

Psychometric properties of the Office Gossip Scale in Puerto Rico

Propiedades psicométricas de la escala de chisme de oficina en Puerto Rico

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Abstract

This research examines the psychometric properties of the Office Gossip Scale Spanish (adapted version) in a sample of 150 Puerto Rican working adults. It also evaluates its internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, McDonald's omega coefficient, construct validity, and factor structure. The 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish (adapted version) has an alpha coefficient of .91, a composite reliability of .91, and an omega coefficient of .91. In addition, a confirmatory factor analysis with structural equation modeling was performed and the factor structure of the 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish (adapted version) was analyzed. The one-factor model showed good indicators of construct validity. The results suggest that the 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish (adapted version) is a reliable and valid instrument for researchers to study the phenomenon of gossip in the workplace and organizations in Puerto Rico.

Keywords: *gossip, confirmatory factor analysis, psychometrics, office gossip, adaptation*

Resumen

Este estudio examina las propiedades psicométricas de la Escala de Chisme de Oficina de 9 ítems en español (en su versión adaptada) para una muestra de 150 trabajadores adultos puertorriqueños. Además, se evaluó su consistencia interna, alfa de Cronbach, la fiabilidad compuesta, el coeficiente omega de McDonald's, la validez de constructo y la estructura factorial. La versión de la Escala de Chismes de Oficina de 9 ítems en español (en su versión adaptada) posee un coeficiente alfa de .91, una confiabilidad compuesta de .91 y un coeficiente omega de .91. Se realizó un análisis factorial confirmatorio con ecuaciones estructurales y se examinó la estructura factorial de la Escala de Chisme de Oficina de 9 ítems en su versión en español. El modelo mostró un solo factor y buenos indicadores de validez de constructo. Los resultados muestran que la Escala de Chisme de Oficina de 9 ítems en español (en su versión adaptada) es un instrumento confiable y válido para que los investigadores estudien el fenómeno del chisme en el lugar de trabajo y las organizaciones en Puerto Rico.

Palabras clave: *chisme, análisis factorial confirmatorio, psicometría, chisme de oficina, adaptación*

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Introduction

Human beings are complex beings who live in a complicated, socio-cultural society. Therefore, maintaining a network of relationships can be a difficult task. Humans must obtain valuable information about those around them to function efficiently in a shifting, complicated social environment. Social curiosity and gossiping are the main aspects of the human condition and its socio-cultural life. Thus, social curiosity and gossiping may enable people to learn, understand and interchange socio-cultural information (Hartung & Renner, 2013).

Carrim (2019) argues that there are many challenges in researching the phenomenon of office gossip. Even though it is an omnipresent activity in the workplace, it may not be easy to examine. Hartung, Krohn, and Pirschtat (2019) claim that gossip may be part of a passive-aggressive workplace bullying. Additionally, employees may view gossip-networking as a positive social interaction with other co-workers, especially when employees talk positively about their peers. However, Wu, Balliet, and Van Lange (2016) believe that gossip may be more effective and efficient than penalty from their supervisors when promoting and maintaining group cooperation.

Kuo, Chang, Quinton, Lu and Lee (2014) argue that Human Resources personnel and managers should pay close attention to workplace gossip producing negative work behaviors. Whereas Dores Cruz, Beersma, Dijkstra, and Bechtoldt (2019) state that gossip plays a vital role in groups. It may play an essential role in establishing group norms, protecting group members from norm violations, and maintaining social order and the status quo. However, based on the literature review, numerous cross-sectional research studies point out that gossip in organizations may negatively affect teams and individ-

ual group members. There is a close relationship between gossip and a decline of intra-team trust, affecting the employee's psychological well-being and safety, lowering work engagement and organizational citizenship behavior. Furthermore, Hartung et al. (2019) point out that gossip is an extension of observational learning. Humans can learn and acquire new social skills based on their socio-cultural interaction with other individuals by listening about their successes, failures, and mishaps. Also, Martinescu, Janssen, and Nijstad (2019) say that gossip aims to interchange three distinct social resources. People engage in gossiping to, first, exchange information; second, influence their conversation partners; and third, maintain social bonds and trust relationships and seek group support. Likewise, Hartung et al. (2019) agree that workers use gossip for informational purposes. However, Dores Cruz, Balliet, et al. (2019) claim that people use gossip for emotion venting.

