

RESEARCH ARTICLE

SINISTER BIRTH FROM THEORETICAL CONCEPTS: THE EMERGENCE OF DARK NETWORKING PHENOMENON AT DARK EDGE OF ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR USING CONCEPTUAL BLENDING

Hamid Hosseinzadeh Nikouie, Reza Sepahvand*, Seyed Najmedin Mousavi, Mohammad Hakkak

Department of Management, Faculty of Management and Economics, Lorestan University, Iran.

**Corresponding Author: Reza Sepahvand*

Abstract: Communication with others or networks can be considered one of the main tools of employees in using the organization's resources and identifying opportunities. The use of the network in organizations can be aimed at improving organizational activities and processes, or it can be used only to provide individual benefits. Informal networks move freely in every direction, ignoring organizational authorities and administrative hierarchies and bypassing managers. Networking considering such behaviors leads to dark networking. The purpose of this research is to conceptualize dark networking. A qualitative method has been used to conduct this research. the Theories are identified; According to the concept of dark networking, different theories should be examined, the theories related to this concept should be identified. Conceptual blending method was used. The key concepts related to the selected theories are identified by combining them with the dark edge of organizational behavior that lead to the creation of the phenomenon of dark networking. The results of the research showed that the concepts related to the phenomenon of dark networking are extreme opportunism, political destruction, covert emotional manipulation, pretentious benevolence, dark persuasion, self-interested dickers, deep demarcation of self and non-self and machiavellianism.

Keywords: *Conceptualization blending, Communication, Networking, Dark networking.*

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INTRODUCTION

Organization may be defined as the structure of authoritarian or normal personal mutual relations in an administrative system (Alvani and Danaee Fard, 2018). An organization is a social institution that is created with a specific purpose and undergoes changes to achieve specific goals (Safari and Fattah Ziarani, 2017). The organization needs organizational communication to achieve its goals (Borun *et. al.*, 2014).

Considering the wide range of communication issues in organization and management, it can be claimed that many organizational and social problems originate from weak communication (Rezaian, 2012). Communication, as an important part of all work, is an aspect that includes organizational tasks and is very influential in

its success (Hosseinzadeh Nikouie, 2014). Organizational communication is a type of information exchange that provides the basis of perception and feeling between two or more people, or a group in a company or organization, and causes organizational networks to be formed in order to perform organizational tasks (Panahi, 2018). Networking helps organizational functions by supporting organizational communication and access to resources (Sepahvand *et. al.*, 2018).

Also, Bat Jargel (2010) considers networking as a series of social strategies, methods and resource mobilization in networks. Therefore, networking behavior can be considered as creating, maintaining and using relationships to facilitate activities related to

people's job and profession and maximizing its benefits (Neqabi, 2013). Networking behavior - which is the creation, maintenance and use of professional relationships - has attracted considerable attention in the work and career literature. The dominant view in this literature is that network behavior is a suitable tool for self-management and employee job promotion. Employees approach resources that are not available through networking. For example, networking gives job seekers the confidence to achieve higher quality employment; Access to strategic information or job leads may ultimately help to grow your salary.

It is not surprising that a wide range of popular articles enthusiastically encourage employees to create and strengthen professional relationships (Wingender and Wolff, 2013). According to Hakansson and Snehota (1995), relationships that are valuable in certain ways may also have negative aspects. Similarly, Grayson and Ambler (1999) pointed out that relationships can have certain advantages, but also have their inherent disadvantages.

Additionally, Samaha, Palmatier, and Dent (2011) explain that over time relationships always suffer and understanding this is critical to long-term success. The dark edge represents a natural component of relationships that is unavoidable, but its darkness can be successfully managed and reduced (Abosag *et. al.*, 2016). The dark side of networking refers to its vulnerability to corrupt behavior and abuse of power. Within dark networks there is flexibility, tolerance, mutual understanding and also trust. While outside its border, on the contrary, employees are treated as "outsiders" and there may be discrimination and even hostility.

Networking is often based on a certain level of trust and supports cooperation and mutual assistance, provides sociability and emotional support, and thus reduces feelings of loneliness. However, any type of exchange leads to an implicit contract that requires reciprocity. Therefore, maintaining relationships through mutual affection and fulfilling desires can be time-consuming, costly, and sometimes heavy (Horak *et. al.*, 2020). Spreading rumors by employees about colleagues, favoritism and discriminatory support, abuse of exclusive privileges by employees, non-constructive competition of

employees with colleagues, blaming and condemning employees and endangering colleagues by reckless behaviors, which will spread through dark networking (Robinson and Bennett, 1995). Unfortunately, it is rare to find a government organization that does not have such behaviors. Thus, in such an organization, communication between employees weakens intimacy with each other, reduces mental health, causes interpersonal problems and conflicts; If interpersonal relationships are necessary to ensure and maintain the health of the organization, and the absence of this factor can make employees feel dissatisfied and endanger the existence of the organization (Seyed Naqavi *et. al.*, 2019).

