



## **Factors Influencing Fear and its subsequent effects on Self Confidence: An analysis on HR Perspective**

**Zaki Hasan**

Assistant Professor at ZCRS, Ziauddin University

**Neelum Zehra**

HOD-OT at ZCRS, Ziauddin University

**Saleem Ahmed**

Senior Lecturer at ZCRS, Ziauddin University

**Hafiz Muhammad Wamiq**

Lecturer at Government City College Karachi

### **Abstract:**

The misconception that promoting fear among employees will produce better discipline and performances of the worker is now proved to be reciprocal since such fearful working environments lead to poor interpersonal skills that affect directly the confidence of the employee. Unhealthy work environments not only reduce the competitive advantage of the organization it grimly devastates staff mental health and physical performance. The employee is generally fearful of losing the job and bears the stress that affects the people skills of an individual. This study is aimed to determine factors about the fear that are affecting the self-confidence of the employees who are working at any particular organization. It is a qualitative study based on framework analysis which is concluded through structured interviews. Thirty employees randomly selected from five different industries (Pharmaceutical, Education, Telecommunication, Airlines, and Software houses) have been selected for this research. 50 % of the population is male and the rest female. Inclusion criteria included 8 working hours and direct reporting to the heads of the department. A job description that involves target or sales were excluded from the sample. It is observed that fear in employees and their thoughts in an organization has a major impact that is reflected in staff as psychologically revoke, depression and anxiety, demotivation and apathy, autocrat leaders, and distrust environment. All these factors affect the interpersonal skills of the employee, especially self-confidence leading to unhealthy human resource culture. It is concluded that there is a direct relationship between autocratic leadership and fright in employees of the organization that results in loss of buoyancy. Such organizations promote unwholesome human resource culture creating psychosocial problems in the workers.

**Keywords:** Fear, Psychologically Revoke, Depression, Anxiety, Autocratic Leaders, Demotivation, Apathy, Distrust of Employees, Self Confidence.

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## **Introduction**

The fear that occurs in an organization while working as an employee is one of the major distress nowadays faced by individuals. Employees who work for a company are somehow concerned about their jobs based on a few factors which may lead them to get unemployed (Farré L, Fasani F, Mueller H., 2018). The effects of fear have something being troubled in the mindset of people and this may lead to having a great consequence on self-esteem and losing self-confidence. These consequences currently seem losing hope for better opportunities and a distressful lifestyle. Besides this, in the world of highly competitive and ruthless environments, the upcoming generation who have just completed their degrees are facing tough job markets which let their morale down and they are losing hope for a better lifestyle (Tomlinson M., 2017). On the other hand, if someone gets an opportunity, they face an eviler job environment and their employers' behavior which leads them to lose self-confidence (Thompson MN, Dahling JJ. 2017). This generation is automatically having fear and losing confidence because of inflation ruling in the country and competitive employees having experience giving them a tough time (Chen, H., 2021). The study which was conducted related to fear and mental health states that following western cultures will also create negative and fearful concerns among individuals (Sultan, F, et al, 2020). Any threat either it is objective or non-objective, interrupts a persons' emotional health leads to fear. Any particular individual, actions or responses, events or occurrences, any kind of mental or physical harm makes a person fearful. (Pain R, Smith SJ., 2016). According to Denkinger MD, Lukas A, Nikolaus T, Hauer K. (2015), there are five factors most common factors that are falling in the community which includes physical health, the impact of mood, cognitive status, history of falls, and environmental characteristics. Same as the above, some other scholars Cacciotti G, Hayton JC, Mitchell JR, Giazitzoglu A. (2016), stated that fear appraises the threat and occurs a change in the brain and its functions. He further elaborates that fear is one of the factors which tends to dismay and loss of self-confidence. Fear is found to be one of the most common factors among the employees who are working in organizations where bullying, disrespecting, and blaming are conjoint (Pilch I, Turska E. 2015). All these causes lead an employee to lose self-confidence and disgrace them to work in a social and friendly environment (Spence Laschinger HK, Nosko A. 2015).