In management culture, gossip is considered a waste of time and productivity in the workplace. A common assumption is that gossip is detrimental to work morale, and it should be discouraged. Moreover, gossip is associated with malicious, derogatory and insignificant work productivity (Michelson, Van Iterson, & Waddington, 2010; Waddington, 2014).

Martinescu et al. (2019) state that influential individuals with power can affect the value and appeal of their social interactions with other people. The power relationships may have an impact on the perceptions of gossip as a resourceful exchanging behavior. Influential individuals tend to maintain distance from subordinates and practice formal power privileges to exert influence and control over others. However, influenced people are very conscious of their dependency on influential individuals in the workplace. Many employees use gossip to obtain rewards and promotions,

and avoid punishment or retaliation from their supervisors. In contrast, [Fonseca and Peters \(2018\)](#) argue that gossip is part of human conversation. People's quotidian conversations may be one of the most important contexts for the transmission of reputational information, especially in groups.

This study aims to validate, translate, and adapt the 10-item Office Gossip Spanish version and its psychometric properties to have a reliable instrument in order to measure gossip in organizations in Puerto Rico. This study pretends to answer if the Spanish adapted version of the Office Gossip Scale will reproduce the exact factor structure of the original scale with optimal reliability and validity values and explain how the data on office gossip was obtained from the participants in this study.

To test the construct validity and factor structure of the Office Gossip Scale Spanish adapted version, it is essential to test the scale with robust statistics, for example, with a confirmatory factor analysis to improve the validity and reliability of the scale and to adapt it to the Puerto Rican population. This goes in line with what [Richaud de Minzi \(2008\)](#) states in that within Structural Equations Models, the confirmatory factor analysis examines the causal relationships between the observed variables and the latent constructs (factors).

Additionally, this study aims to examine other psychometric properties such as the Cronbach's alpha and the McDonald's omega to test the reliability of the scale. A further goal is to calculate the average variance extracted (AVE) to the composite reliability (CR) for convergent analysis and determine if the scale has an adequate construct ([Fornell & Larcker, 1981](#)). Also, the composite reliability is to test the internal consistency of the scale. Thus, it may further validate the Office Gossip Scale Spanish version to obtain optimal psychometric properties.

A Brief Review of the 10-item Office Gossip Scale by Schmidt (2010) English Version

Dr. [Gordon Schmidt](#) developed the 10-item Office Gossip Scale English version (2010) based on previous theoretical work on office gossip and general office gossip behaviors, such as elements related to informational and group cohesion aspects of gossip. Schmidt studied office gossip and examined its impact on several important workplace outcomes. Schmidt administered it to a sample of 277 undergraduate students from a large Midwestern university in the United States, and the students who participated in the study online for course credit. 93.5% had a part-time job and 70.4% of participants were female. The average participant age was 20.02 years. Accordingly, in Schmidt's study, the results showed that the reliability of the scale was .93. A factor analysis using principal axis factoring for extraction was conducted in SPSS and showed one-factor having an eigenvalue of 6.143, accounting for 61.43% of the variance. A second factor had an eigenvalue of .845 and significantly less and below common rules of thumbs for eigenvalues of 1.0, representing potentially significant factors. Item loadings on the single factor ranged from .65 to .86. All were above the .60 loadings.

[Schmidt \(2010\)](#) defines *office gossip* as exchanging information relevant to an organization. Schmidt believes that office gossip is a means of gaining valuable information from others through organizational socialization. Also, gaining new information about other co-workers and the organization can be beneficial and a valuable source. Likewise, gossip is useful for the sense-making of the corporate events inside the office space.