Dark networking leads to the dissatisfaction of government employees with their job status, the decline and degradation of the morale and motivation of government employees in performing their duties and providing services or unsatisfactory quality, the emergence and increasing development of the reprehensible phenomenon of administrative corruption, the lack of a meritocratic system in appointments and promotion.

Manpower as well as the administrative system's inability to attract and maintain capable, efficient and expert employees are among the problems of the administrative system according to the report of the administrative transformation program in the field of human resources (Mirsepassin and Etebarian, 2008). This is despite the fact that the administrative system of any country has a special credibility and importance due to its direct connection with the society, and a huge amount of services are provided to the people by public sector employees. Having a healthy and efficient administrative system is necessary to achieve the goals and plans of the country's development (Ghorbanizadeh *et. al.*, 2018).

Networking in such a situation threatens the interests of the organization and its stakeholders. Dark networking affects the trends and processes of the organization in such a way that it deviates from the systematic and principled path, and as a result, it is the founder of creating deviant mechanisms that lead to unsatisfactory results. The section will be dark only for employees active in networking.

The results of Bozionelos' research (2021) showed that the belief of most employees active in dark networking is that if they do not try to take advantage of relationships themselves, someone else will do it and they will lose. A brief look at the process of changes in the working relationship between the individual and the organization makes it clear that the movement towards dark networking creates fundamental changes in the attitude, beliefs and beliefs of organizational employees and makes them different from employees who rely more on effort. and perseverance in the direction of growth, development and improvement of productivity, they turn into opportunistic and utilitarian employees.

The institutionalization of such misbehavior can make the organization face serious challenges in achieving its goals. Unfortunately, dark networking is a problem that government organizations are facing, and it is very difficult to find out why it is formed, and also during the investigations, it was determined that it is as it should be. The issue has not been addressed, while it is necessary for government organizations to use efficient and effective interpersonal communication and networking in order to take steps towards the realization of the organizational mission and goals.

Therefore, considering the research gap and the inadequacy of the research done in the field of dark networking and the need to know the factors affecting dark networking in the organization, it seems necessary to use scientific studies to create a model for identifying the factors affecting. This issue can be studied and investigated as a complication in organizations and can explain many challenges in the direction of not achieving organizational goals. Therefore, the main question of this research is what conceptualization of dark networking can be presented? What concepts does dark networking include?

THEORIZING, CONCEPTUALIZING AND METAPHORIZING

Any attempt to explain or demonstrate an experience is called a theory, which means how certain events occur. All people use theories and without them it is not possible to continue life.

Theories guide people in making decisions and performing various actions, and over time, they change by observing new things and gaining new perspectives (Littlejohn, 2003). It is generally said that a theory is one or more hypotheses about various phenomena such as mechanics, light, disease, disease transmission, world trade, organizational conflict, and generally management of organizations, etc. In other words, theory is a vehicle for understanding, analyzing, giving meaning, explaining, controlling and predicting the phenomena of interest (Danaee Fard, 2014). The main purpose of the theory is to summarize and store knowledge (Shoemaker *et. al.*, 2003).

Kurt Lewin mentions the practical usefulness of good theory. This understanding of theory is in contradiction with the conventional thought that considers theory as raw ideas unrelated to the real world (Danaee Fard and Asghari Sarem, 2013). The principle of good theory called parsimony can help in this regard. Parsimony means the simpler the better. A theory that follows parsimony has little complexity and does not have excess or extra elements (Neuman, 2009). There is no reason not to consider your common understandings of behavior, events, phenomena, processes, etc. as theories and see them as different from purely scientific theories (Danaee Fard, 2012).

Theories are like nets that are thrown to catch the world and its truths (Hafeznia, 2007). Theorizing starts from the beginning of every person's life. When a person looks around in the cradle, he scrutinizes the surrounding environment and theorizes about its phenomena (Danaee Fard, 2012). Theory is a collection of concepts, the relationships expressed between them are a kind of explanation, understanding, or critical evaluation of the studied phenomenon (Hatch and Cunliffe, 2013).

Conceptual formation consists of determining the key elements of the theory, the initial explanation of their interdependence, and determining the limits and general conditions under which one can expect the performance of the theoretical framework (Swanson and Chermack, 2013). The concept provides classifications for organizing, organizing and storing experience (Raminmehr and Charsetad, 2013).