To understand fear in general terminology Pain and Smith (2008), stated that fear is a response to human psychology and his emotions. Every individual has a different mindset to understand the exact definition of fear. For some people, it may be any action that can cause harm, whereas for some people it may be only any thought which can occur a depression or anxiety. The word fear has multiple understandings taken by a person based on their indulgence, and the results are even worse than its thought. They might get panic, which may get eviler results (Wongyara N, Wongsawang N, 2017). Employees who are working at an organization have a serious issue of fear in terms of job stress, job losing, job burden, and incentives issues. All these occur distress on losing self-confidence and poor performance (Clark DM, Loxton NJ. 2012). Any thought which deprives self-confidence of the human mind may cause by fear and fear is one of the major role-playing entities at every stage of our life (Farré L, Fasani F, Mueller H., 2018).

Immordino, G., (2021) states that there is a significant correlation between fear and job loss. Rosenblatt Z, Ruvio A. (2011) found a significant correlation between fear and losing a job. He stated that losing a job has many characteristics mainly concerned with fear. He further elaborates that losing a job has somewhat based on losing self-confidence and some other forms. On the other hand, Lawrence ER, Kacmar KM. (2017) proposes in his paper that employees have a serious issue of unethical behavior while working at any organization which relates them to losing self-



confidence and working in a fearful environment. Other studies presented by Morikawa M. (2017) conclude that in the era of artificial intelligence, employees have a fear of their jobs being replaced by robots and they are having tough competition. The study states that normative motivations, hedonic motivations can lead to decrease fear among the employees (Khan et al, 2019). People are getting replaced by robotics and other types of machinery which tends them to lose their job or to work in a hard-hitting environment.

McQuaid R. (2017) discloses in his research that self-confidence somehow leads to losing a job or it is one of the major products of unemployment. He further explains that being unemployed has a huge effect on the human mind and his thought may reflect long-term scarring. Low pay, few qualifications, non-cognitive skills of the employees who have just started their career would also lead to losing self-confidence. Moreover, conflicts among the employees will also create fear and affects employee performance (Khan et al, 2017).

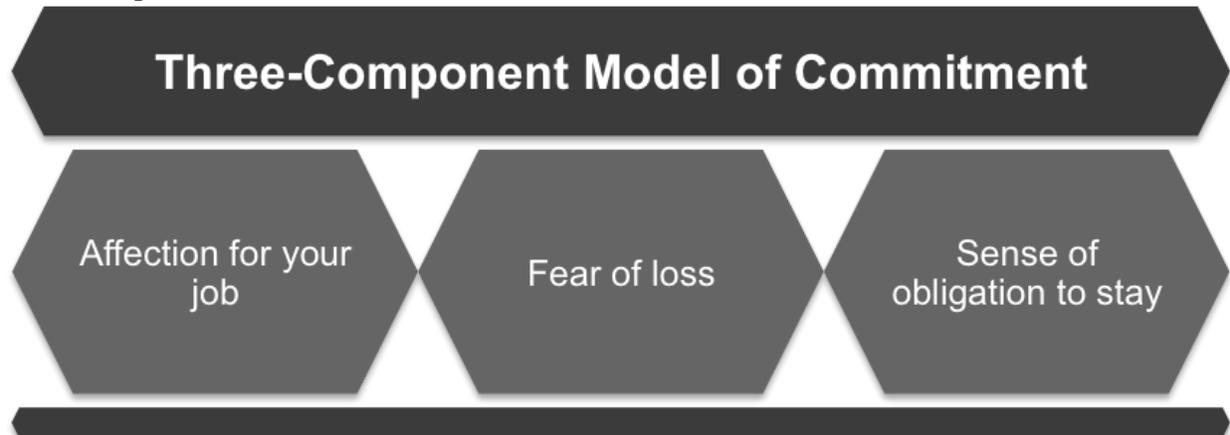
Self-confidence is based on motivation and appreciation while working at any particular organization. Any employee leads to having a better performance if their leaders are positively upholding them. All the workers are truly dedicated to their work and confidently perform their tasks if they are being treated well in a relaxed full environment. Certain issues may lead a person to lose trust while working for any specific organization (Biolcati R, 2017). It is not necessary that fear while working at any organization may create only through the stressful environment, dictating boss, or integrated system (Khan et al, 2017). This may be also be created when a person has no personal interest in doing a particular job or he may have no understanding about a job description which he is performing at a company (Cacciotti G, Hayton JC, 2015). Yilmaz H, (2018) stated that when an individual has a poor understanding of the job description, he performs his work in a stressful environment and stress leads to create fearful thoughts in this mind which comprehends losing self-confidence.

