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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Identifying Threatening Factors to Employees' Psychological Security in Organizations and Providing a Sustainable Security Model Based on the Teachings of the Quran and Nahjul-Balagheh

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Introduction

Employees' psychological security is a key component of occupational health and organizational performance, encompassing a sense of calm, absence of anxiety and worry, and trust in the work environment. It serves as a foundation for increased job satisfaction and employee productivity. In today's complex world, economic instability, rapid social changes, political crises, and work-related pressures threaten individuals' mental well-being, leading to heightened anxiety, reduced quality of interpersonal relationships, and the emergence of mental health challenges. Research has shown that a lack of psychological security among employees is associated with increased anxiety, depression, lower job satisfaction, and decreased organizational productivity, which not only impacts individual well-being but also disrupts service quality, workplace interactions, and team performance. From an Islamic and rational perspective, mental tranquility and the absence of fear and anxiety, conditioned upon faith and piety, constitute a fundamental requirement for a healthy and successful life. The Qur'an promises psychological security to a faithful society, highlighting the importance of such security for both individuals and communities. Accordingly, integrating religious principles into organizational practices can create psychologically safe work environments, enhance employee well-being, and improve organizational performance. The present study aimed to identify the factors threatening employees' psychological security in workplace settings and to develop a model for sustainable psychological security grounded in Islamic teachings. This research is significant in two ways: first, scientifically, it enriches the literature on psychological security and organizational management by integrating organizational psychology and religious teachings, providing practical strategies to enhance employees' mental well-being. Second, in terms of research necessity, prior studies have primarily focused on psychological perspectives, with limited attention to the role of religious teachings; thus, this study fills an important gap by offering an Islamic-based framework. The novelty of this study lies in presenting an integrated model that leverages concepts such as piety, trust in God, patience, and gratitude to promote employees' psychological security, while situating these principles within the scientific framework of organizational psychology.

The study addresses key questions: which factors threaten employees' psychological security in workplaces, how Islamic teachings can be applied to enhance psychological security, and what model can be proposed to sustainably improve employees' mental well-being in organizational settings. The findings of this study can support organizations—particularly those guided by religious principles—in designing psychologically safe work environments, improving employee well-being, enhancing

job satisfaction, and boosting overall organizational performance. Moreover, it provides a practical and ethical framework for managing psychological threats, offering actionable insights for promoting holistic employee development.

Methodology

The present study is a qualitative, exploratory, and applied research aimed at identifying psychological threats affecting employees' psychological security in organizations and developing a model for achieving sustainable psychological security based on Islamic teachings. The qualitative approach was chosen due to the complex and subjective nature of psychological security and the need to gain a deep understanding of employees' lived experiences. This approach enables the identification of influential factors and the extraction of relevant concepts through direct interaction with participants, thereby providing a foundation for practical solutions. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 30 employees working in governmental and non-governmental, non-profit organizations. Participants were selected based on having at least five years of work experience, prior exposure to challenges related to psychological security, and willingness to provide in-depth information on the topic. Interviews continued until theoretical saturation was reached, and data were recorded through detailed note-taking and, in some cases, audio recording with participants' consent.

The sample included employees from different organizational levels and educational backgrounds to enhance data credibility and comprehensiveness. Data analysis was conducted using qualitative content analysis, including coding, extraction of main and sub-categories, and categorization of psychological threats. Initially, the interview transcripts were coded, and similar concepts were grouped together. Relationships between codes were then examined, leading to the formation of categories based on shared characteristics, with organizing titles assigned to each category. This method allowed for the identification of meaningful patterns, concepts, and categories, enabling the recognition of psychological threats affecting employees and the development of appropriate strategies grounded in Islamic principles. To ensure research validity and reliability, the extracted codes and categories were reviewed by two organizational psychology experts, and findings were also shared with some participants for feedback (participant validation). Inter-coder agreement was applied to assess reliability, and the final categories were confirmed by both the experts and the researcher. Finally, psychological threats were analyzed from the perspective of Islamic teachings, and suitable strategies for managing these threats were identified. These strategies were then integrated into a comprehensive model comprising dimensions, components, and specific indicators, which can assist organizations in creating psychologically safe work environments.

