervisor high in referent power, who is typically well-liked and respected, makes it so that the gossiping employee feels even guiltier about disrespecting the supervisor, and possibly ruining their relationship.

Generally, I contribute to the emerging gossip literature by exploring gossip in the workplace and focusing on the moral consequences of engaging in gossip. This research was meant to elucidate people's moral reaction to their gossip behavior via the

experience of moral emotions. My research finds that people do experience the moral emotion of guilt when they engage in supervisor-directed gossip. One major contribution of this work to is extend deonance theory to explain the emotional reactions people have to their own moral violations. Gossip presumably violates the notion that all people should be treated with dignity and respect (Kant, 1797/1991); thus, people should feel badly when they fail to preserve this norm by gossiping about someone else. To date, deonance theory has been used to understand people's negative emotional reactions to the observed moral violations of others (Folger, 1998, 2001); however, I argue that engaging in a moral violation will also elicit moral emotions as a personal response to wrongdoing. Results from my study provide preliminary support for this idea as gossip is positively related to individual experiences of guilt, as a moral emotion.

A final contribution of my research is that it demonstrates that people's day-to-day emotional reactions at work can affect their behavioral reactions toward supervisors. My results show that fear is positively related to employees' avoidance of supervisors. My supplemental results show that guilt is positively related to employees' avoidance of supervisors, and anxiety is positively related to employees' supervisor-directed helping behaviors. Although the organizational behavior literature has started to examine employees' emotions in relation to behaviors (Bono, Foldes, Vinson, & Muros, 2007; Judge, Woolf, & Hurst, 2009; Scott & Barnes, 2011), little research to date has utilized experience sampling methodologies to provide better evidence of causal effects. I contribute to the broader emotions literature by showing that employee's emotional variations can indeed effect their effectiveness at work, at least in terms of how they interact with supervisors.

Practical Implications

Practically, I also make contributions to the literature. First, although gossip has beneficial functions, such as passing information, maintaining norms, unifying groups, and strengthening individual relationships (Foster, 2004; Gluckman, 1963; Stirling, 1956), I find that employees' workplace gossip, specifically, supervisor-directed gossip, can have an unfavorable effect on employee emotions. Gossiping about a supervisor may be akin to "biting the hand that feeds you," which influences the gossiper's emotional arousal of guilt and anxiety for behaving in a way that is unsupportive of a boss who provides access to promotions, raises, and favorable work assignments (Berscheid et al., 1976; Magee & Galinsky, 2008). In fact, supplemental analyses show that gossiping about coworkers does not elicit the same level of guilt (B = .03, *ns*) or anxiety (B = -.06, *ns*) as gossiping about one's supervisor.

Additionally, supervisors should understand that the day-to-day emotional experiences of employees can affect their behaviors on the job. If an employee is experiencing guilt, the manager may experience backlash in the form of employee avoidance. Employees' anxiety may induce supervisor-directed helping behavior, perhaps as a way to show one's worth, and to reduce uncertainties regarding one's place in the organization. Managers should be mindful of employees' emotional variations and practice patience with employees, realizing that their emotionally-aroused behaviors today may not be reflective of the employee's typical behavior.

Lastly, I focus attention on the negative repercussions of workplace gossip. The popular press touts the harmful effects of gossip (Amsinger, 2015; Danziger, 1988; Evans, 2015; Michelson & Mouly, 2004), but academic research has lagged behind in

this regard. Thus, this research may be useful for organizations as they attempt to dissuade employees from gossiping at work. My results show that gossip can lead to negative emotions, such as guilt and anxiety. Guilt and anxiety can result in increased frustration, burnout, counterproductive behaviors, and reduced job and life satisfaction (Cass, Siu, Faragher, & Cooper, 2003; Fairbrother & Warn, 2003; Fox & Spector, 1999; Hochwarter, Perrewé, Meurs, & Kacmar, 2007; Tangney, Niedenthal, Covert, & Barlow, 1998). Although mediation effects are speculative at this time, managers should be warned that an employee's gossip may spawn negative emotions that could potentially lead to increased counterproductive behaviors, burnout, and reduced satisfaction (Cass et al., 2003; Fairbrother & Warn, 2003; Fox & Spector, 1999; Hochwarter et la., 2007). Thus, as managers draw attention to the harmful nature of gossip, it may make employees think twice before gossiping the next time.

Limitations and Future Directions

As with all research, this dissertation is not without limitations. First, both ESM studies failed to provide adequate between-person variability in supervisor-directed gossip, with variability being between 20% and 22%. Additionally, in the pilot study, shame also exhibited low variability between individuals, 37%. This low variability had implications for data analyses, and in the pilot study, the full model was not specified. Thus, in the Main Study, I used different measures for gossip, emotions, and supervisor-directed helping and avoidance, which resulted in a fully-specified model. The low variance in supervisor-directed gossip in both ESM studies provides some evidence that gossiping about one's supervisor may not be a prevalent problem in the workplace. Moreover, I also collected a brief measure related to gossiping about one's coworkers and

the variance in this measure was low as well, specifically 27% was attributed to variability between individuals. Further research is needed, but this may suggest the frequency of workplace gossip may be less prevalent than previously thought.

The low variability in supervisor-directed gossip may also be influenced by the sensitive nature of the variable. Because gossip is a taboo topic and society tends to frown upon it (Elmer, 1994; Goodman, 1994), asking employees to report their gossip behavior may not result in accurate reports. Although the scale items for gossip did not explicitly use the word "gossip," employees may have picked-up on the underlying theme of the items. Or perhaps gossip is not as prevalent as past research would suggest. Future research would do well to assess gossip in a more objective manner, such as obtaining reports from coworkers and friends or capturing it via written communication (email, instant messages, Facebook or Twitter posts). Furthermore, it may be that people do not perceive their behaviors as really gossiping or harming others, and thus, may easily justify gossip behavior. It would be beneficial for future research to investigate when people actually perceive their gossip behavior as gossiping and when they do not.

Relatedly, future research should also investigate the between-level influence of individual gossip. In multi-level data there are both within- and between level effects, for instance gossip is considered a within level effect (it varies within individuals) and LMX and abusive supervision are considered between level effects because they vary between individuals only. Yet, data measured at the within level also contain between-individual effects; specifically, part of the variance within individuals can be attributed to the individual (between level) and part to daily fluctuations in the individuals (within individual) (Hoffman, 2015). To help account for this, in my analyses I group-mean

centered the predictor variable to assess the pure within-individual effects (Hofmann, 2015). However, future research should also examine the between-level effects of gossip. The between-level effects essentially capture the amount a person gossips, while the within-level effects capture the individual's daily variance in gossip. Parsing the gossip variable into separate between and within variables would essentially provide a way to control and test for the between-level effects of gossip at the same time as testing for the within-level effects.

Additionally, while there are a number of benefits associated with the use of ESM (Beal, 2015), it is not without drawbacks. Specifically, as participants are asked the same questions each day, there is the concern that familiarity with the survey items can cause sensitization and boredom with study variables, which can influence survey responses (Song, Foo, & Uy, 2008). Yet, past research has mitigated these concerns by showing that these effects are not significant (Eckenrode & Bolger, 1995; Shiffman & Stone, 1998). Furthermore, it is possible that the results could be affected by common method variance, as all measures were assessed by the same source (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). However, given the variables of interest were personal behaviors and emotional experiences, I felt that self-report assessment was appropriate (Spector, 2006). That being said, I did add a time separation between reports of gossip and emotions and reports of supervisor-directed behaviors so all variables were not collected at the same point in time. Moreover, participants that completed both surveys less than 3 hours apart (eliminating the temporal separation) were not included in the analyses. However, future research would benefit from capturing coworker or supervisor reports of gossip behavior and outcome variables.

In this research, I focus on a specific type of gossip, namely supervisor-directed gossip. Supervisor gossip is very specific and as such may not vary much from day-to-day; thus, I would encourage future researchers to assess a more general measure of gossip using an ESM type study. Alternatively, future research may find more variability in studies that capture supervisor-directed gossip on a weekly rather than daily basis. While I believe there is value in understanding the effect of the gossiper-gossipee relationship in predicting emotions, the present research did not provide cooperating statistical support for my hypothesized moderating relationships (LMX and abusive supervision). However, as previously discussed, a more appropriate moderator may be captured by power dynamics between the two parties. It may be more risky to engage in gossip toward a powerful supervisor, as the gossiper may need to maintain a good relationship with the supervisor to continue to receive access to important social and physical resources.

Furthermore, research should also consider examining moderators that speak to individual differences in terms of gossip and ethics. For instance, moral identity (Aquino & Reed, 2002) may influence the likelihood of a person viewing gossip as a moral violation. Those with a lower moral identity may not view gossip as a serious moral violation compared to those with a high moral identity. Furthermore, one's attitude toward gossip (Litman & Pezzo, 2005) or propensity to gossip (Nevo, Nevo, & Derech-Zehavi, 1994) may also effect the gossiper's reaction to gossiping. One who frequently gossips may have a more positive attitude toward gossip (Turner, Mazur, Wendel, & Winslow, 2003) and view it as less serious than one who gossips infrequently.

Future research should explore the role of social bonds in relation to gossip behavior and emotional reactions. Social ties provide people with information, influence, and social credentials (Lin, 2002) and can be threatened because of gossip (Farley, 2011). Weak social ties are easily broken and may be more influenced by the exchange of bad behaviors (Schug, Yuki, & Maddux, 2010; Turner et al., 2003), such as gossip. This is because the two parties do not have the appropriate history, or strength, to overcome relational difficulties. Hence, gossipers who are in weak social relationships may experience heightened levels of anxiety as a result of their gossip. However, when social bonds are stronger and not easily replaced, the threat of gossip tarnishing a relationship can be mitigated, as expressed by lower levels of social anxiety.