### **Three-Component Model of Commitment**

In 1991 Meyer and Allen proposed a Three-Component Model of Commitment which explains the psychological state of an organization and shows how employees feel about the organization they are working with. These three components are completely based on a person's state of mind and how is he feeling about their boss and working environment. The first component of the model shows the affection of employees towards the job Herscovitch L, Meyer JP. (2002). This is based on the emotional attachment of a person towards his job and when he is fully satisfied with what is he doing. The values, goals, commitment, and vision of an organization are the same way important and desirable for an employee as for an organization (Iqbal, H. et al, n.d.). Whereas, the second component of this model is based on fear, a fear of losing a job. The person is committed to the organization not because he loves to work, but he is in fear of losing the job. This fear comprehends because it has bitter side effects than gaining another job. The fear increases with time as the employee gets older, he would never want to disturb his comfort zone of working peacefully Solinger ON, Van Olfen W. (2008). Employers do not have to instill fear in the employees by threatening them with every single mistake, but instead of that, they can make them feel how important is this job is for them and what consequences would they face if they lose the job Yahaya R, Ebrahim F (2016).

The third component of this model is the Sense of Obligation. This happens when an employee feels his importance for the organization and he/she decided to stay with the particular firm for long whether they are happy or not. This obligation can be based on various reasons, starting from the early stage of an employees' life when the organization helped him to build his career Devece

C, Palacios-Marqués D. (2016). Even if better opportunities are waiting for a person, still he commits with current job and gives his best based on loyalty. This component can only be summarized in just one word 'Loyalty'. Organizations must have to invest in employees monetarily and by providing them additional chances apart from their daily tasks to keep them motivated. Only in this way employees can stick to their job in terms of loyalty and long-lasting relationships Hoffman J, Bennett N. (2018).



**Figure 1: Three Components Model of Commitment**

According to this model the component 'Fear of Loss' has various categorizations including monetary and non-monetary benefits. Few people do not leave the job because of their salary as they believe that based on their experience they are earning more, and if they lose the job they won't get a better opportunity and better salary. Whenever the person restricts his career opportunities or tries to play in his comfort zone, he is headed towards losing his confidence. Moreover, on the other hand, fear of losing a job is also based on the centralized system of any organization where leaders are autocratic and never motivate employees' ideas nor even allow their employees to work in a sociable environment. These types of systems of any organization are somehow responsible for employees' poor confidence.

#### **Exclusion and inclusion criteria:**

Also, researchers have tried to put all expert judgments and opinions but this study does not provide a clear picture regarding fear and its effects on self-confidence because of many constraints including time and limited resources. Furthermore, the research is only limited to qualitative analysis which may show a one-sided picture of limited sample size.

#### **Methodology:**

##### **Research Design**

Using Williams AE, Fossey E, (2016) framework, the qualitative research method is being used in the study to explore the outcomes of fear and its effects on self-confidence. A qualitative phase involves grounded theory kind which is being determined through interviewing techniques.

##### **Sampling Technique/ Size**

The simple random sampling technique has been used in this study based on two phases, firstly the questions were asked from respondents in a direct interview, and later on, the data was

