

# Death Anxiety and Its Relationship to Electronic Rumors in Light of a Disease Pandemic Corona Virus (Covid-19)

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## **Abstract**

Our present age is often described as the age of anxiety, due to the acceleration of events and chasing events in the course of affairs, but death anxiety caused by thoughts related to death is the most dangerous among the types of anxiety that threaten the human being and haunted him in conjunction with these tremendous events related to the spread of the Corona virus pandemic.

## **(SARS-CoV-2) or the emerging coronavirus disease (COVID-19).**

Especially if this coincides with this amazing spread of Electronic Rumors Through multiple and different electronic means of communication , AS crises and epidemics are disturbing and devastating in themselves, but their destruction will increase if rumors are added to them and interacted with them and Despite many studies on this deadly virus, we did not find A psychological study that dealt with Death anxiety and its relationship to Electronic Rumors in light of this pandemic, according to our knowledge. under the circumstances of this pandemic. This is what the current study targeted to find death anxiety for a sample of employees at Al-Nahrain University in Baghdad, which consisted of (110) employees The results were: The sample members suffer from death anxiety and They accept electronic rumors.

I also made several recommendations and proposals.

## **Chapter I**

### **Problem and Importance of the Research**

Our present age is often described as the age of anxiety due to the acceleration of events, the cohesion of crises, and the development of the course of things in conjunction with this huge amount of amazing openness in the field of cyberspace, scientific and technological progress and the complexity of life's demands and the accompanying psychological pressures on the soul and its components, and on public health and its components. Anxiety as a psychological term is a double-edged sword. At a time when it is a condition that threatens the entity of the individual, a negative symptom that exhausts his mental health, and an important symptom of mental disorders and diseases at all, moderate anxiety motivates the individual to strive for performance, achievement, success and creativity, and often worries A person for reasons related to the past and his negative experiences, or for reasons related to the present and its psychological pressures, or for reasons related to the future and its sudden changes. It is the most prevalent mental disorder, and its incidence increases in the transitional periods of life to face danger, as indicated by the School of Psychoanalysis, (and the most common mental health problems, and the most prominent health problems at the global level, as the number of people with anxiety in the year (2018) reached more than (264 million) people. ), which is the sixth leading cause of death worldwide) as stated in a report

by the World Health Organization (WHO) and published in the WISH Anxiety and Depression Forum file:///C:/Users/p/Downloads/Documents2018. Anxiety according to the American Psychiatric Association: (Fear or tension and distress stems from the expectation of a danger, the source of which is unclear and accompanied by fear and many physiological changes). (Al-Yamani and Abdel-Khaleq, 2004, p. 126). With the many types of anxiety and the multiplicity of its names and themes, I see that the most severe types of anxiety are those that are related to the obsessions of death, this feeling that man has always tried to escape from or not think about, because of the painful, influential and frustrating feelings on the human soul. Death is: (The state of permanently stopping living organisms from growth, metabolism, and vital functional activities such as breathing, eating, drinking, contemplation and movement. (Hasiba, 2009, pg. 209). Which undoubtedly is a fact that has been realized by every person wherever he is and at any time in this insecure world. People are often preoccupied with thinking about death more than they are thinking about life, so the level of Death Anxiety has risen, which is: an emotional response, feelings of doubt, helplessness and fear centered around What is related to death and dying in the person himself or his relatives). (Ghanim, 2011, p. 31). Although Death Anxiety increases as people age and approaches the end of life, it affects the young and the elderly alike, especially with the increase in the death of dear family members or hearing the death of a relative or friend. Death Anxiety is a common anxiety that has been known and defined psychologically for a long time and is not always associated with a specific age or disability, but its severity increases with the spread of disasters, wars and epidemics. Concerning Iraqi Death Anxiety, Nazmi 2017 notes: (The dimensions and factors that compose the psychology of Death Anxiety have become today the most present and dominant phenomenon in the Iraqi reality. Rather, it can be said that most of the vocabulary of daily life has been distorted and distorted to conform in its biological, social and psychological content with the "entitlement" and authority of death Comprehensive, as the Iraqi individual, with all his categories and affiliations, has reached a firm conviction that the most precious goal has become "not death" instead of "life"; with his accurate realization that what is meant by death is assassination, bombing, and stray bullets of bullets!). (Nazmy, 2017, pg. 2). Today, in this difficult circumstance, with the outbreak of the Corona virus, Covid-19, which began to shake everyone's sleep, and which the World Health Organization (WHO) unfortunately dealt with in a bad way, by delaying its procedures in declaring a state of public emergency and classifying it as a pandemic, we find that the problem has exacerbated and increased the person's concern for his life, as well as With regard to the health safety measures imposed against the spread of the virus, represented by a comprehensive curfew that restricted the movement of people at the official and popular level, closing borders and suspending flights, social isolation and social distancing and their psychological, social and economic effects on the individual and society, the anxiety associated with death became (a feeling that dominates the individual that Death awaits him wherever he is and wherever he goes in his wakefulness and sleep in his movement and stillness, which makes him sad, confined and apprehensive from just living normally. (Shukair, 2003, pg. 7). Not to mention the problem of social stigma associated with disease by directing blame and ostracism to some human people due to their exposure to an epidemic pandemic that relentlessly ravages the lives of thousands of people, including our Iraqi society, which already suffers from poor health, preventive and material capabilities. Psychological studies have shown that Death Anxiety is of two types:

- (Acute Death Anxiety): It is anxiety whose symptoms appear in a short time, are violent and urgent in a short time and are related to life experiences, or the death of a relative or other).