Future research should test my theoretical model in a context where gossip is especially frequent. Healthcare organizations (Laing, 1993; Waddington, 2005; Waddington & Fletcher, 2005), or highly competitive companies, may instigate higher levels of gossip because of greater competition for resources (Buss & Dedden, 1990; Hess & Hagen, 2006; McAndrew & Milenkovic, 2002). In fact, future research could examine competition as an antecedent of workplace gossip and see whether those who are "prone to gossip" are more likely to do so in these environments. Subsequently, these types of employees and their gossip behaviors can create an unfavorable contamination effect, where gossip spirals out of control (Andersson & Pearson, 1999).

Conclusion

Because gossip is commonplace in a range of contexts (Dunbar, 2004; Noon & Delbridge, 1994), it is important to understand not just *why* people gossip, but the consequences of gossip behavior for the gossiping individual (i.e., the gossiper) and the

people being gossiped about (i.e., the gossipee). The majority of past gossip research highlights the positive outcomes of gossip and often examines it at the group level. This work is meant to investigate the moral implications of employees' workplace gossip by examining the gossiper's emotional responses. Drawing on deonance theory (Folger, 1998, 2001), I argued that gossip, as a moral violation, produces unfavorable emotional reactions for the gossiper. I found that although gossiping about a supervisor does not elicit shame or fear, it does trigger feelings of guilt and anxiety. Even though mediation effects were not found, my results reveal that guilt positively influences avoidance behaviors, and anxiety positively affects supervisor-directed helping, with both behavioral reactions being important to the organization's vitality (Ferris et al., 2008; Koys, 2001; O'Reilly & Robinson, 2009; Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 1997; Williams, 2007).

REFERENCES

Adler, R. S., Rosen, B., & Silverstein, E. M. 1998. Emotions in negotiation: How to manage fear and anger. ***Negotiation Journal***, 14:161-179.

Amsinger, V. 2015. Winning the gossip game at work. ***St. Louis Post-Dispatch***. Retrieved February 24, 2015 from http://www.stltoday.com/classifieds/jobs/winning-the-gossip-game-at-work/article_19e5eb63-496c-5de2-8433-d8fb03efa0e9.html.

Anderson, E., Siegel, E. H., Bliss-Moreau, E., & Barrett, L. F. 2011. The visual impact of gossip. ***Science,*** 332: 1446-1448.

Andersson, L. M., & Pearson, C. M. 1999. Tit for tat? The spiraling effect of incivility in the workplace. ***Academy of Management Review***, *24*: 452-471.

Aquino, K., & Reed II, A. 2002. The self-importance of moral identity. ***Journal of Personality and Social Psychology***, *83*: 1423-1140.

Aquino, K., & Thau, S. 2009. Workplace victimization: Aggression from the target's perspective. ***Annual Review of Psychology***, 60: 717-741.

Ausubel, D. P. 1955. Relationships between shame and guilt in the socializing process. ***Psychological Review***, *62*: 378-390.

Avolio, B. J., Walumbwa, F. O., & Weber, T. J. 2009. Leadership: Current theories, research, and future directions. ***Annual Review of Psychology***, 60: 421-449.

Bandura, A. 1986. ***Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory***. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Bandura, A. 1999. Moral disengagement in the perpetration of inhumanities. ***Personality and Social Psychology Review***, *3*: 193-209.

Baumeister, R. F., Bratslavsky, E., Finkenauer, C., & Vohs, K. D. 2001. Bad is stronger than good. ***Review of general psychology***, *5*: 323-370.

Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. 1995. The need to belong: desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. ***Psychological Bulletin***, 117: 497-529.

Baumeister, R. F., Zhang, L., & Vohs, K. D. 2004. Gossip as cultural learning. ***Review of General Psychology,*** 8: 111-121.

Beal, D. J. 2015. ESM 2.0: State of the art and future potential of experience sampling methods in organizational research. ***Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Behavior***, *2*: 383-407.

Beersma, B., & Van Kleef, G. A. 2011. How the grapevine keeps you in line: Gossip increases contributions to the group. ***Social Psychological and Personality Science***, 2: 642-649.

Ben-Ze'ev, A. 1994. The vindication of gossip. In R. F. Goodman & A. Ben-Ze'ev (Eds.), ***Good gossip***: 11–24. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas.

Berscheid, E., Graziano, W., Monson, T., & Dermer, M. 1976. Outcome dependency: Attention, attribution, and attraction. ***Journal of Personality and Social Psychology***, 34: 978-989.

Bolino, M. C., Turnley, W. H., & Bloodgood, J. M. 2002. Citizenship behavior and the creation of social capital in organizations. ***Academy of Management Review***, *27*: 505-522.

Bono, J. E., Foldes, H. J., Vinson, G., & Muros, J. P. 2007. Workplace emotions: The role of supervision and leadership. ***Journal of Applied Psychology***, *92*: 1357-1367.

Bosson, J. K., Johnson, A. B., Niederhoffer, K., & Swann, W. B. 2006. Interpersonal chemistry through negativity: Bonding by sharing negative attitudes about others. ***Personal Relationships***, 13: 135-150.

Burt, R. 2001. Structural holes versus network closure as social capital. In N. Lin, K. S. Cook, & R. S. Burt (Eds.), ***Social capital: Theory and research***: 31–56. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Buss, D. M., & Dedden, L. A. 1990. Derogation of competitors. ***Journal of Social and Personal Relationships***, *7*(3): 395-422.

Carver, C. S., Sutton, S. K., & Scheier, M. F. 2000. Action, emotion, and personality: Emerging conceptual integration. ***Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin***, 26: 741-751.

Cass, M. H., Siu, O. L., Faragher, E. B., & Cooper, C. L. 2003. A meta-analysis of the relationship between job satisfaction and employee health in Hong Kong. ***Stress and Health***, *19*(2): 79-95.

Cohen, T. R., Wolf, S. T., Panter, A. T., & Insko, C. A. 2011. Introducing the GASP scale: A new measure of guilt and shame proneness. ***Journal of Personality and Social Psychology***, 100: 947-966.

Cole, J. M., & Scrivener, H. 2013. Short term effects of gossip behavior on self-esteem. ***Current Psychology***, 32: 252-260.

Cropanzano R., Goldman B., Folger R. 2003. Deontic justice: The role of moral principles in workplace fairness. ***Journal of Organizational Behavior***, 24: 1019–1024.

Danziger, E. 1988. Minimize office gossip. ***Personnel Journal***, 67: 31-34

De Dreu, C. K., & Nauta, A. 2009. Self-interest and other-orientation in organizational behavior: Implications for job performance, prosocial behavior, and personal initiative. ***Journal of Applied Psychology***, 94: 913-926.

Duffy, M. K., Ganster, D. C., & Pagon, M. 2002. Social undermining in the workplace. ***Academy of Management Journal***, 45: 331–351.

Dunbar, R. I. M. 1994. ***Grooming, gossip, and the evolution of language***. London: Faber & Faber.

Dunbar, R. I. 2004. Gossip in evolutionary perspective. ***Review of General Psychology***, 8:100-110.

Dunbar, R. I. M., Marriott, A., & Duncan, N. D. C. 1997. Human conversational behavior. ***Human Nature***, 8: 231–246.

Eckenrode, J., & Bolger, N. 1995. Daily and within-day event measurement. In S. Cohen, R. Kessler, & L. U. Gordon (Eds.), **Measuring stress: A guide for health and social scientists** (pp. 80 –101). New York: Oxford University Press.

Eisenberg, N. 2000. Emotion, regulation, and moral development. ***Annual Review of Psychology***, *51*: 665-697.

Ellsworth, P. C., & Smith, C. A. 1988. From appraisal to emotion: Differences among unpleasant feelings. *Motivation and Emotion*, *12*(3), 271-302.

Ellwardt, L., Labianca, G. J., & Wittek, R. (2012). Who are the objects of positive and negative gossip at work?: A social network perspective on workplace gossip. ***Social Networks,*** 34: 193-205.

Elmer N. 1994. Gossip, reputation, and social adaptation. In Goodman R., Ben-Ze'ev A. (Eds.), ***Good gossip***: 117–138. Kansas City, KS: University Press of Kansas.

Erdogan, B., Bauer, T. N., & Walter, J. 2015. Deeds that help and words that hurt: Helping and gossip as moderators of the relationship between leader–member exchange and advice network centrality. ***Personnel Psychology***, 68: 185-214.

Evans, L. 2015. How to prevent office gossip from ruining your business. ***Entrepreneur***. Retrieved February 24, 2015 from http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/242257.

Fairbrother, K., & Warn, J. 2003. Workplace dimensions, stress and job satisfaction. ***Journal of Managerial Psychology,*** *18*(1): 8-21.

Farley, S. D. (2011). Is gossip power? The inverse relationships between gossip, power, and likability. ***European Journal of Social Psychology***, 41: 574-579.

Feinberg, M., Willer, R., Stellar, J., & Keltner, D. 2012. The virtues of gossip: Reputational information sharing as prosocial behavior. ***Journal of Personality and Social Psychology***, 102: 1015-1030.

Ferris, D. L., Brown, D. J., Berry, J. W., & Lian, H. 2008. The development and validation of the Workplace Ostracism Scale. ***Journal of Applied Psychology***, 93: 1348-1366.

Ferris, D. L., Yan, M., Lim, V., Chen, Y., & Fatimah, S. (2015). An Approach/Avoidance Framework of Workplace Aggression. ***Academy of Management Journal***, doi:10.5465/amj.2014.0221

Festinger L 1957. ***A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance***. Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.

Fine, G.A., & Rosnow, R.L., 1978. Gossip, gossipers, gossiping. ***Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin***, 4: 161–168.