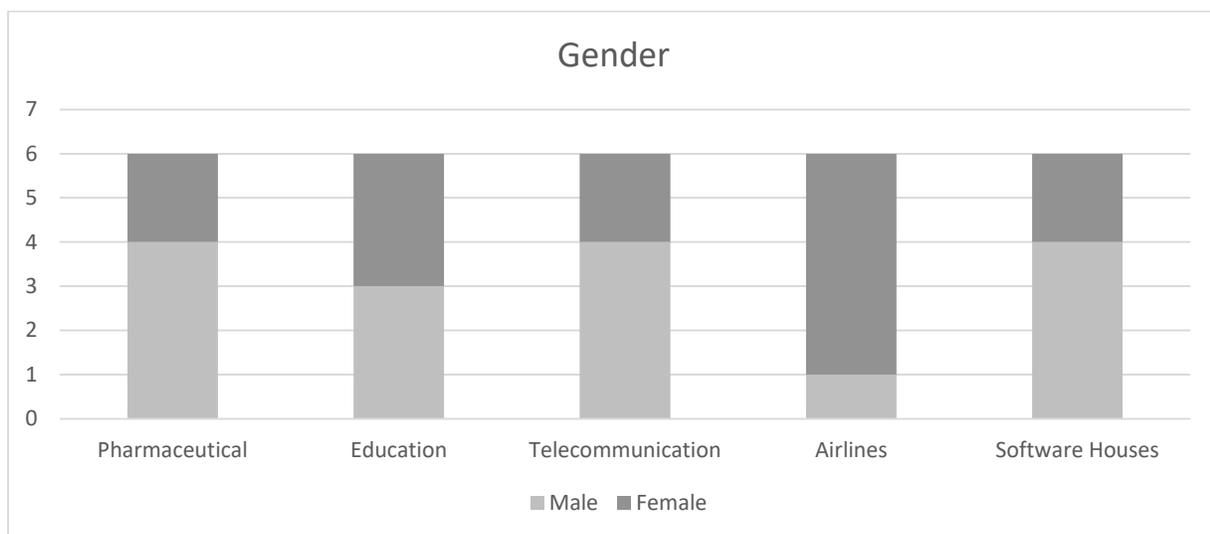
sorted respectively. The population of this research belongs to various organization and their employees who are working there. Moreover, as the research is based on interviews so 6 different employees from 5 organizations have been questioned, in total 30 people have been asked questions.

### Data Collection tool and analysis

The data was collected through interviews structured and non-structured Questions from person to person. Key points from the recorded interview were analyzed later. There was a total of 10 items in the structured question regarding feelings, the behavior of boss at work reasons of job switching figure 1. The collected data was analyzed through the framework. The factors of fear will be hypothetically related to self-confidence and its effects.