- (Chronic Death Anxiety): which is characterized by its severity, length of duration, and increased suffering of the patient with it, and it is inherent in patients who suffer from serious chronic diseases. (Abdul-Khaleq, 1987, p. 17). Among the most important psychological symptoms of Death Anxiety: (A bout of spontaneous panic, depression, excessive irritability, inability to distinguish, mixed thinking, increased tendency to aggression, ease of anticipating negative things in life, speed of anger, agitation and nervous tension, a feeling of near term or death that may up to the point of panic). (Shaalan, 1998, p. 35, Sheehan, 1982, 66) and in the circumstances of crises, as (the acts of terrorism, disasters and epidemics are all destructive in themselves, their destruction intensifies if rumors are added to them and interacted with them, and we cannot imagine a society since the beginning of creation devoid of Rumors are a necessary social and psychological phenomenon, and in the history of mankind clear examples show that the rumor was found on earth with man. (Nasr, 1967, p. 189). It is a cornerstone of psychological warfare, a real influence on people's lives and morale, and an effective means of creating confusion in times of war and peace. In addition, (the individual when he is integrated in the midst of a group shows a strong tendency to believe rumors where there is no opportunity for criticism and scrutiny, and the tendency appears Clearly in situations in which the individual is in a state of strong emotion. The methods of psychological warfare and persuasion depend on the tendency of individuals to believe in groups rather than in the form of individuals. (Al-Esawy, 1999, p. 104). At the time when the traditional rumor is transmitted by word of mouth or by whispering from one person to another, as a large number of researchers in the field of rumor psychology supported this, such as: Allport & Postman, 1947, as: (every issue or qualitative (or topical) statement presented for ratification It is transmitted from one person to another, usually by the spoken word, without there being any definite criteria of truthfulness) (Allport & Postman, 1947, p. 220). Or it is: (a specific opinion presented so that whoever hears it believes in it, and it is usually transmitted from one person to another through word of mouth without requiring a level of proof or evidence). (Nasr, 1988, p. 66). The spring of 1981 sees that the rumor: the process of transmitting news related to its reality or an opinion or a made-up quality through the audible word of mouth as an expression of a specific state of anxiety or collective repression. (Spring, 1981, p. 297). With the progress of the microelectronic revolution and communication technologies and harnessing this in psychological dealing with peoples to blackmail them or for undeclared ends, including rumors of fear and panic that spread in the whole world through the means of the Internet and carry seeds of doubt everywhere and cause individuals to despair and frustration, unsafe for their lives. He does not distinguish between the rumor and the truth, because the truth is the first victim of crises. So, rumors of a new type are growing in the modern era, carrying the same intentions and goals of the traditional rumor, but they are distinguished from them in their intensity, impact, speed and ease of spread, and they are electronic rumors and amazingly, as people transmit them through the means Social media and other means of electronic communication, which is one of the most serious risks of the Internet to the public, as these rumors effectively contribute to amplification and exaggeration in a short period of time that may not exceed hours. An electronic rumor expresses its content in written and spoken text, images, animation, video and live broadcasts sometimes. (Harby, 2013, p. 114). Systematic rumor makers often formulate and plot them in a fun and interesting way that arouses people's curiosity with the aim of manipulating their emotions and minds with the multiplicity and diversity of electronic means of communication. Also, between a limited number of individuals, the terrorist organization "ISIS" has effectively exploited electronic rumors through social networks since the first moments of the fall of the city of Mosul in (2014) by spreading rumors on the (Twitter) network to weaken the morale of the Iraqi military

forces and broadcasting Discrimination and strife among the members of the one Iraqi society. (Hassan, 2016, pg. 300). The electronic rumor has been heavily employed in light of the Coronavirus pandemic, because the pandemic is the one that spreads among humans in large areas in a continent, for example, or may expand to include all parts of the world, and is distinguished from the epidemic, which is also widespread but stable and it is possible to know the number of individuals who get sick because of it, and accordingly The pandemic is excluded from the flu, seasonal colds and others, and many pandemics have appeared throughout history such as smallpox, tuberculosis and the black plague, which is one of the most devastating pandemics; More than 20 million people were killed in the year 1350 AD in what is known in the modern era as the HIV pandemic, the 2009 swine flu pandemic, the H1N1 influenza virus, and the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, or the so-called emerging virus (Covid- 19) The focus of our current research, which is: (A global pandemic is currently ongoing for the disease Corona Virus Covid-19, caused by the outbreak for the first time in the Chinese city of Wuhan in early December 2019, and later declared by the World Health Organization to turn the outbreak into a pandemic on March 11 of the year As of July 11, 2020, more than 12,500 million cases of COVID-19 have been reported in more than 188 countries and territories, with more than 560,000 deaths. about coughing, sneezing, or talking) <https://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki>. The researcher realized the importance and enormity of the event and its psychological aspects, so he proceeded to study Death Anxiety and its relationship to electronic rumors in light of this difficult circumstance. Based on all of the above, the researcher sees that:

- Anxiety is the most prominent negative phenomenon that accompanies a person from birth to death. There is no human being in this universe who has not been exposed to anxiety at any stage of his life.
- Death Anxiety is a negative exploitation of the human mind, and it is the most intense type of anxiety because it is linked to the obsession with death and its painful and frustrating effects on the human soul.
- Some people suffer from Death Anxiety, regardless of their age, although the percentage is higher in the elderly and those with chronic or dangerous diseases.
- The level of Death Anxiety is steadily increasing among members of society according to the death of a family member, relatives or friends, especially in times of disasters, wars and epidemics, and what is observed today in light of the pandemic of the Corona virus disease.
- When crises intensify and threaten human life in their struggle for survival, the impact and destruction of crises intensify and multiply if rumors are added to them and interact with them, and among the rumors are what has been killed. - The amazing spread of electronic rumors due to the development of electronic means of communication and the multiplicity of its techniques and methods, it has become inevitable that every person carrying a mobile phone is exposed to electronic rumors, young or old, healthy or sick.
- Some rumors of electronic panic or terror, accompanying the intensification of crises, cause horrific symptoms to the human soul; Such as acute anxiety, depression and despair, and perhaps to the collapse of the psychological structure of the individual.
- The more a person is worried about the events or epidemics threatening his being, the more he will be affected or believe in rumors, as he is looking for any way to calm his emotional and psychological tensions, so he finds in the rumors a haven for that. The spread of rumors and their recurrence in the social environment is also increasing people's anxiety.
- Rumors have intentions and goals that some may not realize, especially those formulated by tempting electronic means in the form of videos, pictures, caricatures, and the like, and in the form of

a joke or humor that appears to be amusement and laughter, but its interior is harmful and destructive.

- In light of the Corona pandemic, man in our society has become afraid of social stigma, perhaps more than his fear of contracting the disease itself.
- Some people infected with the Corona virus tend to hide their infection with the virus, perhaps due to their ignorance or selfishness, so they do not quarantine themselves, especially in participating in social events, religious ceremonies and holidays, while underestimating health procedures and instructions for some.
- The comprehensive curfew imposed on people and their stay in their homes semi-unemployed, made their only connection with the outside world and their communication through Internet outlets, and this void with concern greatly helped in the exchange and transmission of information related to the Corona pandemic, which is definitely not devoid of rumors due to the importance and ambiguity of the topic, which is commensurate with The speed and intensity of the spread of rumors according to the law of rumors, which states: (the intensity of the rumor = importance x ambiguity x subjective factors of the individual).
- The conflict and abundance of information about this pandemic and its dangers and victims made people not distinguish between the truth and the rumor. In order for rumors to be stricken, whether they are traditional or electronic, they must be confronted with facts, as the more the truth emerges, the rumors are absent.

### **Research Objectives:**

- 1- Disclosure of the Death Anxiety variable among the research sample.
- 2- Detection of differences in the variable Death Anxiety according to the variable of sex.
- 3- Disclosure of acceptance of electronic rumors among the members of the research sample.
- 4- Detection of differences in acceptance of electronic rumors according to the gender variable.
- 5- Find out the relationship between the Death Anxiety variable and electronic rumors.

### **Research Limitations**

The current research is limited to the employees of Al-Nahrain University who are continuing in functional service from holders of a bachelor's degree and above for the academic year 2019/2020 in light of the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

### **Terminology Definitions**

#### **Anxiety Definition**

Webster's Dictionary Definition. (1991)

It is an unusual and apparent feeling with fear and apprehension and it is always characterized by physiological signs such as sweating, tension and increased heartbeat, due to the person's self-doubt and the reality of the nature of the threat about his ability to deal with the threat successfully (Webster, 1991, p221).

It was defined by Sigmund Freud, 1963:

(A state of intense, mysterious fear that possesses a person and causes him a lot of distress and distress, and the person always expects evil, and always appears pessimistic and doubts everything that surrounds him and fears that harm will happen to him. (Freud, 1963, 97).

Spiel Berger Definition, 1972:

Unpleasant emotion and a feeling of discomfort and stability with a sense of tension and unjustified fear and an excessive response to situations that do not pose a danger, and the individual responds in an exaggerated manner. (Spielberger, 1972, p6)

### **Death Anxiety Definition**

Templer, 1971 definition:

It is an unpleasant emotional state that makes the individual contemplate his death (Templer, 1971, p7).

Dickstein, 1972 definition:

Emotional meditation on the reality of death, and the negative appreciation of this reality (Dickstein, 1972, p563).

Abdul Khalek, 1996 defined him:

It is the tension and fear of death through continuous thinking about death and the domination of the idea of death and the repetition of the idea of death. (Abdel- Khalek, 1996, p159) (Al-Qaddoumi, et al., 2003, p. 33).

### **Rumor Definition**

Definition of Kapferrier, Jean-Noel 2007:

Every statement made for public endorsement is linked to the events of the day and spreads without official verification (Kapferrer, 2007, p. 15).

Definition of Al-Kalbani 2017 in (Dictionary of Psychology):

A vague or inaccurate report, a story or a description that is conveyed among members of society through the spoken word often, and rumors tend to spread in times of crisis in society and always revolve around important people or events about which the information is ambiguous. (Al-Kalbani, 2017, pg. 12).

### **Electronic Rumor Definition**

Every news, information or digital content that is not certain of its authenticity, circulated through the electronic environment, and social Internet applications such as Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, and others... with the aim of destabilizing the security of society and stirring up and influencing public opinion (Daak, 2017, p. 3).

### **Pandemic Definition According to Oxford Dictionary**

A pandemic is an epidemic that spreads on a very large scale beyond international borders, affecting, as usual, a large number of individuals, and pandemics may affect the environment and agricultural organisms such as agricultural crops, trees, livestock, fish, etc. (Dictionary Oxford, 2008, p99).