Fisher, C. D., & To, M. L. 2012. Using experience sampling methodology in organizational behavior. ***Journal of Organizational Behavior***, 33: 865-877.

Flynn, F. J., & Schaumberg, R. L. 2012. When feeling bad leads to feeling good: Guilt-proneness and affective organizational commitment. ***Journal of Applied Psychology***, 97: 124-133.

Folger R. 1998. Fairness as a moral virtue. In: Schminke M (ed.) ***Managerial Ethics: Morally Managing People and Processes***: 12-34. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Folger R. 2001. Fairness as deonance. In: Gilliland S, Steiner D, Skarlicki D (eds) ***Research in Social Issues in Management***: 3–31. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.

Folger R. 2012. Deonance: Behavioral ethics and moral obligation. In: De Cremer D, Tenbrunsel A (eds) ***Behavioral Business Ethics: Shaping an Emerging Field***: 123–142. London: Taylor & Francis.

Folger R. & Cropanzano R. 1998. ***Organizational Justice and Human Resource Management***. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Fong, C. T. 2006. The effects of emotional ambivalence on creativity. ***Academy of Management Journal***, 49: 1016-1030.

Foster, E. K. 2004. Research on gossip: Taxonomy, methods, and future directions. ***Review of General Psychology***, 8: 78-99.

Fox, S., & Spector, P. E. 1999. A model of work frustration–aggression. ***Journal of Organizational Behavior***, *20*: 915-931.

Fox, S., Spector, P. E., Goh, A., Bruursema, K., & Kessler, S. R. 2012. The deviant citizen: Measuring potential positive relations between counterproductive work behaviour and organizational citizenship behaviour. ***Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology***, *85*(1): 199-220.

Fredrickson, B. L. 2001. The role of positive emotions in positive psychology: The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. ***American Psychologist***, 56: 218-226.

Fredrickson, B. L., Tugade, M. M., Waugh, C. E., & Larkin, G. R. 2003. What good are positive emotions in crisis? A prospective study of resilience and emotions following the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11th, 2001. ***Journal of Personality and Social Psychology***, *84*: 365-376.

French, J. R. P., & Raven, B. 1959. The bases of social power. In D. Cartwright & A. Zander, ***Group dynamics*** (pp. 150–167). New York: Harper & Row.

Frijda, N. H. 1986. ***The emotions***. London, England: Cambridge University Press.

Gerstner, C. R., & Day, D. V. 1997. Meta-Analytic review of leader–member exchange theory: Correlates and construct issues. ***Journal of Applied Psychology***, 82: 827.

Gluckman, M. 1963. Papers in honor of Melville J. Herskovits: Gossip and scandal. ***Current Anthropology***, 4: 307-316.

Goodman, R.F. 1994. Introduction. In R.F. Goodman and A. Ben-Ze'ev (eds) ***Good Gossip***: 1–8, Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas.

Graen, G. B., & Uhl-Bien, M. 1995. Relationship-based approach to leadership: Development of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory of leadership over 25 years: Applying a multi-level multi-domain perspective. ***The Leadership Quarterly***, 6: 219-247.

Greenbaum, R. L., Mawritz, M. B., Mayer, D. M., & Priesemuth, M. 2013. To act out, to withdraw, or to constructively resist? Employee reactions to supervisor abuse of customers and the moderating role of employee moral identity. ***Human Relations***, 66: 925-950.

Grosser, T. J., Lopez-Kidwell, V., & Labianca, G. 2010. A social network analysis of positive and negative gossip in organizational life. ***Group & Organization Management***, 35: 177-212.

Haidt, J. 2003. The moral emotions. In R. J. Davison, K. R. Scherer, & H. H. Goldsmith (Eds.), ***Handbook of Affective Sciences****:* 852-870. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Heider, F. 1958. ***The psychology of interpersonal relations***. New York: Wiley.

Hess, N. H., & Hagen, E. H. 2006. Psychological adaptations for assessing gossip veracity. ***Human Nature***, *17*(3): 337-354.

Hibri, A. 1996. The Muslim Perspective on the Clergy-Penitent Privilege. ***Loyola of Los Angeles Law Review***, 29 (1723), 1723-1732.

Higgins, E. T. 1987. Self-discrepancy: a theory relating self and affect. ***Psychological Review***, 94: 319-340.

Hinkin, T. R., & Schriesheim, C. A. 1989. Development and application of new scales to measure the French and Raven (1959) bases of social power. ***Journal of Applied Psychology***, *74*: 561-567.

Hitt, M. A., Beamish, P. W., Jackson, S. E., & Mathieu, J. E. 2007. Building theoretical and empirical bridges across levels: Multilevel research in management. ***Academy of Management Journal***, 50: 1385-1399.

Hochwarter, W. A., Perrewé, P. L., Meurs, J. A., & Kacmar, C. 2007. The interactive effects of work-induced guilt and ability to manage resources on job and life satisfaction. ***Journal of Occupational Health Psychology***, *12*: 125-135.

Hoffman, L. (2015). ***Longitudinal analysis: Modeling within-person fluctuation and change***. New York: Routledge.

Ilies, R., Nahrgang, J. D., & Morgeson, F. P. 2007. Leader-member exchange and citizenship behaviors: A meta-analysis. ***Journal of Applied Psychology***, 92: 269-277.

Izard, C. E., Libero, D. Z., Putnam, P., & Haynes, O. M. 1993. Stability of emotion experiences and their relations to traits of personality. ***Journal of Personality and Social Psychology***, *64*(5), 847-860.

Izard, C. E. 1991. ***The psychology of emotions***. New York: Plenum Press.

Jaeger, M. E., Skleder, A. A., Rind, B., & Rosnow, R. L. 1994. Gossip, gossipers, gossipees. In R. F. Goodman & A. Ben-Ze'ev (Eds.), ***Good Gossip***: 11–24. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas.

Joireman, J. 2004. Empathy and the self-absorption paradox II: Self-rumination and self-reflection as mediators between shame, guilt, and empathy. ***Self and Identity***, 3: 225-238.

Jordan, J., Mullen, E., & Murnighan, J. K. 2011. Striving for the moral self: The effects of recalling past moral actions on future moral behavior. ***Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin,*** 37: 701-713.

Judge, T. A., & Ilies, R. 2004. Affect and job satisfaction: A study of their relationship at work and at home. ***Journal of Applied Psychology***, 89: 661-673.

Judge, T. A., Woolf, E. F., & Hurst, C. 2009. Is emotional labor more difficult for some than for others? A multilevel, experience-sampling study. ***Personnel Psychology***, *62*: 57-88.

Kant, I. 1991. ***The metaphysics of morals*** (M. Gregor, Trans.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. (Original work published in 1797).

King, C., Timberg, C., & Nakashima, E. 2014. Sony's hacked e-mails expose spats, director calling Angelina Jolie a 'brat'. ***The Washington Post***. Retrieved March 3, 2015 from http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/sonys-hacked-e-mails-expose-spats-director-calling-angelina-jolie-a-brat/2014/12/10/a799e8a0-809c-11e4-8882-03cf08410beb_story.html

Kish-Gephart, J. J., Detert, J. R., Treviño, L. K., & Edmondson, A. C. 2009. Silenced by fear: The nature, sources, and consequences of fear at work. ***Research in Organizational Behavior,*** *29*: 163-193.

Koys, D. J. 2001. The effects of employee satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, and turnover on organizational effectiveness: A unit-level, longitudinal study. ***Personnel Psychology***, *54*: 101-114.

Kurland, N. B., & Pelled, L. H. 2000. Passing the word: Toward a model of gossip and power in the workplace. ***Academy of Management Review***, 25: 428-438.

Laing, M. 1993. Gossip: does it play a role in the socialization of nurses?. ***IMAGE: The Journal of Nursing Scholarship***, *25*(1): 37-44.

Lang, P. J., Levin, D. N., Miller, G. A., & Kozak, M. J. 1983. Fear behavior, fear imagery, and the psychophysiology of emotion: The problem of affective response integration. ***Journal of Abnormal Psychology***, 92: 276-306.

Lanz, H. 1936. Metaphysics of gossip. ***International Journal of Ethics***, 46: 492-499.

Larsen, J. T., McGraw, A. P., Mellers, B. A., & Cacioppo, J. T. 2004. The agony of victory and thrill of defeat mixed emotional reactions to disappointing wins and relieving losses. ***Psychological Science***, 15: 325-330.

Lazarus, R. S. 1991. Cognition and motivation in emotion. ***American Psychologist***, 46: 352-367.

Leary, M. R. 2002. When selves collide: The nature of the self and the dynamics of interpersonal relationships. In A. Tesser, D. A. Stapel, & J. V. Wood (Eds.), ***Self and motivation*** (pp. 119-145). Washington, DC: APA.

Leary, M. R. 2007. Motivational and emotional aspects of the self. ***Annual Review of Psychology***, 58: 317–344.

Leary, M. R., & Miller, R. S. 2000. Self-presentational perspectives on personal relationships. In W. Ickes & S. Duck (Eds.), ***The social psychology of personal relationships*** (pp. 129-154). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Leith, K. P., & Baumeister, R. F. 1998. Empathy, shame, guilt, and narratives of interpersonal conflicts: Guilt-prone people are better at perspective taking. ***Journal of Personality***, 66: 1-37.

Lerner, J. S., & Keltner, D. 2000. Beyond valence: Toward a model of emotion-specific influences on judgement and choice. ***Cognition & Emotion***, 14: 473-493.

Lerner, J. S., & Keltner, D. 2001. Fear, anger, and risk. ***Journal of Personality and Social Psychology***, 81: 146-159.