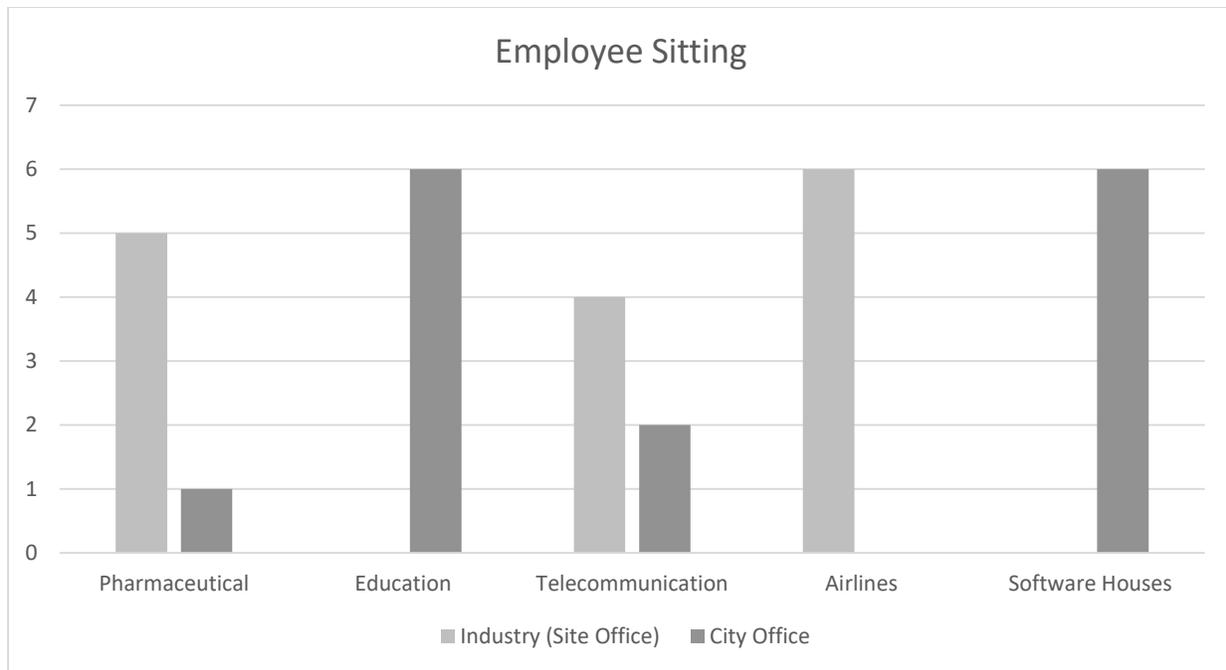
### Discussion

In this paper, the researcher has conducted structured interviews with 30 people in five different industries including Pharmaceutical, Education, telecommunications, Airlines, and Software houses.



**Figure 2: Demographic Details**

The purpose behind choosing these industries is based on various purposes, the first reason is to work in service industries just to have a mutual environment. Secondly, the reason behind choosing five different industries is to have detailed and various ideas of employees from a different working environment. The interviews have been taken from one employer, two managerial level personnel, and three officers from each industry.



**Figure 3: Employee Sitting**

Based on interviews, different codes have been interpreted which has been mentioned in the framework. Before discussing them in detail, the researcher gave a review of various interviews starting from the question ‘Why are you working for this particular organization?’. The responses varied from one to another, for example, few respondents have answered that their commitment to the organization is on a contractual basis whereas some of them answered that they have got the best opportunity so far that’s why they are committed to them.

Continuing their conversation, the second question added ‘why are you working with this particular organization, and what if you get a better opportunity, would you like to opt-in or not?’. The majority of the interviewee responded that they will surely go for a better opportunity if they get it, everyone wanted to achieve better goals and lifestyle. Whereas, few of them don’t want to switch jobs because of their long-term relationship with the organization. The third question asked them is regarding their career-seeking capabilities, ‘Are you looking or finding for better opportunities?’. Answering this question, people responded that not thoroughly but yes whenever they get an option, surely, they apply for the opportunity. These three questions reflect the idea about their sincerity and their reflection towards their current job.

The second phase of the interview is regarding their job security, their motivation level, and their employers’ attitude. Starting with the question ‘Has organization offer extra allowances and compensations apart from your job basic salary?’. None of the employees answered no, however, it varies from organization to organization. Some of the companies are paying more benefits to the employees whereas, some of them pay less comparatively. Apart from their fixed allowances and incentives many of the firms are even offering incentives to the employees who work for better ideas and share some good strategies. This leads to employee motivation. Besides this, some of the workers added up a point that some employees are playing a favorite role for bosses and the top-level managers are biased in their decisions by offering them extra incentives on regular basis. This hurts their job security and pulls them back to work valuable for the organization. Such