However, preliminary studies analyzed the effects of office gossip and behavior of workers engaging in gossip. [Schmidt \(2010\)](#) used the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale-17 (UWES-17),

the Affective Organizational Commitment Scale, and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale (OCB) to examine gossip and cognition workplace behaviors.

Furthermore, Schmidt's study (2010) reported that office gossip positively correlated with employee engagement. Also, it predicted that the employee engagement factor of vigor would have the strongest relationship with office gossip. In addition, office gossip and vigor had a significant positive correlation, while office gossip had insignificant relation with the employee engagement factors of absorption and dedication. A significant positive relationship was found between office gossip and affective organizational commitment, while Organizational Citizenship Behavior was found to have a significant positive correlation with office gossip.

Methods

This study applied a quantitative, cross-sectional approach with psychometric instrumental type design and non-probabilistic snowball sampling. Many of the organizations declined to participate in this study. An instrumental research design which measures the instruments' psychometric properties and analyzes and describes a population's behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes was used (Creswell, 2014; Goodman, 1961; Montero & Leon, 2007).

Participants

The participants were contacted using word of mouth or snowball sampling. Goodman (1961) defines snowball sampling as a random sample of individuals drawn from a given finite population to infer statistical inferences about various as-

pects of the population's relationships. It serves to identify potential participants based on referrals or word of mouth. The investigator visited private as well as public governmental agencies in the south region of Puerto Rico to reach the participants who were willing to participate or refer other co-workers in the same workplace to fill out the instruments.

The inclusion criteria for the selection of the participants in this study were that they had to be working at least part-time in public or private sectors in Puerto Rico and be 21 years old or older and of both sexes. The exclusion criteria were participants under 21 years old and unemployed. The sample consisted of 150 participants, of whom 65% ($n = 97$) were females. The mean age of the participants was 36.55. 48.7% ($n = 73$) of the participants were from Generation Y (born between 1981 and 1999). 48% ($n = 72$) of the participants were single and 29% ($n = 44$) had a Bachelor's degree. 71% ($n = 107$) of the participants lived in the Southern region of Puerto Rico; 59% ($n = 88$) worked in the private sector and 41% in the public one ($n = 62$). 45% ($n = 67$) had been working for 1 to 5 years in the organization in tenure. 79% ($n = 119$) held a non-management position.

Instruments

The first instrument was the 9-item Sociodemographic Questionnaire, which collected the following data: workplace location, civil status, sex, age, generations, working sector (private or public), education, job position, and tenure. The second instrument was the 10-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish in its adapted version, which had a 7-point Likert scale. The items were rated from 1 = *hardly ever* to 7 = *almost always*. The third instrument was the 7-item Perception

of Organizational Rumor Scale Spanish version (PORS) designed by Velez-Vega (2021) to measure the perceptions of organizational rumors. This instrument had a Cronbach's alpha of .86 and was validated for the Puerto Rican population. It was used for the convergent validity analysis with the Office Gossip Scale Spanish version. According to Difonzo and Bordia (2007), rumors and gossip are closely related constructs and share certain similarities. Therefore, the fourth instrument used was the 9-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale short version by Schaufeli et al. (2006) to test the divergent validity analysis with the Office Gossip Scale Spanish version, and which presented a Cronbach's alpha of .91. Also, Difonzo and Bordia (2007) argue that work engagement and gossip are a distant construct and do not share the same similarities.

Procedure

The research was authorized by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico under the IRB protocol CEG-25-2014 and followed APA standards. The researcher contacted the author of the 10-item Office Gossip Scale English version, Dr. Gordon B. Schmidt, who granted permission for the use of the scale.