### **Corona virus Definition**

Corona virus goes back to the Latin (corona) and is known by the acronym (Cov), which means crown or corona, where the name refers to the distinctive appearance of virus particles (freons) that appear through an electron microscope, bearing a few surface protrusions, which shows it in the form of the king's crown or the solar corona. , a group of viruses that cause diseases in mammals and birds and cause respiratory infections in humans that include the common cold and are usually mild, and rarely fatal, such as severe acute respiratory syndrome. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>

**Novel (COVID-19) Coronavirus**

The World Health Organization (WHO) has named SARS-CoV-2 for the coronavirus and COVID-19 for the disease this virus causes. The two letters /CO is short for corona, the letter /VI is short for virus, and /D is short for disease [www.jhah.com/ar/new-coronavirus/mental-health-tool-kit](http://www.jhah.com/ar/new-coronavirus/mental-health-tool-kit).

**Chapter II****Theoretical Framework****Theories that explain Death Anxiety****Psychoanalytic Theory**

Sigmund Freud confirms that (there is a permanent conflict between the three components of personality: (Id, Ego, Ego Super) and identified each component its role in the growth and interaction of personality, so he looked at the disorder or disease that affects the individual in the light of the conflict that occurs Among the previous personality components, the ego is forced to suppress inappropriate or conflicting defenses.. and that the ego is primarily responsible for providing psychological security for the individual and preserving him from feeling anxious or internal and external threats) (Freud, 1963,99) Freud distinguished between three types of anxiety They are: (objective anxiety, which is normal anxiety and comes from the outside world, moral anxiety, which is the result of thinking about an action that violates moral behavior, and neurotic anxiety, which is a vague, incomprehensible fear that is a reaction to an instinctive danger, the cause of which cannot be known) (Salih) 2003, pp. 82-83 (Abu Al-Huda: 2006, pp. 40-41), anxiety according to Freud: (it lurks in opportunities and is related to any idea or any matter of daily life, and the anxious person appears nervous, loses confidence in himself, hesitates and is unable to Looking into things, he loses the ability to focus his mind, and so Sometimes it is difficult for him to clearly understand what is going on around him) (Faraj, 2009, p. 127). In this context, the proponents of the psychoanalytic school see: (Felfel, 2000) that most other types of anxiety are nothing but a deceptive manifestation of Death Anxiety (Sauret, 2000). 2000, p48). Erikson (1973) believes that the fear of death is also linked to the lack of ego integration, while Melanie Klein (Klein.M, 1999) believes that Death Anxiety is due to the capricious threat resulting from the death impulse that exists in the subconscious since birth, stressing that death Anxiety is the basis of every anxiety that affects the individual in his life, and it is the basis of all hostile thoughts and perceptions resulting from aggressive impulses (Al-Ashwal, 1998, p. 98).

**Anxiety as a State, as a Trait**

It is the contemporary Contemporary anxiety theory as presented by Spielberger, 1972, which is the most common and widespread anxiety theories at the present time, and the most accepted by contemporary psychologists and psychiatry, which has worked to achieve something in harmony between them, and according to this theory, there are two aspects or two concepts For anxiety are: the state of anxiety, and the trait of anxiety, as the concept of state of anxiety refers to anxiety as an emergency or temporary emotional state in a person that varies in intensity and fluctuates from time to time and accordingly the level of anxiety state rises in the circumstances that the individual views as Circumstances threatening him regardless of the real or objective danger, and the intensity of the state of anxiety decreases in non-stressful situations or circumstances in which the individual does not see the upcoming danger as a threat to him (Spiel Berger, 1972, p39).

As for the concept of the trait of anxiety, it refers to: Anxiety as a relatively stable feature of the human personality, but individuals vary in the degree of their possession of it, which reflects

differences between them in terms of their willingness to respond to stressful situations with different degrees of anxiety. According to this theory, the trait of anxiety can be viewed as a tendency or (( An acquired behavioral disposition in the individual that depends mainly on his past experience and contributes to the formation of his own view of the world, and also contributes to the formation of his tendency to show a relatively stable response to certain stimuli or situations, while anxiety (as a condition) is characterized as an attitude. By its nature, that is, related to a specific situation, circumstances or situation, and depends mainly and directly on the stressful conditions to which the individual is exposed (Speilberger & Diaz, 1982, p4). It is not an inherent feature of the personality of the individual and constitutes a hindrance to his performance, such as anxiety, fear of heights, fear of the sea or disease, fear of death or death anxiety and generalized anxiety (Halgin, 2005, p55).

### **Theories that Explain the Rumor**

#### **Psychological Field Theory**

The basic idea of the field theory of Kurt Lewin is summed up that human behavior depends on the complete construction of the psychological field, and that behavior is an indicator of the interaction of the individual with the environment in which he lives, that is, it is an indicator of his life from the moment of birth until death (Al-Kubaisi, 1990, p. 88).

According to field theory, and in an atmosphere charged with emotions and emotions related to disasters, wars, acts of violence and epidemics, rumors often spread, especially impulsive ones among people, the spread of wildfire in a very short time. They reflect the movement of public opinion and thus affect the course of the general behavior of individuals, while public opinion grows slowly, as many rumors come out in an unexpected way, and grow suddenly and excitingly, forming an emergency public opinion. (Nasr, 1967, p. 335) so that the psychological environment or field in which the individual lives become popularized with a specific concept that must lead to a specific result consistent with the goals of psychological warfare and rumors) (Rabee, 1989, p. 339).