Litman, J. A., & Pezzo, M. V. 2005. Individual differences in attitudes towards gossip. ***Personality and Individual Differences***, 38: 963–980.

Lewis, H. B. 1971. ***Shame and guilt in neurosis***. New York: International Universities Press.

Lin, N. 2002. ***Social capital: A theory of social structure and action*** (Vol. 19). New York: Cambridge University Press.

MacDonald, G., Kingsbury, R., & Shaw, S. 2005. Adding insult to injury: Social pain theory and response to social exclusion. In K. D.Williams, J. P. Forgas, & W. von Hippel (Eds.), ***The social outcast: Ostracism, social exclusion, rejection, and bullying*****:** 77–90. New York: Taylor & Francis.

Magee, J. C., & Galinsky, A. D. 2008. Social hierarchy: The self-reinforcing nature of power and status. ***The Academy of Management Annals***, 2: 351-398.

Marschall, D., Sanftner, J., & Tangney, J. P. 1994. ***The state shame and guilt scale***. Fairfax, VA: George Mason University.

Mathieu, J. E., & Chen, G. 2010. The etiology of the multilevel paradigm in management research. ***Journal of Management***, 37: 610-641.

Mazar, N., & Zhong, C. B. 2010. Do green products make us better people?. ***Psychological Science***, *21*: 494–498.

McAndrew, F. T., & Milenkovic, M. A. 2002. Of tabloids and family secrets: The evolutionary psychology of gossip. ***Journal of Applied Social Psychology***, 32: 1064-1082.

Michelson, G., & Mouly, V. S. 2004. Do loose lips sink ships? The meaning, antecedents and consequences of rumour and gossip in organizations. ***Corporate Communications***, 9: 189-201.

Mills, C. 2010. Experiencing gossip: The foundations for a theory of embedded organizational gossip. ***Group & Organization Management***, 35: 213-240.

Mitchell, M. S., & Ambrose, M. L. 2007. Abusive supervision and workplace deviance and the moderating effects of negative reciprocity beliefs. ***Journal of Applied Psychology***, 92: 1159-1168.

Mitra, T. & Gilbert, E. 2012. "Have you heard?: How gossip flows through workplace email," ***AAAI International Conference on Weblogs and Social Media***.

Muthén, L. K., & Muthén, B. O. 2014. ***Mplus 7.11*** [Computer software]. Los Angeles, CA: Muthén & Muthén.

Nevo, O., Nevo, B., & Derech-Zehavi, A. 1993. The development of the tendency to gossip questionnaire: Construct and concurrent validation for a sample of Israeli college students. ***Educational and Psychological Measurement***, 53: 973-981.

Niedenthal, P. M., Tangney, J. P., & Gavanski, I. 1994. "If only I weren't" versus "if only I hadn't": Distinguishing shame and guilt in conterfactual thinking. ***Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,*** *67*: 585.

Nielsen, K., & Cleal, B. 2011. Under which conditions do middle managers exhibit transformational leadership behaviors?—An experience sampling method study on the predictors of transformational leadership behaviors. ***The Leadership Quarterly***, 22: 344-352.

Noon, M., & Delbridge, R. 1993. News from behind my hand: Gossip in organizations. ***Organization Studies***, 14: 23-36.

Ohman, A. 2008. Fear and anxiety: Overlaps and dissociations. In M. Lewis, J. M. Haviland-Jones, & L. F. Barrett (Eds.), ***Handbook of emotions*** (3rd ed.). New York: Guilford Press.

O'Reilly J., Robinson S. L. 2009. *The negative impact of ostracism on thwarted belongingness and workplace contributions*. Best paper proceedings, Academy of Management meeting, Chicago.

Paine, R. 1967. What is gossip about? An alternative hypothesis. ***Man***, 2: 278–85.

Piazza, J., & Bering, J. M. 2008. Concerns about reputation via gossip promote generous allocations in an economic game. ***Evolution and Human Behavior***, 29: 172-178.

Plutchik, R. 1980. ***Emotion: A psychoevolutionary synthesis***. New York: Harper & Row.

Podsakoff, P. M., & MacKenzie, S. B. 1997. Impact of organizational citizenship behavior on organizational performance: A review and suggestion for future research. ***Human Performance***, 10: 133-151.

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J. Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. 2003. Common method biases in behavioral research: a critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. ***Journal of Applied Psychology***, *88*: 879.

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Paine, J. B., & Bachrach, D. G. 2000. Organizational citizenship behaviors: A critical review of the theoretical and empirical literature and suggestions for future research. ***Journal of Management***, 26: 513-563.

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., & Podsakoff, N. P. 2012. Sources of method bias in social science research and recommendations on how to control it. ***Annual Review of Psychology***, 63: 539-569.

Preacher, K. J., Zyphur, M. J., & Zhang, Z. 2010. A general multilevel SEM framework for assessing multilevel mediation. ***Psychological Methods***, *15*: 209-233.

Richman, J. A., Flaherty, J. A., Rospenda, K. M., & Christensen, M. L. 1992. Mental health consequences and correlates of reported medical student abuse. ***Journal of the American Medical Association***, 267: 692-694.

Robinson, M. D., & Clore, G. L. 2002. Belief and feeling: Evidence for an accessibility model of emotional self-report. ***Psychological Bulletin***, 128: 934-960.

Greene, L. 2014. Sony emails: David O. Russell 'felt up' transgender niece. ***NYPost.com***. Retrieved March 3, 2015 from http://pagesix.com/2014/12/15/sony-hack-reveals-

david-o-russell-felt-up-transgender-niece/?_ga=1.214140631.1369336518.1411159563

Rupp D. E., & Bell C. M. 2010. Extending the deontic model of justice: Moral self-regulation in third-party responses to injustice. ***Business Ethics Quarterly***, 20: 89–106.

Scandura, T. A., & Graen, G. B. 1984. Moderating effects of initial leader–member exchange status on the effects of a leadership intervention. ***Journal of Applied Psychology***, 69: 428-436.

Scherer, K. R., & Tannenbaum, P. H. 1986. Emotional experiences in everyday life: A survey approach. ***Motivation and Emotion***, 10: 295-314.

Schmader, T., & Lickel, B. 2006. The approach and avoidance function of guilt and shame emotions: Comparing reactions to self-caused and other-caused wrongdoing. ***Motivation and Emotion***, 30: 42-55.

Schug J., Yuki M., Maddux W. W. 2010. Relational mobility explains between- and within-culture differences in self-disclosure toward close friends. ***Psychological Science***, 21: 1471-1478.

Scollon, C. N., Kim-Prieto, C., & Diener, E. 2003. Experience sampling: Promises and pitfalls, strengths and weaknesses. ***Journal of Happiness Studies***, 4: 5–34.

Scott, B. A., & Barnes, C. M. 2011. A multilevel field investigation of emotional labor, affect, work withdrawal, and gender. ***Academy of Management Journal***, 54: 116-136.

Scott, B. A., Barnes, C. M., & Wagner, D. T. 2012. Chameleonic or consistent? A multilevel investigation of emotional labor variability and self-monitoring. ***Academy of Management Journal***, *55*: 905-926.

Shiffman, S., & Stone, A. A. 1998. Introduction to the special section: Ecological momentary assessment in health psychology. ***Health Psychology***, 17: 3–5.

Skarlicki, D. P., & Folger, R. 1997. Retaliation in the workplace: The roles of distributive, procedural, and interactional justice. ***Journal of Applied Psychology***, 82: 434-443.

Sommerfeld, R. D., Krambeck, H. J., Semmann, D., & Milinski, M. 2007. Gossip as an alternative for direct observation in games of indirect reciprocity. ***Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences,*** 104: 17435-17440.

Song, Z., Foo, M. D., & Uy, M. A. 2008. Mood spillover and crossover among dual-earner couples: A cell phone event sampling study. ***Journal of Applied Psychology***, *93*: 443-452.

Spector, P. E. 2006. Method variance in organizational research truth or urban ledgend?. ***Organizational Research Methods***, *9*: 221-232.

Stirling, R. B. 1956. Some psychological mechanisms operative in gossip. ***Social Forces***, 34: 262– 267.

Stone, J., & Cooper, J. 2001. A self-standards model of cognitive dissonance. ***Journal of Experimental Social Psychology***, 37: 228-243.

Tangney, J. P. 1991. Moral affect: the good, the bad, and the ugly. ***Journal of Personality and Social Psychology***, *61*(4), 598-607.

Tangney, J. P. 1996. Conceptual and methodological issues in the assessment of shame and guilt. ***Behaviour Research and Therapy***, *34*: 741-754.

Tangney, J. P. 1999. The self-conscious emotions: Shame, guilt, embarrassment and pride. In T. Dalgleish & M. J. Power (Eds.), ***Handbook of cognition and emotion***: 541–568. Chichester, England: Wiley.

Tangney, J. P., Miller, R. S., Flicker, L., & Barlow, D. H. 1996. Are shame, guilt, and embarrassment distinct emotions? ***Journal of Personality and Social Psychology***, 70: 1256-1269.

Tangney, J. P., Niedenthal, P. M., Covert, M. V., & Barlow, D. H. 1998. Are shame and guilt related to distinct self-discrepancies? A test of Higgins's (1987) hypotheses. ***Journal of Personality and Social Psychology***, *75*: 256-268.

Tangney, J. P., Stuewig, J., & Mashek, D. J. 2007. Moral emotions and moral behavior. ***Annual Review of Psychology***, 58: 345-372.

Taylor, S. E. 1991. Asymmetrical effects of positive and negative events: The mobilization-minimization hypothesis. ***Psychological Bulletin***, 110: 67-85.

Tepper, B. J. 2000. Consequences of abusive supervision. ***Academy of Management Journal***, 43: 178-190.