The scale was then translated into Spanish by two certified bilingual translators in Puerto Rico using Brislin's (1970; 1986) translation method. The two bilingual translators were subject matter experts from Puerto Rico with a master's degree in languages from the University of Puerto Rico and considerable experience in translations. In the translation process, the second translator did not see the original document translated by the first translator into Spanish. The second translator's work was to translate the Office Gossip

Scale Spanish version (translated into Spanish by the first translator) back into English. Then, the translators had to repeat steps one and two until the scale in Spanish (the target language) was acceptable and equivalent to the Office Gossip Scale English version original content. According to Brislin's (1970, 1986) recommendations, the translators had to modify the scale if there was some incongruence with the translation and adapt it according to the participant's socio-cultural and linguistic background. After that, another two native subject matter experts from Puerto Rico with a degree in industrial-organizational psychology and experience in psychometrics contrasted semantically the 10-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish version with the 10-item Office Gossip Scale English version to determine if it fit the Puerto Rican sociocultural-linguistic background. Then, all four subject matter experts would agree on a final translation of the 10-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish version and the response to difficulties associated with adaptations and translations of such instruments and any required modification. The information was recorded in paper and later on destroyed to protect the judges' confidentiality.

Afterwards, the participants received the Sociodemographic Questionnaire, the Office Gossip Scale Spanish adapted version, the 9-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale short version, the PORS Scale, and the consent forms. All the documents were handed out in paper form. The researcher notified all the participants about the voluntary nature of the study, their right to withdraw at any time during the study, the instructions and the results once they were available. The researcher applied the word of mouth method to reach the participants in public areas such as cafeterias and lobbies in the governmental agencies and other private organizations in Puerto Rico.

Statistical Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24 program, Mplus, and JASP for data analysis were applied to perform the descriptive statistics, the scale's reliability using Cronbach's alpha formula and the McDonald's omega coefficient, and to examine the factor structure. [Deng and Chan \(2017\)](#) argue that the McDonald's omega is a reliability coefficient similar to Cronbach's alpha. However, McDonald's omega has the advantage of considering the strength of association between items on a scale.

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with a structural equation modeling (SEM) and an unweighted least squares (ULS) estimation was performed in the validation and data analysis since the 10-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish version has an ordinal rating Likert-type scale and this study has a small sample size. [Byrne \(2016\)](#) argues that chi-square is used to establish a model fit. Sometimes chi-square is sensitive to sample size and tests if a model fits in the population.

However, the standardized root mean square (SRMR) was used instead of the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) fit index. The SRMR is the average discrepancy between the correlations observed in the input matrix and the predicted correlation of the model ([Brown, 2015](#)). Nevertheless, [Shi et al. \(2020\)](#) argue that the SRMR fit index is more appropriate in smaller samples than the RMSEA fit index and it is also more appropriate when fitting ordinal factor analysis models using ULS estimation from tetrachoric and polychoric correlations.

Considering the recommended threshold fit indices based on the literature review, a CFI $\geq .90$ is acceptable, but a CFI $\geq .95$ is considered better. The Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) $\geq .90$ is fair, but a TLI $\geq .95$ is better. The IFI $\geq .90$, GFI $\geq .90$, and

the NFI $\geq .90$ are acceptable, but indices superior to $.95$ are excellent, and SRMR $\leq .08$ or below is acceptable ([Brown, 2015](#); [Byrne, 2016](#)).

The average variance extracted (AVE) and the composite reliability (CR) examined further validity concerns factor loadings on the scale construct. The recommended thresholds for AVE are $.50$ or more and for CR $.70$ and above ([Fornell & Larcker, 1981](#)). The composite reliability tested the internal consistency in the scale items, sometimes called the construct reliability. It was equal to the true score variance relative to the total scale score variance ([Brunner & Süß, 2005](#)). To sum up, a Pearson and Spearman coefficient were used to test the Office Gossip Scale's Spanish version convergent and divergent validity.