The rumor may include achieving a certain psychological state of satiation or getting rid of tension, which in this analysis is a form of indirect and explicit collective confrontation (Rabee, 1981, p. 291), or the person who repeats and spreads rumors may try to express the feelings of others through their participation In their feelings and emotions and the feelings that circulate in their souls, to relieve his emotional tension towards a particular event, trying to find someone who will exchange feelings for him, or to elicit sympathy and support from others, so that he feels a certain security and confidence, especially in matters of importance, in his life or personal ambitions (Saeed , 1967, p. 68) In general, rumors sometimes provide a very broad explanation for many of the closed features of the environment, and then play a prominent role in satisfying the mental need and making the world around us seem reasonable.. Based on the foregoing, create each of the following:

Allport and Postman legalized rumors, emphasizing that the individual in the field or in the social environment cannot live far from people's conversations that spread in his environment and deafen his senses about it, but responds and is affected by what surrounds him in the surrounding environment according to the importance of the event on his life and future. It is possible for the individual to search, follow up and talk about things, events and topics that do not interest him...especially if a kind of ambiguity surrounds them that raises self-doubt.

The two researchers set a law for the severity of the spread of rumor:

The intensity of rumor = importance x ambiguity (Allport & Postman, 1947, p.225).

Then other scholars came and added to the law the appropriate conditions (which relate to the subjective factors of the individual) to become:



**Rumor Intensity = Importance x Ambiguity x Appropriate Circumstances**

The relationship between the elements of this equation is a multiplicative relationship. And by appropriate conditions, he means social, psychological, political, economic situations and anxiety caused by fear and despair, or emotional tensions despite the importance of psychological projection and exciting anticipation or suggestions (Al-Daouqi, 1990, p. 104).

**Behavioral Support Theory**

This theory is related to Hovland and his colleagues at Yale University. According to this theory, there are three important processes in learning any direction towards important things in life: Attention, Comprehension, and Acceptance. The subject of the rumor Hovland confirms that the rumor can be described as evidence of public opinion, and its manifestations can also usually be identified in three forms:

Attention or (preparing the mind): to the topic of rumor. When rumor spreads, it tries to prepare people's minds, and in this appearance, it is short and clear, easy to understand and utter, and uses few words and information, and details are few.

-As for understanding and comprehension with emphasis on sharpness, as the rumor becomes sharp after trying to understand it well and choosing some few details from the topic of the rumor with insistence on it, and these details are often important to the person who transmits the rumor.

As for the phenomenon of (acceptance and assimilation): it is the final phenomenon, i.e., when individuals digest the common elements that enter into their thinking and become a basis of the components of this thinking, and then become more coherent and acquire people's belief, as it expresses itself in the form of a reflection of the person's emotions and the matters he is biased towards (warren, 1973, p.115).

**Previous Studies****Death Anxiety Studies****Al-Juhani study 1991.. The relationship between believing and repeating rumors, anxiety, intelligence and educational level**

The study aimed to reveal the relationship between believing and repeating rumors and some personality variables such as anxiety, intelligence and educational level among a sample of Taif students, and it reached the following results:

There is a positive correlation between anxiety and the belief and repeating of rumors.

- There is a negative correlation between intelligence and the belief and repeating rumors, the higher the intelligence, the less the belief and repeating rumors. It also found that there are statistically significant differences in the belief and repeating rumors for the benefit of students with a high educational level (Al-Juhani, 1991, p. 77).

**Ilizirov-Sonya, 2001 Study on the Effect of Religiosity on Death Anxiety and Death Depression**

This study aimed to verify the effect of religiosity and traditional custom on death anxiety and depression among a sample of traditional Jewish adolescent Americans. Female participants suffer from Death Anxiety at a higher rate than males. Another result revealed that there was no difference in feelings of death anxiety with regard to the association of feeling with death anxiety in the family with personal illness or dying, and it was 13%. (Ilizirov-Sonya, 2001, p99).

**The study of Jan Wayab: Chan & Yab 2010 Death Anxiety and its relationship to the variables of age, religiosity and gender:**

a study conducted in Malaysia on a sample of ages ranging from (17-70) years using the Templer scale. The results showed that there is no correlation between religious and non-religious answers. The level of Death Anxiety for females is higher than for males, and there is no correlation between Death Anxiety and the age variable among all sample members (Chan & Yab 2010, p8).

**Rumor Spreading Studies**

**Moreno study: (1962) Moreno spread of rumors within the limits of one network**

This study aimed to identify the rapid spread of rumors within the limits of one network or one institution in a closed circuit, where Moreno made an experiment in which he spread some rumors in a reform house in which there are (300) girls and he noticed that rumors spread quickly within the groups that have social relations between them Form a network, while little or no spread of rumors between one group and another (Al-Esawy, 1999, p. 62).

**Keefer & Kimmel, 2000 Study The psychological association between acceptance of rumors about AIDS and transmission of the disease:**

The study aimed to identify the relationship between the large number of rumors about AIDS and the spread of this disease and the accompanying anxiety. Rejection or belief, as it generates thoughts, emotions and feelings towards the event and thus affects behavior and attitude (Keefer and Kimmel, 2000, p497).

**Chapter III**

**Research Methodology**

**First: Research Community**

The current research community consists of 1530 employees of Al-Nahrain University who are continuing in the job service for the academic year 2019/2020.

**Second: Research Sample**

The research sample was chosen in a simple random way, and the researcher was keen to be a representative sample of the community, and the size of the sample amounted to (110) one hundred and twenty employees, with (58) males and (52) females.