Tepper, B. J. 2007. Abusive supervision in work organizations: Review, synthesis, and research agenda. ***Journal of Management***, 33: 261-289.

Tepper, B. J., Carr, J. C., Breaux, D. M., Geider, S., Hu, C., & Hua, W. 2009. Abusive supervision, intentions to quit, and employees' workplace deviance: A power/dependence analysis. ***Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes***, 109: 156-167.

Tomkins, S. 1963. ***Affect, imagery, consciousness. Vol. 2. the negative affects***. New York: Springer.

Trougakos, J. P., Beal, D. J., Green, S. G., & Weiss, H. M. 2008. Making the break count: An episodic examination of recovery activities, emotional experiences, and positive affective displays. ***Academy of Management Journal***, 51: 131-146.

Turillo, C. J., Folger, R., Lavelle, J. J., Umphress, E. E., & Gee, J. O. 2002. Is virtue its own reward? Self sacrificial decisions for the sake of fairness. ***Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes***, 89: 839-865

Turner, M. M., Mazur, M. A., Wendel, N., & Winslow, R. 2003. Relational ruin or social glue? The joint effect of relationship type and gossip valence on liking, trust, and expertise. ***Communication Monographs***, *70*: 129-141.

Van Dyne, L., & LePine, J. A. 1998. Helping and voice extra-role behaviors: Evidence of construct and predictive validity. ***Academy of Management Journal***, 41: 108-119.

Waddington, K. 2005. Using diaries to explore the characteristics of work-related gossip: Methodological considerations from exploratory multimethod research. ***Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology***, 78: 221-236.

Waddington, K., & Fletcher, C. 2005. Gossip and emotion in nursing and health-care organizations. ***Journal of Health Organization and Management***, *19*(4/5): 378-394.

Watson, D., & Clark, L. A. 1994. The PANAS-X: Manual for the positive and negative affect schedule - expanded form. University of Iowa.

Warr, P. 1990. The measurement of well-being and other aspects of mental health. ***Journal of Occupational Psychology***, *63*(3): 193-210.

Weaver, J. R., & Bosson, J. K. 2011. I feel like I know you: Sharing negative attitudes of others promotes feelings of familiarity. ***Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin***, 37: 481-491.

Weiss, H. M., & Cropanzano, R. 1996. Affective events theory: A theoretical discussion of the structure, causes and consequences of affective experiences at work. In B. M.Staw and L. L.Cummings (Eds.), ***Research in organizational behavior***: 1– 74. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Wert, S. R., & Salovey, P. 2004. A social comparison account of gossip. ***Review of General Psychology***, 8: 122-137.

Wheeler L., & Reis H. T. 1991. Self-recording of everyday life events: origins, types, and uses. ***Journal of Personality***, 59: 330-354.

Wicker, F. W., Payne, G. C., & Morgan, R. D. 1983. Participant descriptions of guilt and shame. ***Motivation and Emotion***, *7*: 25–39.

Williams, K. D. 2007. Ostracism. ***Annual Review of Psychology***, 58: 425– 452.

Wittek, R., & Wielers, R. 1998. Gossip in organizations. ***Computational & Mathematical Organization Theory***, *4*(2): 189-204.

Wong, S. S., & Boh, W. F. 2010. Leveraging the ties of others to build a reputation for trustworthiness among peers. ***Academy of Management Journal***, 53: 129-148.

Zhong, C. B., & Liljenquist, K. 2006. Washing away your sins: Threatened morality and physical cleansing. ***Science,*** *313*: 1451-1452.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: PILOT STUDY MEASURES

Appendix B: MAIN STUDY NEW MEASURES

Appendix C: TABLES

Appendix D: FIGURES

Appendix A:

PILOT STUDY MEASURES

Initial Survey Items:

Leader-Member Exchange (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995)
Please use the following scale to indicate how strongly you agree with the following statements regarding your immediate supervisor. (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

1. I usually know how satisfied my manager is with what I do.
2. I feel that my manager understands my problems and needs.
3. I feel that my manager recognizes my potential.
4. If necessary, my manager would use his or her power and influence to help me.
5. I can count on my manager to support me even when I'm in a tough situation at work.
6. I would support my manager's decisions even if he or she was not present.
7. I have an effective working relationship with my manager.

Abusive Supervision (Tepper, 2000)
Please use the following scale to indicate how strongly you agree with the following statements regarding your immediate supervisor. (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

1. Ridicules me
2. Tells me my thoughts or feelings are stupid
3. Gives me the silent treatment
4. Puts me down in front of others
5. Invades my privacy
6. Reminds me of my past mistakes and failures
7. Doesn't give me credit for jobs requiring a lot of effort
8. Blames me to save himself/herself embarrassment
9. Breaks promises he/she makes
10. Expresses anger at me when he/she is mad for another reason
11. Makes negative comments about me to others
12. Is rude to me
13. Does not allow me to interact with my coworkers
14. Tells me I'm incompetent
15. Lies to me

Daily Survey 1 Items: *Rated around noon of each day*

Negative Gossip (Erdogan, Bauer, & Walter, 2015)
The following questions are about **you**. Please rate the extent to which you have engaged in the following behaviors today. (1 = to a very small extent, 5 = to a very large extent)

1. I talked with others about mistakes my supervisor made.
2. I talked with others about my supervisor's poor performance.
3. I talked with others about my supervisor's failures.
4. I talked with others about the bad things that happened to my supervisor.

Shame (Watson & Clark, 1994)
Indicate to what extent you have felt this way today. (1 = to a very small extent, 5 = to a very large extent)

1. Ashamed
2. Disgusted with self
3. Dissatisfied with self

Fear (Watson & Clark, 1994)
Indicate to what extent you have felt this way today. (1 = to a very small extent, 5 = to a very large extent)

1. Afraid
2. Scared
3. Frightened
4. Nervous
5. Jittery
6. Shaky

Daily Survey 2 Items: Rated at the end of each day

Helping (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998)
The following questions are about **you**. Please rate the extent to which you agree that you engaged in the following behaviors today. (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

I…

1. volunteered to do things for my supervisor.
2. attended functions that help my supervisor.
3. assisted my supervisor with his/her work.
4. got involved to benefit my supervisor.
5. helped my supervisor learn about the work.
6. helped my supervisor with his/her work responsibilities.

Workplace Ostracism (Ferris et al., 2008)
The following questions are about **you**. Please rate the extent to which engaged in the

following behaviors today. (1 = to a very small extent, 2 = to a small extent, 3 = to a moderate extent, 4 = to a large extent, 5 = to a very large extent)

I intentionally….

1. Ignored my supervisor at work.
2. Left the area when my supervisor entered.
3. Let my supervisor's greeting go unanswered at work.
4. Let my supervisor involuntarily sit alone in a crowded lunchroom at work.
5. Avoided my supervisor at work.
6. Avoided making eye contact with my supervisor at work.
7. Shut my supervisor out of a conversation at work.
8. Refused to talk to my supervisor at work.
9. Treated my supervisor as if he/she weren't there.
10. Did not invite or ask my supervisor if he/she wanted anything when I went out for a coffee break.

Appendix B:

NEW MAIN STUDY MEASURES

Daily Survey 1 Items: *Rated around noon of each day*

Negative Gossip (adapted from Wittek & Wielers, 1998)
Please indicate how often you engaged in the following behaviors at work **today** when your supervisor wasn't around. (1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = occasionally, 4 = quite often, 5 = frequently)

1. I talked to others about my supervisor's work mistakes.
2. I conversed with others about my supervisor's poor job performance.
3. I chatted with others about my supervisor's failures.
4. I spoke to others regarding something bad about my supervisor.
5. I complained about the uncooperative behavior of my supervisor.
6. I criticized something I regard as a negative trait of my supervisor.
7. I criticized the passive behavior of my supervisor.
8. I asked the opinion of others concerning my supervisor's negative behavior.
9. I expressed irritation about a comment my supervisor made.
10. I made snide remarks about my supervisor.

Shame (adapted from Watson & Clark, 1994)
Indicate to what extent you feel this way right now. (1 = not at all, 2 = a little, 3 = moderately, 4 = quite a bit, 5 = extremely)

1. Angry at self
2. Disgusted with self
3. Dissatisfied with self

Guilt (developed for this study)
Indicate to what extent you feel this way right now. (1 = not at all, 2 = a little, 3= moderately, 4 = quite a bit, 5 = extremely)

1. Blameworthy
2. Regretful
3. Remorseful

Fear (Fredrickson et al., 2003)
Indicate to what extent you feel this way right now. (1 = not at all, 2 = a little, 3= moderately, 4 = quite a bit, 5 = extremely)

1. Scared
2. Fearful
3. Afraid

Anxiety (Warr, 1990)
Indicate to what extent you feel this way right now. (1 = not at all, 2 = a little, 3= moderately, 4 = quite a bit, 5 = extremely)

1. Tense
2. Uneasy
3. Worried

Daily Survey 2 Items: Rated at the end of each day

Supervisor-directed OCBs (Fox, Spector, Goh, Bruursema, & Kessler, 2012)
Thinking about your interactions with your boss/supervisor today, please indicate the frequency with which you engaged in the following behaviors at work today. (1 = never, 2 = once, 3 = twice, 4 = three times, 5 = four or more times)

1. Took time to advise or help my supervisor.
2. Lent a compassionate ear when my supervisor had a personal or work problem.
3. Helped my supervisor when he/she had too much work to do.
4. Gave my supervisor encouragement or appreciation.

Supervisor-directed avoidance (Ferris, Yan, Lim, Chen, & Fatimah, 2015)
Thinking about your interactions with your boss/supervisor today, please indicate the frequency with which you engaged in the following behaviors at work today. (1 = never, 2 = once, 3 = twice, 4 = three times, 5 = four or more times)

1. I kept as much distance from my supervisor as possible.
2. I withdrew from my supervisor.
3. I purposely avoided my supervisor.