Results

Item Analysis

Table 1 illustrates the skewness and kurtosis and the thresholds of ± 2.0 ([Hair et al., 2013](#)). In relation to the descriptive item analysis, item 2 shows skewness and kurtosis normality violations. According to [Kline \(2005\)](#), skewness values greater than 3 and a kurtosis index absolute value greater than 10 are concerns. A Shapiro-Wilk test can be used in samples below 300 for test normality of distribution of the scores for two groups ([Field, 2017](#); [Shapiro & Wilk, 1965](#)), which were males and females in this case. As regards to the Shapiro-Wilk test results and a visual inspection of their histograms, normal Q-Q plots and the box plots showed that the scores did not have a normal distribution for males and females. Males had a skewness of 1.025 (SE = .327) and a kurtosis of 1.194 (SE = .64) and females a skewness of 1.163 (SE = .245) and a kurtosis of .957 (SE = .485). Furthermore, the Shapiro-Wilk test provided evidence that none of the ten items had

Table 1

Descriptive distribution of the skewness and kurtosis of the Office Gossip Scale Spanish version.

Items	Mean	SD	Skew	Kurtosis	Shapiro-Wilk
1. Talk with co-workers about people's experiences with the boss.	2.94	1.68	0.59	-0.50	.91
2. Talk with others about people's experiences with co-workers.	3.55	7.98	11.57	139.17	.17
3. Seek out information co-workers have about people I may work with in the future.	2.53	1.58	0.83	-0.25	.86
4. Talk with co-workers about other employee's accomplishments and mistakes.	2.76	1.56	0.68	-0.38	.87
5. Swap stories about other people in the organization.	2.76	1.56	0.52	-0.69	.89
6. Talk with co-workers about other employee's personal lives.	1.82	1.39	1.78	2.57	.66
7. Talk with co-workers about other people we know in the organization and what they have been up to.	2.35	1.45	1.10	0.78	.84
8. Seek out rumors about other people in the company.	1.78	1.37	2.02	3.66	.64
9. Spent time chatting with co-workers about organization happenings.	2.73	1.73	0.85	-0.23	.86
10. Gossip with my co-workers.	1.99	1.38	1.46	1.51	.73

Note. SD = Standard deviation.

a normal distribution ($p < .001$). As a result, item 2 was taken out of the data analysis due to the normality violations.

In addition, multivariate normality was tested using SPSS to calculate Mahalanobis distances in the data to measure the distance of a particular case from the centroid of the remaining cases. It detects any strange pattern of scores across all nine sociodemographic independent variables within the dependent variable, the Office Gossip Scale Spanish version. The results showed a value of 53.38 of the maximum Mahalanobis distance. According to the literature, the critical value for nine variables is 27.88, which also showed a violation of multivariate normality in the data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

Construct Validity

Confirmatory factor analysis with structural equation modeling was carried out. The first model of the 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish version (M1) and regarding this type of validity showed a $\chi^2_{(27)} = 194.240$, $p < .001$. Fit indices CFI = .98, TLI = .97, GFI = .99, IFI = .98, NFI = .98, and SRMR = .07 were analyzed to assess the adjustment of the model. As a result, there were satisfactory fit indices. Additionally, all p -values were significant and factor loadings thresholds were superior to .30 under the standard estimates detailed in (Kline, 2005) Table 2 of the Model 1 (M1).

Table 2

Factor loadings and parameter estimates of the 9-item Office Gossip Spanish version scale.

Factor	Items	Symbol	Est.	Std. Error	z-value	p	95% Confidence Interval		Std. Est. (all)
							Lower	Upper	
Factor 1	OG1	λ_{11}	1.00	.03	38.20	< .001	0.95	1.05	.60
Office	OG3	λ_{12}	0.95	.03	36.63	< .001	0.90	1.00	.60
Gossip	OG4	λ_{13}	1.23	.03	45.06	< .001	1.18	1.28	.79
	OG5	λ_{14}	1.22	.03	44.80	< .001	1.17	1.27	.78
	OG6	λ_{15}	1.07	.03	40.30	< .001	1.01	1.12	.77
	OG7	λ_{16}	1.25	.03	45.64	< .001	1.20	1.30	.86
	OG8	λ_{17}	1.04	.03	39.43	< .001	0.99	1.09	.76
	OG9	λ_{18}	1.30	.03	46.99	< .001	1.25	1.36	.75
	OG10	λ_{19}	0.95	.03	36.66	< .001	0.90	1.00	.69

Note. OG = Office Gossip; Est = Estimates; Std. Error = Standard Error; Std. Est = Standard Estimates; p = p -value significant < .001.