**Third: Research Tools**

For the purpose of achieving the objectives of the research, paragraphs were formulated and two scales were built for the research variables (Death Anxiety, and electronic rumor) that meet the conditions for building scientific standards such as honesty, stability, objectivity and the ability to distinguish. The process of building them went through a series of stages:

- 1- The researcher determined a definition of (Death Anxiety) according to the psychological analysis point of view of the first variable, and another for (electronic rumor) and according to the psychological field theory point of view of the second variable, which the researcher adopted in interpreting the research results.
- 2- Building a Death Anxiety Scale that consisted of (22), and put in front of each situation five alternatives according to the Lekirt method: (always, often, sometimes, rarely, never), (Appendix/1).

- 3- Building a scale for electronic rumor that consisted of (26) situations and put in front of each situation five alternatives (always, often, sometimes, rarely, never), (Appendix 2).

#### **Fourth: Validity of the Items according to both Scales:**

For the purpose of verifying the validity of the items for each scale, the validity of the tools should be verified by presenting them to a group of experts specialized in evaluating the validity of the paragraphs to ensure the measurement of the feature for which they were developed (Ebel, 1972, p222). 16) A specialist in psychology and psychometrics, to pass their judgment on the validity of each item of the two scales, or their invalidity, in the form of an electronic form, as the percentage of each item was extracted, so the items that obtained 80% or more were retained.

#### **Fifth: Correcting Both Scales:**

The Death Anxiety scale consisted of (18) situations. Answer alternatives were determined according to the five-way Likert method: always, often, rarely, sometimes, never, corresponding to a scale of scores for positive items (1,2,3,4,5) and for negative items (5 (4,3,2,1), and so is the case with the electronic rumor scale consisting of (22), as the positive items in the Death Anxiety scale were: 3,4,7,8,9,14,18, and the rest of the items were negative. Positive items for electronic rumors: 2,5,6,8,9,13,14,19,22, and the rest of the items are negative.

#### **Sixth: Validity of Indexes**

Validity is a psychometric property and the honest scale is the scale that achieves the function for which it was set well (Stanly & Hopkins, 1972, p101), and for the two current scales, face-validity was extracted. from the experts.

#### **Seventh: Items Analysis**

##### **A. (Contrasted Groups Approach):**

After correcting the sample forms, which amounted to (110) forms according to the given weights, the total score obtained by the respondents was determined, then their scores were arranged in descending order from the highest to the lowest score, and 27% of the higher forms and the same from the lower forms were adopted as the best percentage for comparison between two different groups of The total group to study the properties of the items, and the researcher applied the t-test of two independent samples to test the differences between the average scores of the upper and lower groups on each of the situations for the Death Anxiety scale consisting of (18) positions and for the electronic rumor scale consisting of (22) positions, and after analyzing the positions of each A measure using the T-test for two independent samples to test the difference between the upper and lower groups. The extracted T-value for each of them was compared with the tabular value of (1.96), so the positions that obtained a T-value more than the tabular were considered distinct because they are statistically significant at the level of (0.05) and with a degree of freedom (1.34). Thus, all positions of the two scales are acceptable according to this indication, and below is Table (1) for the Death Anxiety Scale, and Table (2) for the Electronic Rumor Scale:

**Table (1) The discriminatory power of the items of the Death Anxiety Scale using the two Contrasted groups method**

Item	The High Group		The Low Group		T-Value	Significance
	Means	Deviation	Average	Deviation		
1	4.78	1.35	3.47	0.67	8.95	دالة
2	4.80	0.88	3.69	0.75	9.48	دالة
3	4.81	1.99	3.30	0.67	9.99	دالة
4	4.96	1.48	3.95	0.97	6.06	دالة
5	4.54	1.23	3.65	1.28	6.04	دالة
6	4.05	1.09	3.89	1.26	7.32	دالة
7	4.03	1.30	3.44	0.86	10.50	دالة
8	4.76	1.10	3.01	1.10	11.72	دالة
9	4.78	1.16	3.10	1.20	11.41	دالة
10	4.26	1.30	3.86	1.29	8.36	دالة
11	4.21	1.21	3.77	0.94	9.67	دالة
12	4.87	1.15	3.86	1.27	6.29	دالة
13	4.38	1.54	3.59	1.16	6.05	دالة
14	4.90	1.42	3.66	0.97	7.57	دالة
15	4.12	1.36	3.49	0.98	9.49	دالة
16	3.64	1.09	2.39	0.99	8.66	دالة
17	3.13	1.28	2.02	1.08	7.00	دالة
18	3.06	1.40	1.94	1.08	6.67	دالة

**Table (2) The discriminatory power of the items of the electronic rumors scale by the two contrasted groups method**

Item	The High Group		The Low Group		T-Value	Significance
	Means	Deviation	Average	Deviation		
1	4.33	1.22	3.23	1.00	7.85	دالة
2	4.20	1.41	3.35	0.88	8.10	دالة
3	4.38	1.43	3.54	1.32	5.99	دالة
4	4.55	1.11	3.66	1.04	7.19	دالة
5	4.32	1.19	3.57	1.10	6.17	دالة
6	4.27	1.12	3.23	1.07	9.66	دالة
7	4.12	1.44	3.21	1.19	7.34	دالة
8	4.34	1.16	3.33	0.95	8.69	دالة
9	4.19	1.18	3.56	1.12	9.48	دالة
10	4.38	1.26	3.26	1.17	3.89	دالة
11	4.48	1.33	3.77	0.92	7.11	دالة
12	4.40	1.34	2.24	1.22	8.28	دالة
13	4.77	1.12	2.10	1.05	6.72	دالة
14	4.47	1.30	3.94	1.11	8.38	دالة

15	4.65	1.20	3.21	0.81	8.30	دالة
16	4.46	0.90	3.88	0.87	9.14	دالة
17	4.16	1.20	3.11	1.11	5.56	دالة
18	4.77	1.23	3.45	1.20	8.76	دالة
19	4.55	1.31	3.32	1.19	6.44	دالة
20	4.62	1.10	2.89	1.18	5.15	دالة
21	4.60	1.50	3.52	1.22	9.27	دالة
22	4.78	1.31	3.90	1.22	6.11	دالة

**B. The method of the item's relationship to the total score of the scale (item validity).**

By finding the correlation between the degree of each position in the total score of the scale, all correlation coefficients were statistically significant when compared with the tabular value 0.138 at the level of significance (0.05) for both scales and below is table (4) for the Death Anxiety scale and Table (5) for the common scale.