Appendix C: TABLES

Table 1

Pilot Study: Variance Components of Null Models for Supervisor-directed Gossip, Shame, Fear, Helping, and Ostracism

Variable	Within-individual variance	Between-individual variance	Variability within individuals	Variability between individuals
Supervisor-directed Gossip	0.163**	0.045**	78.37%	21.63%
Shame	0.050**	0.030	62.50%	37.50%
Fear	0.073**	0.092*	44.24%	55.76%
Supervisor-directed Helping	0.501**	0.656**	43.25%	56.75%
Supervisor-directed Ostracism	0.028*	0.027*	50.94%	49.06%

Note. Percentage of variability within individual was computed by dividing the within-individual variance by the total variance (within- + between-individual variance). Percentage of variability between individual was computed using the equation 1 – within-individual variance.
Observations = 406; ** $p \leq .01$; * $p \leq .05$.

Table 2

Pilot Study: Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Reliabilities Between Study Variables

	M	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Within-individual correlations (level 1)									
1. Supervisor-directed Gossip	1.12	0.47	(.91)	.22*	.14	.06	.12**	-.45**	.46**
2. Shame	1.11	0.27	.12*	(.76)	.43**	-.02	.21*	-.25*	.17
3. Fear	1.20	0.42	.16**	.40**	(.96)	-.04	.32**	-.78	.15
4. Helping	2.45	1.08	.04	-.06	-.06	(.96)	-.10	.10	-.08
5. Ostracism	1.08	0.23	.36**	.11*	.21**	-.07	(.96)	-.18	.27**
Between-individual correlations (level 2)									
6. LMX	3.96	0.83						(.93)	-.59**
7. Abusive supervision	1.58	0.69							(.95)

Note. Correlations above the diagonal represent between-level scores (n = 99). Correlations below the diagonal represent within-individual scores (n = 406). Parenthetical values are reliabilities.
** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$.

Table 3

Main Study: Variance Components of Null Models for Supervisor-directed Gossip, Shame, Fear, Helping, and Avoidance

Variable	Within-individual variance	Between-individual variance	Variability within individuals	Variability between individuals
Supervisor-directed Gossip	0.044**	0.011**	80.00%	20.00%
Shame	0.080**	0.138*	36.70%	63.30%
Fear	0.071**	0.128	35.68%	64.32%
Guilt	0.056**	0.037*	60.22%	39.78%
Anxiety	0.220**	0.221**	49.89%	50.11%
Supervisor-directed Helping	0.257**	0.341**	42.98%	57.02%
Supervisor-directed Avoidance	0.084**	0.063**	57.14%	42.86%

Note. Percentage of variability within individual was computed by dividing the within-individual variance by the total variance (within- + between-individual variance). Percentage of variability between individual was computed using the equation 1 – within-individual variance.
Observations = 1,118; * $p \leq .01$; ** $p \leq .05$.

Table 4

Main Study: Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Reliabilities Between Study Variables

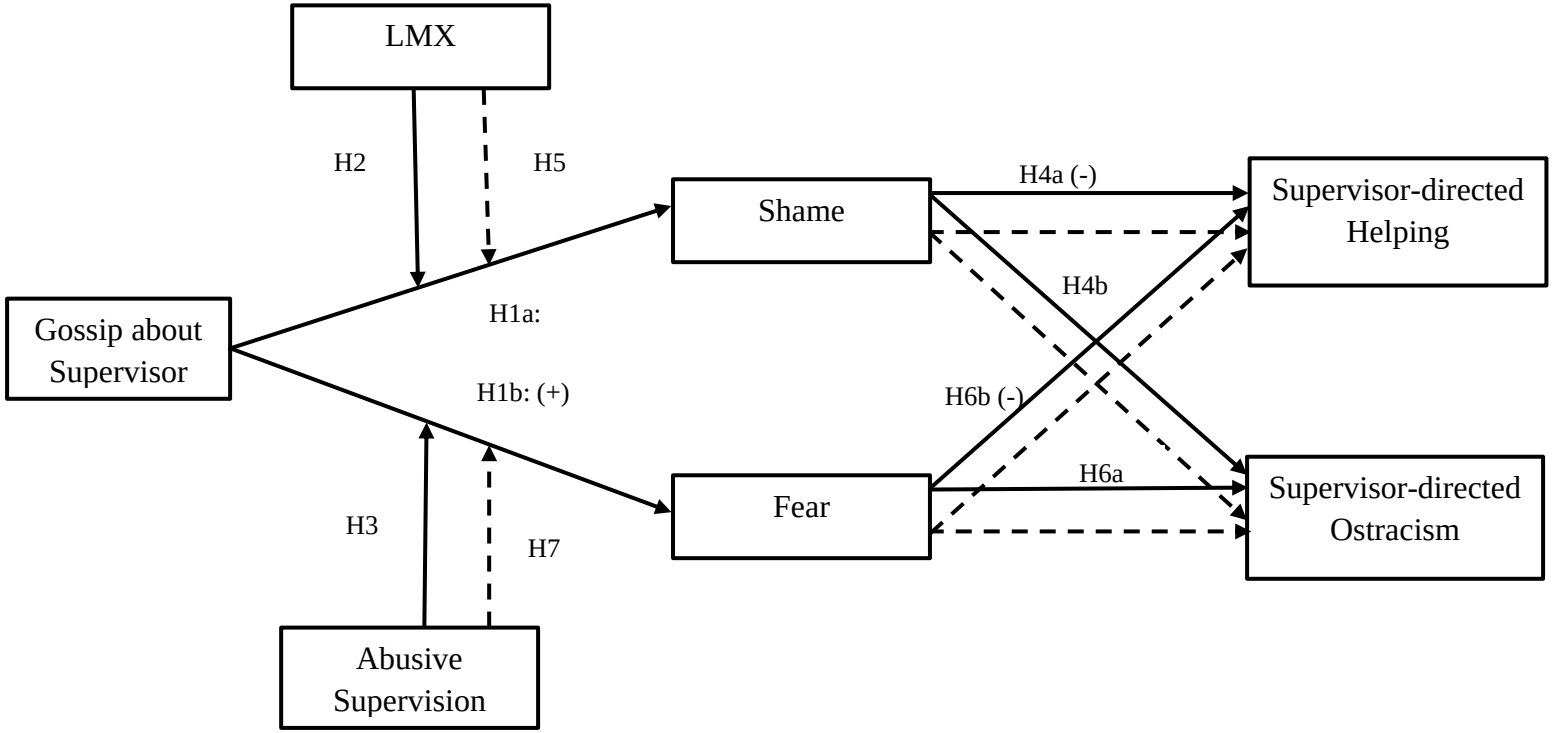
	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Within-individual correlations (level 1)											
1. Supervisor-directed Gossip	1.07	0.24	(.92)	.09	.02	.13	.20**	-.02	.23**	-.16*	.25**
2. Shame	1.14	0.46	.09**	(.86)	.79**	.62**	.56**	-.10	.21**	-.11	.06
3. Fear	1.11	0.43	.05	.69**	(.95)	.47**	.61**	-.03	.20**	-.21**	.16**
4. Guilt	1.09	0.30	.13**	.62**	.39**	(.82)	.41**	.01	.26**	.01	.05
5. Anxiety	1.41	0.65	.21**	.47**	.52**	.37**	(.86)	-.06	.33**	-.33**	.29**
6. Supervisor-directed helping	1.81	0.75	.01	-.06*	-.03	-.04	-.01	(.79)	.04	.07	.18*
7. Supervisor-directed avoidance	1.12	0.39	.42**	.22**	.22**	.17**	.27**	.03	(.84)	-.27**	.35**
Between-individual correlations (level 2)											
8. LMX	4.28	0.78								(.90)	-.60**
9. Abusive supervision	1.34	0.51									(.90)

Note. Correlations above the diagonal represent between-level scores (n = 198). Correlations below the diagonal represent within-individual scores (n = 1118). Parenthetical values are reliabilities. Guilt and anxiety were used for supplemental analyses.
** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$.