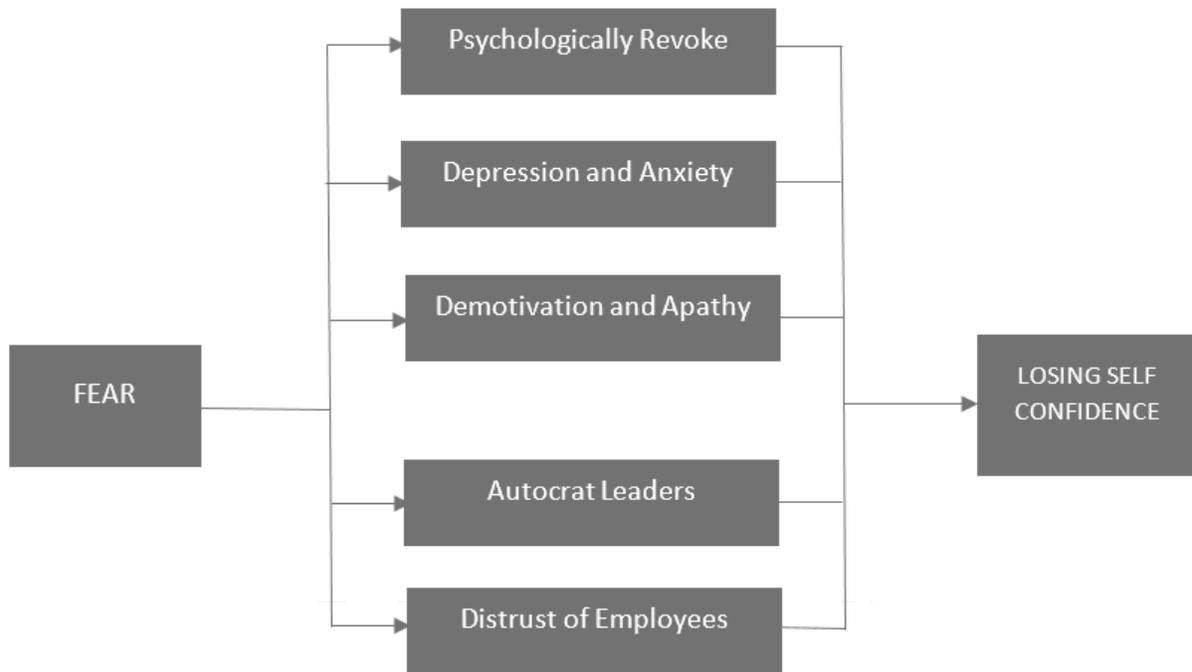


behavior from employers create a gap between top-level and middle/lower-level workers and develops **“Psychological Revoke”** in employees’ mind. They withdraw their extra tasks and avoid putting extra effort into their work as they know the behavior of employers and their biasness. Moreover, when employers asked them to do some extra tasks, they try to avoid and stick to their routine job description because they are afraid of getting no extra benefit.

Another question adding to the conversation regarding the employers’ behavior is ‘Does employers motivate your ideas for organizational expansion?’. Depending on the industry, some of the people who are working at Software Houses comments that their employers always appreciate a new idea and even they pay good incentives for that, but apart from software house, all four industry workers neglect this certain point and explain that they are working in a centralized working environment where employers are **“Autocratic”** in nature and provide us Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to work accordingly. Likewise, another question when asked to employees, ‘Is there any reason which leads you to lose this job or departmental transfer?’ The workers who are senior and experienced, working for an organization for 12-15 years pointed that they have given much time to this job and now they are conscious about their job and retirement time. Organizations have done much for them but now they are **“Depressed and Anxious”** about their job life and future. The majority of them are still the only person in their family who is earning and felt like having not had much time to work on. This leads them to lose confidence in their work-life and to work in an intense environment.

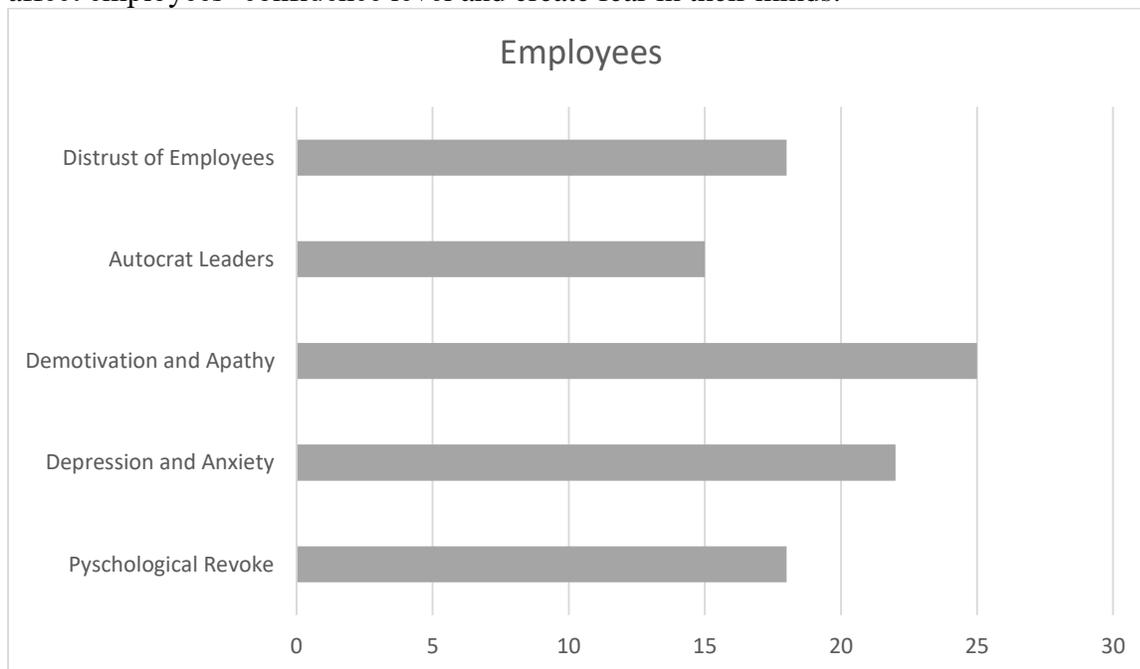
Regarding their retirement plans and their pensions, employees are much curious and dejected because apart from Multi-National Firms, organizations are not paying better rewards to their retired employees even these organizations have much-complicated retirement plans for their employees. These employees found it true distress and **“Demotivates”** them in such a working environment. Moreover, these poor retirement plans affect their confidence and push them back to work in such an environment.