Findings

The analysis of the data revealed that psychological threats in organizational settings can be categorized into five main groups:

1. Unprofessional managerial behavior: Employees reported that behaviors such as lack of professionalism, favoritism, authoritarian leadership, inconsistent decision-making, and a lack of transparency in management created feelings of insecurity, anxiety, and dissatisfaction in the workplace. Such behaviors not only undermine employees' trust in management but also cultivate a culture of fear, discouraging employees from freely expressing their opinions or taking initiative. Consequently, this negatively affects organizational performance and reduces employee engagement in improvement processes.
2. Behavioral and interpersonal risks with colleagues: Conflicts, gossip, unhealthy competition, lack of cooperation, and disrespectful interactions among colleagues were identified as significant sources of stress. These interpersonal challenges reduce team cohesion, increase psychological strain, and create an environment in which employees feel emotionally vulnerable. The effects include decreased collaboration, lower motivation, and diminished quality of workplace interactions.
3. The nature of the job and work responsibilities: Certain job characteristics, such as high workload, unclear responsibilities, monotonous tasks, and exposure to high-pressure situations, directly contribute to psychological stress. Employees emphasized that the absence of role clarity, organizational support, and recognition intensifies job-related stress and reduces their sense of psychological security.
4. Personal and internal issues: Individual factors, including emotional vulnerability, unresolved personal conflicts, lack of effective coping strategies, and pre-existing mental health conditions, also influence employees' psychological security. The findings indicated that personal resilience and stress management skills play a

critical role in shaping employees' perceptions of stability and safety at work, with more resilient employees better able to manage workplace stressors.

5. Economic concerns and livelihood security: Financial difficulties, job insecurity, and worries related to meeting personal and family needs were among the most significant stressors. Fear of income loss, inadequate compensation, or the possibility of job loss not only reduces work performance but also generates persistent anxiety that affects the overall work environment, undermining motivation and job satisfaction.

Analyzing these threats through the lens of Islamic teachings revealed that ethical and spiritual principles can serve as a strong foundation for mitigating psychological risks in the workplace. Concepts emphasizing professional ethics, respect for human dignity, justice, compassion, and spirituality can help create a secure, supportive, and motivating organizational environment. For instance, promoting ethical leadership, fair treatment of employees, and fostering cooperation and mutual respect in accordance with Islamic values can alleviate stress arising from managerial behaviors and interpersonal conflicts. Additionally, engaging in spiritual practices such as meditation, reflection, prayer, and social support can enhance personal resilience and mitigate the negative effects of internal and economic stressors, enabling employees to operate with greater confidence, stability, and psychological well-being.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study investigated the factors influencing employees' psychological security in organizations and proposed strategies for its enhancement. The findings revealed that psychological security is affected by multiple interrelated factors, which can be categorized into five main dimensions: unprofessional managerial behaviors, interpersonal and behavioral risks with colleagues, job and organizational ambiguities, personal perceptions and attitudes, and concerns regarding livelihood security. Each of these factors can directly or indirectly lead to anxiety, stress, reduced job satisfaction, and ultimately decreased organizational productivity. The results align with previous research, indicating that professional management, healthy interpersonal relationships, organizational transparency, and psychological support play a significant role in enhancing employees' psychological security. Moreover, a comparative analysis with Islamic teachings—particularly principles of justice, consultation, employee rights, and managerial guidance in Nahj al-Balagheh — demonstrated that applying these principles can strengthen employees' sense of security and contribute to the creation of an ethical, supportive, and resilient work environment. Based on the findings, it is recommended that organizations design their managerial frameworks in accordance with ethical and Islamic principles and implement clear evaluation mechanisms, defined career advancement pathways, psychological support programs, and skill development training. Such measures can foster a secure, stable, and constructive organizational environment, ultimately improving employees' psychological well-being, motivation, organizational commitment, and overall productivity.

KEY WORDS

Psychological Security of Employees, Ensuring Psychological Security, Islamic Teachings, Organization and Human Resources.