**Table (4) and Table (5) for the correlation coefficients between the item's score and the total score for the two scales: Death Anxiety and Electronic Rumor**

Item No.	Correlation coefficients for Death Anxiety	Significance	Item No.	Correlation coefficients for electronic rumor	Significance
1	0.199	Significant	1	0.322	Significant
2	0.246	Significant	2	0.364	Significant
3	0.247	Significant	3	0.358	Significant
4	0.232	Significant	4	0.423	Significant
5	0.174	Significant	5	0.411	Significant
6	0.263	Significant	6	0.435	Significant
7	0.206	Significant	7	0.190	Significant
8	0.182	Significant	8	0.213	Significant
9	0.288	Significant	9	0.340	Significant
10	0.179	Significant	10	0.380	Significant
11	0.211	Significant	11	0.410	Significant
12	0.296	Significant	12	0.427	Significant
13	0.305	Significant	13	0.366	Significant
14	0.277	Significant	14	0.429	Significant
15	0.281	Significant	15	0.477	Significant
16	0.293	Significant	16	0.323	Significant
17	0.160	Significant	17	0.361	Significant
18	0.249	Significant	18	0.381	Significant
			19	0.200	Significant
			20	0.389	Significant
			21	0.216	دالة
			22	0370	دالة

**Eighth: Reliability:** Reliability is defined as consistency in the results. The test is considered stable if we obtain the same results from it when re-applying it to the individuals themselves and in the same circumstances (Baron, 1981, p418), as the two scales were re-applied to a sample of the research individuals. Their number is (30) individuals, and they are the same individuals to whom the scale was applied the first time, and the time period between the first and second application was two weeks. This method calculates the correlations between the scores of all items on the grounds that each item is a self-contained scale and by extracting the stability according to this method for the reliability sample (30) individuals, the alpha coefficient of the Death Anxiety scale reached (0.74) and the stability coefficient of the electronic rumor scale (0.76).

**Ninth: The final application of both scales:** After making sure that all procedures related to building the two scales are completed and extracting their validity and stability, the researcher applied the two scales to the final sample (110) respondents in the electronic form for the purpose of knowing the results and achieving the research objectives...

**Tenth: Statistical Means:**

- 1- One-sample T-test
- 2- T-test for two independent samples
- 3- Person Correlation Coefficient
- 4- Alfa Formula coefficient to extract scale stability coefficient.

**Chapter IV**

**Results and Discussions of the Research**

**The first objective is to reveal Death Anxiety:**

A scale was built for this purpose, and it was applied to a sample of (110) respondents and extracted the general arithmetic mean of the sample, which amounted to (62.66), the hypothetical mean (54), and the standard deviation (5,33), and after using the t-test for one sample, it appeared that the value The calculated t-value (8.34) and when compared with the tabular value (1.96) at the significance level (0.05), it turned out to be a function, and this result indicates that the members of the research sample have Death Anxiety in the current circumstance, and this can be explained:

- A- Anxiety is (the most common psychological disorder and its occurrence increases in transitional periods of life, or to confront crises and danger to overcome them or mitigate their effects, as indicated by the School of Psychoanalysis, and whenever anxiety is linked to a specific topic, as is the case in the connection of Death Anxiety to the conditions of the threat of the Corona pandemic (Covid). -19) due to the weak role of the ego as it is the first responsible for providing psychological security for the individual and preserving it from feeling anxious or internal and external threats) (Freud, 1963, 99). Also, supporters of the psychoanalytic school emphasized (Erikson, 1973) that the fear of death is related to the lack of ego integration, and (Melani Klein (Klein.M, 1999) that Death Anxiety is due to the impulse threat resulting from the death impulse present in the subconscious since birth. Also, it is the basis of every anxiety that affects the individual in his life., and) Felfel (2000) that most other types of anxiety are only a deceptive manifestation of Death Anxiety. Anxiety rises whenever the individual realizes that there is a threat or change in reality or in the environment, especially in times of disasters and epidemics, as the levels of Death Anxiety are proportional to the increase in Chances of exposure and danger.

B- Death Anxiety in the research sample can be explained by referring to the age group of the sample. The cognitive processes that appear at this stage (life review processes) are natural mental processes, as the levels of Death Anxiety rise in individuals as they age compared to other adolescents or those who are in early youth as confirmed (Ilizirov-Sonya, 2001 study).

C-

**The second objective: To reveal the significance of the differences in the degrees of Death Anxiety among the sample members according to the gender variable (male-female):**

To achieve this goal, the t-test was applied for two independent samples and it was found that there are differences between the sexes in Death Anxiety, as the calculated t-value was (2.77), which is higher than the tabular value (1.96) at the level of significance (0.05), and the difference was in favor of females whose arithmetic mean was (63,05), which is higher than the arithmetic average for males (60, 30), as shown in Table (5).