Appendix D: FIGURES

Figure 1

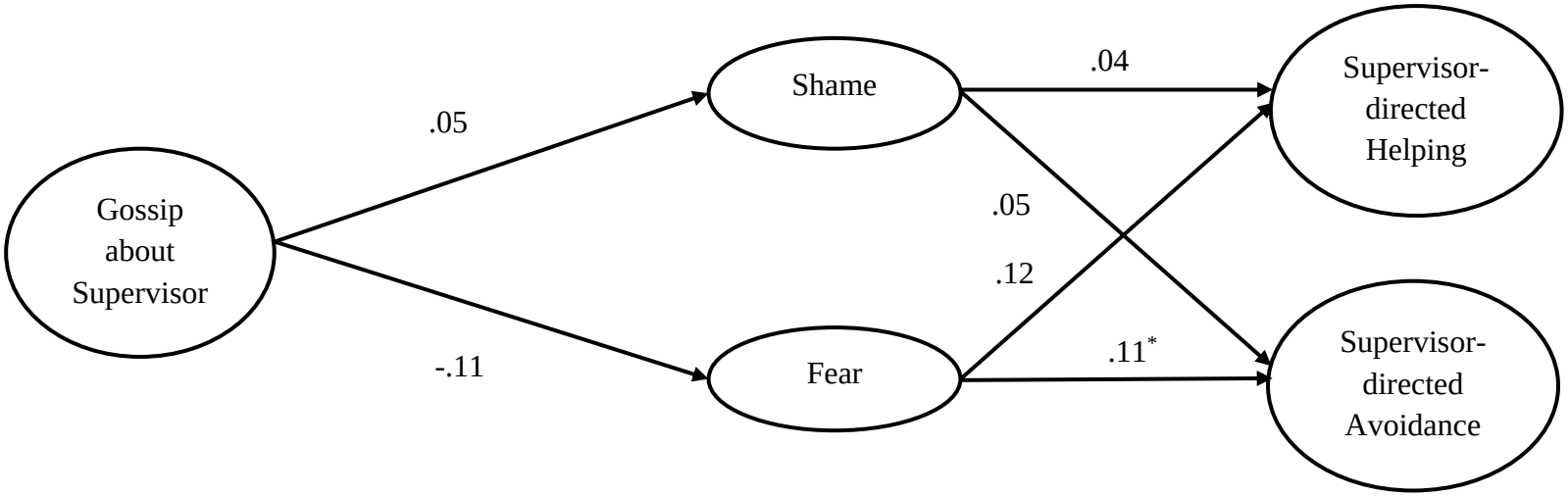
Hypothesized Theoretical Model



Note: Hypothesis H5 and H7 represent the moderated-mediation model

Figure 2

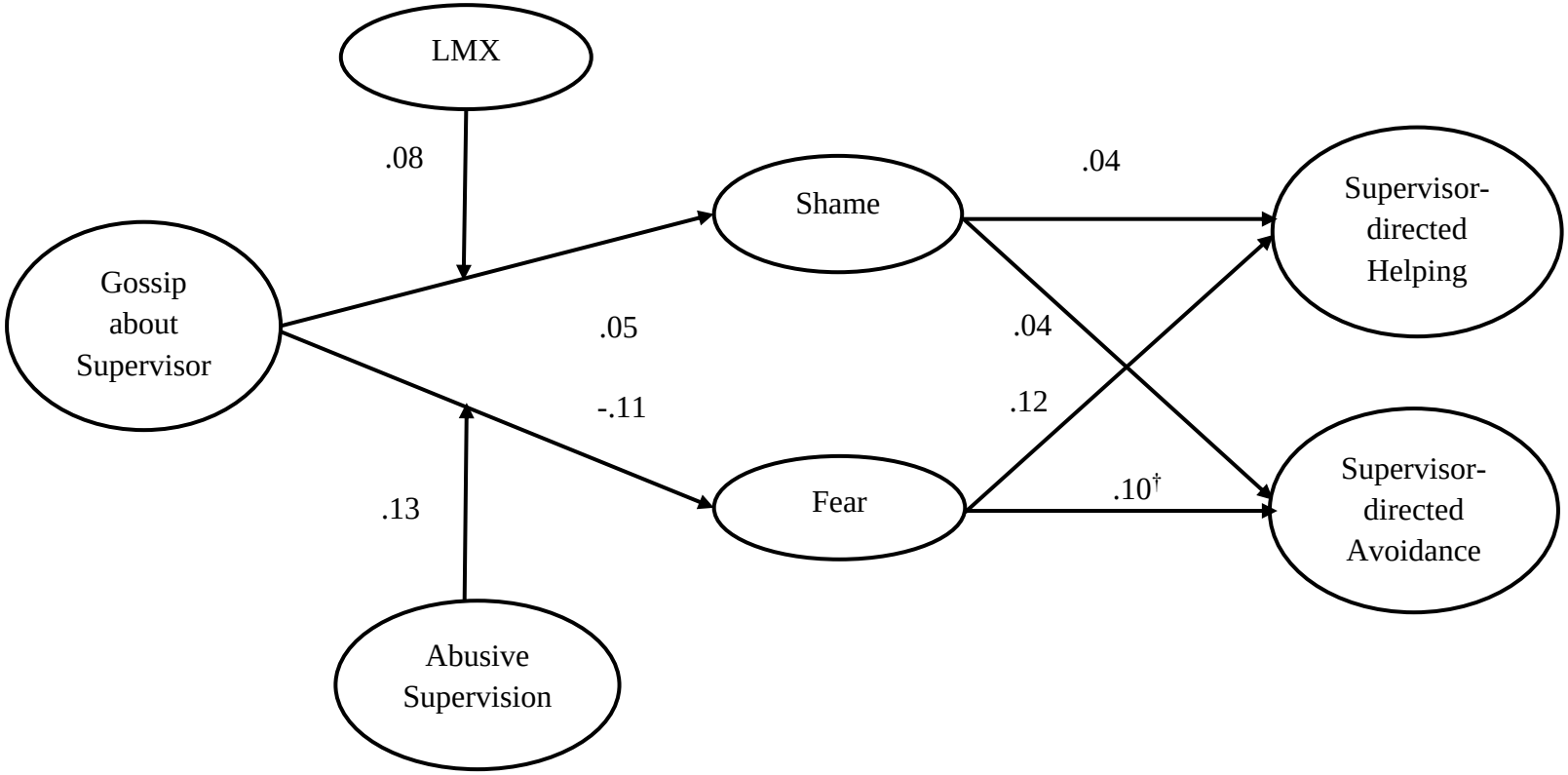
Mediation Path Model Results: H1, H4, & H6



Note: * p < .05

Figure 3

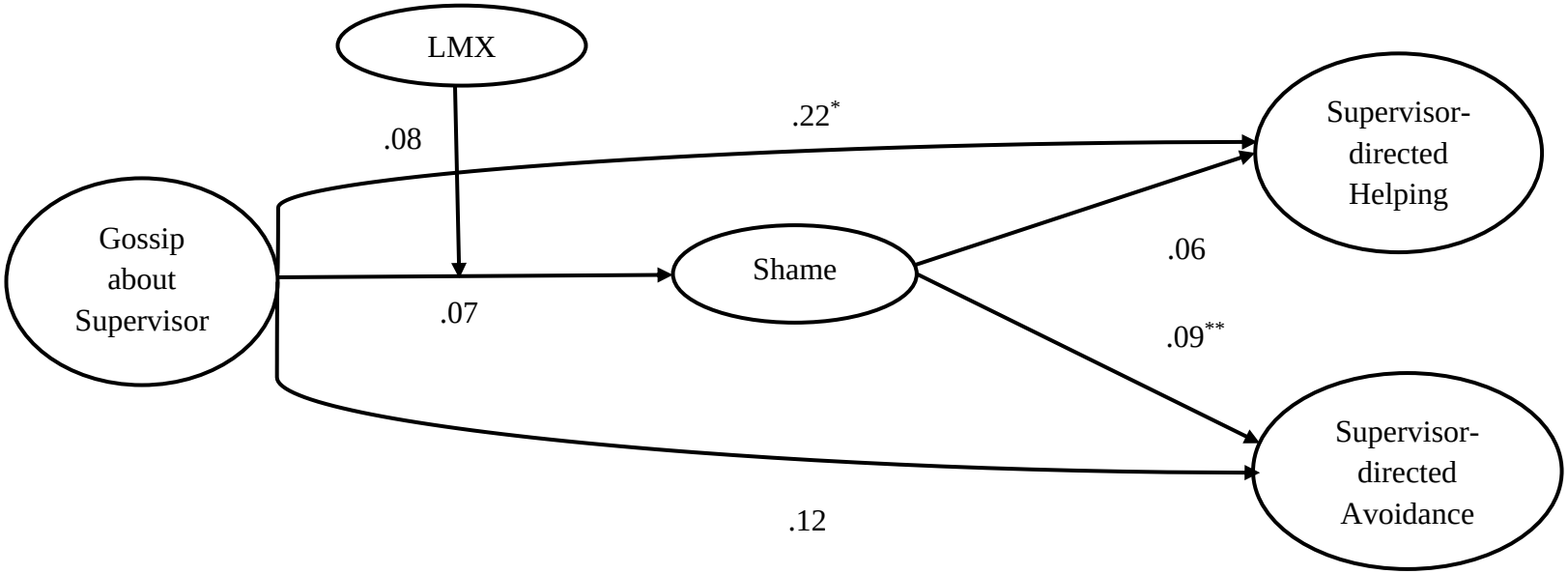
Full Path Model Results: H2, H3, H5 & H7



Note: † p < .10. Represents results for the moderation (H2 & H3) and moderated-mediation hypotheses (H5 & H7); Indirect effects: gossip→shame→helping (*B* = .00, *ns*); gossip→shame→avoidance (*B* = .00, *ns*); gossip→fear→helping (*B* = -.01, *ns*); gossip→fear→avoidance (*B* = -.01, *ns*).