Discrimination Index and Internal Consistency

The 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish (adapted version) was analyzed using the discrimination index and the discrimination indexes greater than .30 were analyzed using the corrected item-total correlation technique as recommended by Kline (2005). All items on the scale complied with the recommended thresholds. Table 3 shows that the discrimination index fluctuated between .57 and .81, the internal consistency fluctuated between .89 and .91, and the McDonald's omega fluctuated between .90 and .91.

Convergent/Divergent Validity of the Construct and Coefficient Internal Validity

The average variance extracted (AVE) was measured to test the convergent validity, and values superior to .50 indicated construct valid-

ity. The composite reliability (CR) measured the internal consistency of scale items, indicating a value of .70 and above. The result showed that the AVE value of .54 and CR value of .91 illustrated convergent validity, construct validity, and reliability.

The 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish version's reliability tested using the Cronbach's alpha was .91 (Mean = 2.41 and SD = .44), with a 95% confidence interval lower bound of .89 and 95% confidence interval upper bound of .93. Likewise, the McDonald's omega was .91 with a 95% confidence interval lower bound of .89 and 95% confidence interval upper bound of .93. This indicates that the scale had an excellent alpha and reliability, and an alpha and internal consistency of .70 or above, which had an acceptable threshold, since a .90 or above is excellent (DeVellis, 2017).

A Pearson and a Spearman correlation were performed on the 9-item Office Gossip Scale

Table 3
Discrimination index of the 9-item Office Gossip Spanish version.

Items	M	SD	r_{bis}	α	ω
1. Talk with co-workers about people's experiences with the boss.	2.95	1.68	.57	.91	.91
3. Seek out information co-workers have about people I may work with in the future.	2.53	1.58	.57	.91	.91
4. Talk with co-workers about other employee's accomplishments and mistakes.	2.76	1.56	.75	.90	.90
5. Swap stories about other people in the organization.	2.76	1.56	.74	.90	.90
6. Talk with co-workers about other employee's personal lives.	1.83	1.39	.73	.90	.90
7. Talk with co-workers about other people we know in the organization and what they have been up to.	2.36	1.45	.81	.89	.90
8. Seek out rumors about other people in the company.	1.78	1.37	.72	.90	.90
9. Spent time chatting with co-workers about organization happenings.	2.73	1.73	.72	.90	.90
10. Gossip with my co-workers.	1.99	1.39	.65	.90	.91

Note. M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; r_{bis} = corrected item-total correlations; α = Cronbach's alpha; ω = McDonald's omega.

Spanish version with the 7-item PORS instrument (Vélez-Vega, 2021) to test convergent validity. Also, the 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish version was tested with the 9-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale short version (Schaufeli et al., 2006) for divergent validity. The results showed that the 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish version has convergent validity with the 7-item Perception of Organizational Rumor Scale (PORS), indicating that both scales share similar constructs since there was a significant moderate correlation. By contrast, the results showed that the 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish version discriminates with the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), indicating that each scale does not share similar constructs and has a negative correlation.

A convergent and divergent validity may be performed, obtaining the scores applying to

two distinct scales. For example, if the two scales measure the same or similar constructs and the results between both measurements present significant correlations, it is said that the scales converge, which indicates that both scales are conceptually similar. Conversely, when, the scores of two different scales measure different constructs, and the scores are low or there is a negative correlation, it is said that the scales diverge, which means there is a non-significant relationship between the variables that measure different constructs (Luján-Tangarife & Cardona-Arias, 2015). In other words, the 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish version indicates adequate external convergent and discriminant/divergent analysis and indicates acceptable psychometric properties. Table 4 shows the results of the convergent and discriminant analysis.

Table 4

Correlation 9-item Office Gossip with 7-item PORS and Utrecht Work Engagement Scale.