**Table (5) The T-value of Death Anxiety by Gender (Male, Female)**

Gender	Number	Arithmetic Means	Standard Deviation	Calculated T-Value	Tabular Value	Significance at 0.5
Male	58	60,30	5,44	2,77	1,96	Significant
Female	52	63,05	5,13			

This result can be explained in the light of the school of psychoanalysis. Because the female experiences, repression and complexity make her social characteristics differ greatly from the male due to the reflection of her biological nature on her behavior, Freud said: (The female from her childhood feels weak, fear and apprehension, with her realization that the male is superior to It has a lot in some biological aspects, and thus it is more anxious than the male) (Freud, 1963, p.217), and this was supported by the study of Jan and Yab: Chan & Yab 2010 and the study of Nazmi 2017 and others that females suffer more from Death Anxiety than males.

Third Objective: Detecting acceptance of electronic rumors:

A scale was built for this purpose, and it was applied to a sample of (110) respondents, and the general arithmetic mean of the sample was extracted, which amounted to (71,11), the hypothetical mean (66), and the standard deviation (5.48). After using the t-test for one sample, it appeared that the value The calculated t-shirt (9,14), and when compared with the tabular (1,196) at the level of significance (0.05), it turned out to be a function, and this result indicates that the sample members have an acceptance of electronic rumors in the current circumstance, and this can be explained:

A- The spread of electronic rumors has contributed to this tremendous development in the field of cyberspace and the progress of the microelectronic revolution and communication technologies. Information, news, ideas, opinions and images reach very quickly in light of the above with ease and convenience to millions of people at one time, spreading rumors, and since human behavior is It depends on the complete construction of the psychological field, which is an indicator of the interaction of the individual with the environment in which he lives, as demonstrated by Levin's field theory. From rumors in his psychological field, and according to the importance of the event and the severity of its ambiguity, as shown by the law of rumors of Albert and Postman (Allport & Postman).

- B- Since the members of the research sample belong to one university or institution, (rumors spread rapidly within groups that have social relations in the form of a network, while the spread of rumors between one group and another), as confirmed by Moreno's study - (Al-Isawy, 1999, p. 62).
- C- Electronic rumors flourish as a means of psychological warfare in the atmosphere charged with emotions, emotions and worrying conditions for humans, especially those related to disasters, wars and epidemics. The members of the current sample suffer from anxiety, as the results showed. The greater the anxiety, the greater the belief and repetition of rumors, and this was also confirmed by Al-Juhani's 1991 study that there is a positive correlation between anxiety and the belief and repetition of rumors.
- D-

**Fourth Objective: To reveal the significance of the differences in the degrees of electronic rumors among the sample members according to the gender variable (males - females):**

In order to find out this goal, the t-test was applied for two independent samples and it was found that there are differences between the sexes in the electronic rumors, as the calculated t-value reached (9.01), which is higher than the tabular value (1.96) at the level of significance (0.05), and the difference was in favor of females, as their arithmetic mean (75,61), which is higher than the arithmetic average for males, which reached (69, 12), and Table (6) shows this.

**Table (6) T-value for acceptance of electronic rumors by gender (male, female)**

Gender	Number	Arithmetic Means	Standard Deviation	Calculated T-Value	Tabular Value	Significance at 0.5
Male	58	69, 12	8.31	9,01	1.96	Significant
Female	52	75,61	8,13			

This is due to the nature of the social structure of our society and the restrictions that it imposes on the female from an early age, which works to restrict the freedom of the female and demands her constantly to stay at home and not participate in complete freedom in public life, and the affirmation of dependent, negative behavior and social dignity is the prevailing public opinion about the female in society, which leads She makes her pay most attention to her social life, so she is affected by those around her and what she hears of groans or gossip and whispers and floating sayings in this field, in addition to being more submissive than men and able to accept suggestion, believe people's words and accept rumors.

**Fifth goal: To reveal the relationship between Death Anxiety and electronic rumors:**

In order to know the relationship between Death Anxiety and the acceptance of electronic rumors among the research sample, and after analyzing the results by applying the Pearson correlation coefficient between the two variables, it was found that the correlation coefficient between them (0.121), which is less than the Pearson tabular value of (0.196) at the significance level (0.05) and the degree of freedom (108). ), which indicates that there is no correlation between Death Anxiety and electronic rumors, and this result can be explained that the two variables are independent of each other. The fact that rumors are a real influence in people's lives, yet each individual is independent in his judgments from the judgments of others within certain limits in assessing events, so that he depends on himself and seeks to prove himself and his individuality.



I see that If the Corona virus is a global pandemic. I think that rumors, whether traditional or electronic, are no less dangerous than a pandemic or epidemic. Dominac (1965) referred to describing rumors as: (real psychological epidemics that were deliberately spread) (Dominac, 1965., p. 190).

### **Recommendations:**

- Paying attention to the upbringing of children based on friendliness, tenderness and emotional warmth that is far from violence, reprimand and reprimand, and taking care of their psychological health and its components far from causing anxiety and disturbance.
- Attention to entertainment, artistic and sports activities of all kinds and for all ages. Paying attention to the departments of psychological counseling and educational guidance in universities to exercise their educational, psychological and humanitarian role in raising awareness and enlightening against malicious rumors, and revealing the facts that suppress rumors.
- Urging people to always pay attention to hygiene, public health, and health safety measures against the spread of viruses, especially the Corona virus.

### **Suggestions:**

- Conducting similar studies on Death Anxiety among other social groups, students and professors.
- Conducting educational courses and studies on the best use of the Internet and social networking
- Conducting more studies and research related to the Corona virus, and encouraging and rewarding researchers.

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