The autocratic leaders found their employees dishonest and they never trust them in decision-making plans and organizational strategies. The **“Distrust of Employees”** is much common in every organization and their employers are very passive to their working environment. They never allow their employees to work out of their job description and even any of the employees initiates doing so, they send them back to their respected circle. But not always and every organization works in such a domain, as discussed above Software Houses are always pleasant to their employees and warmly welcome them to work out of the box. They truly appreciate their effort and allow them to work in such a phase on regular basis. Whenever organization distrusts their employees it makes their employees lose their confidence and work in restricted domains.



**Figure 4: Designed Framework of Study**

The above framework has been designed based on conducted interviews. The mediating codes such as ‘psychologically revoke’, ‘depression’, ‘demotivation’ etc... has been concluded which affect employees’ confidence level and create fear in their minds.



**Figure 5: Employees Response with regards to Variable**



## **Conclusion**

In the above discussion, all the aspects of the conducted interview have been mentioned which concluded many streams. Starting from the fear, it is found that every employee has a fear of their job from some aspect. Some of them have a job loss fear, some of them face their employers' behavior fear and others are having their retirement life fear. Every employee is suffering from fear to some extent. People who work at any particular organization are psychologically revoked because their working environment and their leaders never appreciate their effort and all of these employees want appreciation in terms of incentives. When they seek their top-level managers who are biased in their working environment, they never get appreciated and work only in limited and certain tasks. Employees are demotivated and apathetic with their tasks because these working organizations and their systems are centralized and their fixed SOPs demoralize their employees to work freely.

The autocratic leadership system of organizations destroys the self-confidence of working employees and does not allow them to work in an open and sociable system. These leaders are too compressive and focused to attain their tasks and to put a forceful working environment for their employees. They never allow them to work as per their requirements and needs. All these result in loss of self-confidence in workers and create fear in their minds. Adding to this, the employers are too possessive to their organizations that they cannot build a trustful environment in their companies and do not allow anyone to have a trustful working culture. They distrust their employees and never sum up a good relationship with their team resulting in a poor employee and leaders' relation.

Summing up the entire framework, it is concluded that fear in organizations among the employees and their thought is having a major role. It creates many factors including psychological revoke, depression and anxiety, demotivation and apathy, autocratic leaders, and a distrusting environment. All these factors resulted in the form of losing self-confidence in the employees and created a bad Human Resource Culture.

## **Recommendation**

The study is limited to 30 respondents and only the people of Karachi. The limitation of sample size, time, and only two factors i.e. fear and self-confidence restricted the researcher to work within certain boundaries. To understand the area of study, the number of respondents must be increased along with the better qualitative tools and this study could also be tested in a quantitative method. Moreover, the other industries can also help the study to make it wider and applicable to the market.

There is still a lot to discover and to discuss the outcome of the topic and the entire study. The other researchers can increase the number of factors, respondents, the methodology of the study, and they can test the nature of the study in different cities of Pakistan.

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