Constructs	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i> -value	Lower 95% CI	Upper 95% CI	<i>rho</i>	<i>p</i> -value	Lower 95% CI	Upper 95% CI
Office Gossip with PORS	.41***	< .001	.27	.54	.43***	< .001	.29	.55
Office Gossip with UWES	-.04	.62	-.20	.12	-.10	.22	-.26	.06

Note. *r* = Pearson; *rho* = Spearman; *** $p < .001$.

Discussion

This study examined the psychometric properties of the 10-item Office Gossip Scale English version with a translated and adapted version: the 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish version on a Puerto Rican population. The scale was never used in Puerto Rico or in any Latin-speaking country. There are no studies of office gossip available in Puerto Rico. Since it was the first time the scale was validated in Puerto Rico, there was a constraint to compare the results of this study. The only studies available of the Office Gossip Scale English version by Schmidt (2010) were conducted by the author of the scale and the research was carried out in the United States of America. However, the results of the present study provide relevant and preliminary information on the psychometric properties and factor structure of the 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish version in Puerto Rican working adults.

It was possible to update and examine the short and adapted 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish version's psychometric properties and factor structure with CFA and SEM statistics. This study may also contribute to new literature and a better understanding of the phenomenon of office gossip in some organizations in Puerto Rico. The short and adapted 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish version's construct correlates with Schmidt's study (2010; 2011), which validated

the 10-item Office Gossip Scale English version on organizations' individual affiliative and informational processes. The results also indicate that office gossip may strengthen bonds between co-workers and connections within the organization. According to Schmidt (2011), workers who engaged in more office gossip did have more organizational socialization knowledge and gained new knowledge using office politics and other co-workers' information.

Fornell and Larcker (1981) argue that in order to determine a model fit in a confirmatory factor analysis, the construct validity must converge with the observed variables or the items in an instrument associated in the same latent construct (convergent validity). Construct validity can confirm that there is a good model fit and that it measures what it is supposed to measure, which is the psychological construct proposed by the researcher. Moreover, the CR and AVE are used to test the model fit of a psychological construct in an instrument. In other words, the 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish version complied with the CR and AVE thresholds according to the psychometric properties and validity, indicating adequate construct of measurement on office gossip.

The psychometric properties demonstrated the one-dimensionality of the short and adapted 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish version. This single dimension includes gossip behaviors that concern engaging in idle talk, group cohesion, so-

cialization, and gathering information about other people in the workplace (Schmidt, 2010, 2011). The results from the confirmatory factor analysis with structural equation modeling support the Spanish version of the Office Gossip Scale's one-factor structure, which correlates with the Office Gossip Scale English version (Schmidt, 2010). This suggests that the instrument measures workplace gossip behavior. The fit indices support the model since they were among acceptable values (e.g., Hair et al., 2013; Kline, 2016). Even though item 2 was removed from the data, the Office Gossip Scale Spanish version still possesses excellent reliability over .90 while the Office Gossip Scale English version has a Cronbach's alpha of .93.

Limitations

One of the limitations was the small sample size which does not allow to generalize the final results. Another limitation was the snowball sampling and non-probabilistic convenience recruitment method. As a result, the sample was not representative of the Puerto Rican working population. The most significant limitation was the lack of participation from the organizations. Another limitation was that it was not explicit to the participants whether the office gossip occurred within office space in the workplace or not. Some job occupations do not require employees to be in office space. Additionally, the conditions and other factors such as noise, distractions, limited time to complete the scales, the questionnaire and the consent forms could impact the results. Besides, most of the participants were females. Finally, there are limited studies of gossip research conducted in Puerto Rico, and there were no literature reviews to compare the results.

Recommendations

The practical implications of this study are that there is an instrument that measures office gossip for the Puerto Rican workforce. In addition, the scale is user-friendly and written in simple Spanish for the participants to understand each item of the scale. Also, consultants, industrial-organizational psychologists, and academia may use the short and adapted 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish version as a reliable scale for needs assessments and evaluations and future new studies in Puerto Rico.