Figure 4

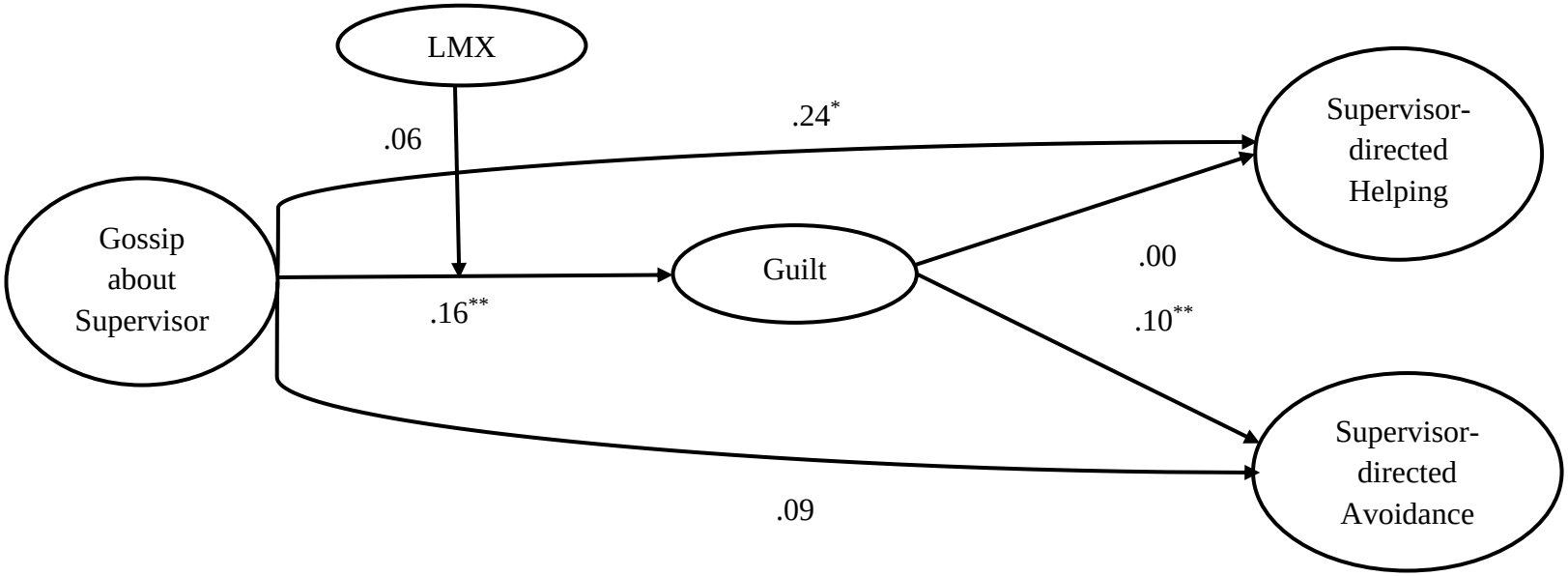
Full Path Model Results for Shame without Fear



Note: Indirect effects: gossip→shame→helping (*B* = .00, *ns*); gossip→shame→avoidance (*B* = .00, *ns*);
** p ≤ .01; * p < .05.

Figure 5

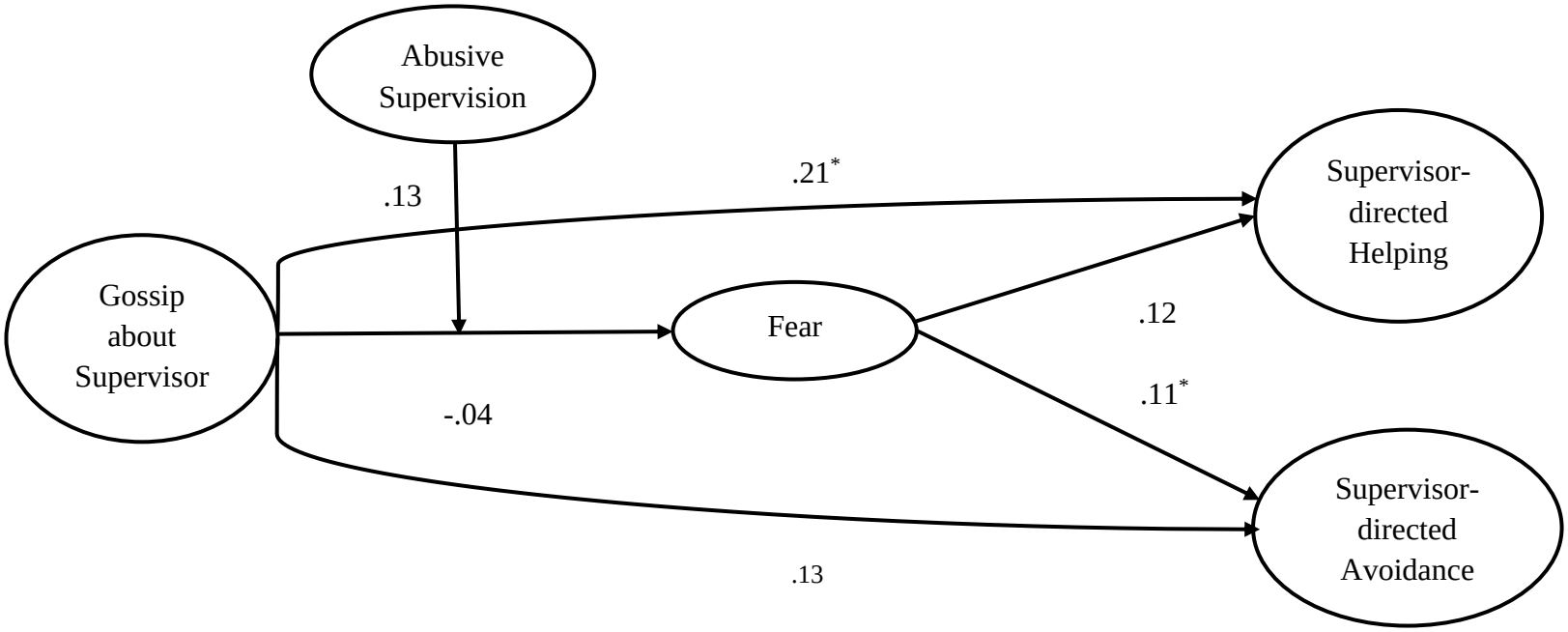
Full Path Model Results for Guilt



Note: Indirect effects: gossip→guilt→helping (*B* = .00, *ns*); gossip→guilt→avoidance (*B* = .02, *p* = .12);
** p ≤ .01; * p < .05.

Figure 6

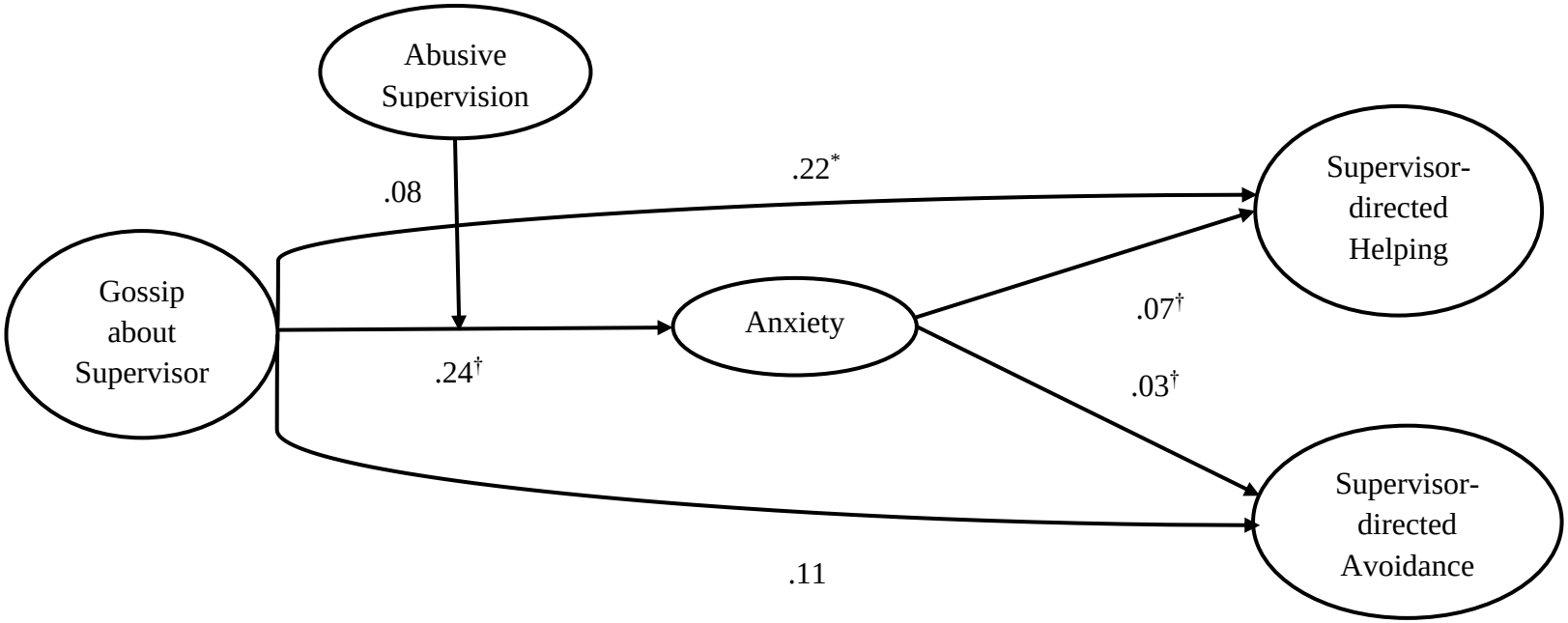
Full Path Model Results for Fear without Shame



Note: Indirect effects: gossip→fear→helping (*B* = .00, *ns*); gossip→fear→avoidance (*B* = .00, *ns*).
* p < .05.

Figure 7

Full Path Model Results for Anxiety



Note: Indirect effects: gossip→anxiety→helping (*B* = .02, *ns*); gossip→anxiety→avoidance (*B* = .01, *ns*).
* p < .05; † ≤ .11.

VITA

Julena Marie Bonner

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Title: BITING THE HAND THAT FEEDS YOU: EMPLOYEES' REACTIONS TO THEIR OWN GOSSIP ABOUT HIGHLY (UN)SUPPORTIVE SUPERVISORS

Major Field: Business Administration

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Management at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in July, 2016.

Completed the requirements for the Master of Business Administration at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May, 2013.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in Business Management and Leadership at Southern Virginia University, Buena Vista, Virginia in December, 2007.

Experience:

Business Owner, *JB Group*, Salt Lake City, UT
Assistant Major Gifts Manager, *U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association*, Park City, UT

Professional Memberships:

Academy of Management, 2012-present
Society for Industrial/Organizational Psychology, 2012-present
Southern Management Association, 2011-present