One recommendation is to administrate the 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish version in a large sample to further test its validity and reliability in other municipalities of Puerto Rico. An additional recommendation is to perform a test criterion and test-retest to evaluate its construct, reliability, and validity. Moreover, it is also recommended to administrate the Office Gossip Scale Spanish version in other Latin-speaking countries, test the construct validity, determine socio-cultural differences, and compare the results with the Puerto Rican sample results.

Another recommendation is to conduct in-depth interviews with employees; for example, a qualitative approach with a phenomenological study may help to better understand the phenomenon of office gossip and provide insight into how employees perceive gossip at the workplace. It is also recommended to combine the 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish version with other variables such as rumors, job satisfaction, job commitment, and the dark side of organizational politics. A final recommendation is to determine what other factors may impact office gossip or if gossip influences these variables.

Conclusion

Many studies show that malicious workplace gossip is demoralizing for employees. Employees encircled by unconstructive gossip will find it difficult to trust other co-workers or establish cooperative work relationships (Kong, 2018). However, other authors argue that gossip may have both positive and negative effects at the workplace (Dores Cruz, Beersma, et al., 2019; Schmidt, 2010).

This study is one of the first pieces of research conducted and it examined the psychometric properties and factor structure of the Office Gossip Scale Spanish (adapted version) in Puerto Rico. The results show that the Office Gossip Scale Spanish (adapted version) possesses excellent internal and external psychometric properties and replicates the one-factor structure of the Office Gossip English version. Similarly, the results support the applicability of the 9-item Office Gossip Scale Spanish (adapted version) in the Puerto Rican workforce population. New studies can contribute to the importance of the Office Gossip Scale Spanish (adapted version) with other variables in public and private working sectors in Puerto Rico. As a result, this study represents a significant contribution to the scientific community. Finally, the Office Gossip Scale Spanish (adapted version) is a reliable instrument with adequate psychometric properties and may be used in new studies in organizational research. This study may imply that managers and organizations can learn to monitor and take actions to prevent negative gossip and raise awareness about it at the workplace.

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Appendix A**10-item Office Gossip Scale****Copyright © Dr. Gordon B. Schmidt, Ph.D. (2010) English version****Copyright © Vélez-Vega (2014) Spanish version**

	1 Hardly Ever	2 Rarely	3 Once a While	4 Sometimes	5 Often	6 Very Often	7 Almost Always
	Casi nunca	Pocas veces	Ocasional- mente	A veces	Frecuente- mente	Muy frecuente- mente	Casi siempre
1. Talk with co-workers about people's experiences with the boss. Hablo con mis compañeros de trabajo sobre las experiencias de la gente con el jefe.							
2. Talk with others about people's experiences with co-workers. Hablo con otros sobre las experiencias de la gente con los compañeros de trabajo.							
3. Seek out information co-workers have about people I may work with in the future. Busco información que mis compañeros de trabajo tengan sobre personas con las cuales pudiese trabajar en el futuro.							
4. Talk with co-workers about other employee's accomplishments and mistakes. Hablo con mis compañeros de trabajo sobre los logros y los fallos de otros empleados.							

<p>5. Swap stories about other people in the organization.</p> <p>Intercambio historias sobre otras personas que laboran en la organización.</p>							
<p>6. Talk with co-workers about other employee's personal lives.</p> <p>Hablo con mis compañeros de trabajo sobre la vida personal de otros empleados.</p>							
<p>7. Talk with co-workers about other people we know in the organization and what they have been up to.</p> <p>Hablo con mis compañeros de trabajo sobre otras personas que conocemos dentro de la organización y de lo que han estado haciendo.</p>							
<p>8. Seek out rumors about other people in the company.</p> <p>Averiguo rumores sobre otras personas que laboran en la empresa.</p>							
<p>9. Spent time chatting with co-workers about organization happenings.</p> <p>Paso tiempo charlando con mis compañeros de trabajo sobre lo que acontece en la organización.</p>							
<p>10. Gossip with my co-workers.</p> <p>Chismeo con mis compañeros de trabajo.</p>							