A theoretical concept is an idea that has been thought about, carefully defined and clearly presented in a theory (Neuman, 2009). If you encounter a new concept for the first time during scientific study, that concept is like an empty container that needs to be filled with meaning; Such as the emergence of the concept of citizenship behavior in the 1990s in the field of organizational behavior management (Raminmehr and Charsetad, 2013).

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) claimed in the book "Metaphors We Live By" that our abstract conceptualization is rooted in the metaphorical extension of objective conceptualization. In other words, the primary role of metaphor is to act as a cognitive tool for understanding one concept based on understanding another concept (Qadri, 2012). The importance of metaphor was recognized for the first time in the early 18th century (Ehren et. al., 2022). The historical study of metaphor has helped to understand that language, in the familiar expression of Wittgenstein, carries a "form of life" (Smith, 2020).

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Lakoff (1993) showed that metaphors are not just a feature of language, but are powerful mental models through which people find meaning; As a result of relating complex phenomena to previous and objective experiences, they understand and reach their world (Ehren et. al., 2022). The use of metaphor involves ways of thinking and seeing that affect our understanding of the world (Elkind, 1998). Metaphor is an important tool for comparison.

Metaphor can be useful to a great extent in order to explain or provide information about how two phenomena work, one of which you already know well (Robbins, 1987). Metaphors play an important role in people's understanding of the environment (Grant, 2001). Metaphor can also be used to refer to social structures that consist of loose and strong ties that enable or reinforce interactions between different organizations and actors (Mars et. al., 2012).

Since the late 1980s, researchers have adopted the network metaphor as a means of representing the interactions of organizations in an industrial space characterized by actors, resources, and activities (Geiger and

Finch, 2010). A network can be defined as a specific set of links in a specific set of actors with their specific role. Some believe that networks are a type of strategy that aims to create alliances through people who can help business development (Ajdari and Talebi, 2015). Rogers considers the communication network as a set of related people who are connected through patterned communication flows (Windahl et. al.,1992).

Networking activities are defined as "proactive efforts by individuals to develop and maintain relationships with others for mutual benefit in their work or profession" (Forret, and Dougherty, 2001, 2004; Fryczynska, et. al., 2015). Among the ways of acquiring social resources for employees, network behavior is one of the most effective ways (Ren and Chadee, 2016; Fryczynska and Ciecierski 2020; Zhao et. al., 2022; Kumari Wanigasekara et. al., 2022).

Managerial and network factors such as employee participation in business decisions, employee training and reward system, and business and social networks play a role in gaining higher competitive advantages for community-based businesses (Siraphatthada, 2012). Networking has also been shown to be a means by which employees take responsibility for their own professional development (Fryczynska, et. al., 2015).

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative method has been used to conduct this research. *Conceptual blending method was used.* In the first stage, theories are identified; At this stage, according to the concept of dark networking, different theories should be examined, the theories related to this concept should be identified. In the second stage, conceptualization of theorizing is done; At this stage, the key concepts related to the selected theories are identified by combining them with the dark edge of organizational behavior that lead to the creation of the phenomenon of dark networking.

This stage includes 3 parts. In the first part, concepts are identified; In the second part, concepts are organized; In the third part, the boundaries are defined. At different stages of the research, the opinions of experts in the fields of psychology and management have been used.

RESULTS

In this regard, articles related to networking were examined. In Table 1, the theories mentioned in different articles are mentioned.

Identification of Theories

Table 1: Theories

Theory	Description
Resource dependence	focus on the process through which organizations reduce their environmental dependencies using various strategies which enhance their own power within the inter-organizational system
Network	focus on how the position of actors within their network of relations, and the content of these relations, affect their opportunities for action
Institutional	focus on isomorphic processes which lead to conformity to institutionalized orders or similarities among organizations, thus, legitimizing them
Political power	focus on how inter-organizational relations foster or impede the use of power, and vice versa
Strategy	focus on how firm strategies impact inter-organizational relationships and networks, or on how outcomes of inter-organizational relationships and networking affect an organization's strategic position and comparative advantage
Exchange	focus on how characteristics of the exchange process are related to the content and structure of inter-organizational relations
Transaction cost	focus on the comparative assessment of the transaction costs ensuing for transactions in different institutional arrangements
Contingency	focus on contingent conditions under which various events, actions, phenomena will exist, contrasted with conditions under which they will not exist
Decision making	focus on internal organizational decision-making processes as they impact organizational networking patterns, policy directions, political actions, etc
Population ecology	focus on how environmental selection results in the extinction of certain organizational forms, or how environmental opportunities allow for the birth of new organizational forms
Industrial organization	focus on how market structures (e.g. number of buyers and sellers, degree of product differentiation, entry barriers) affect the formation and patterns of inter-organizational relations, and vice versa
Agency	focus on the institutional arrangements that actors create for their agency relations in order to pursue their self-interests under conditions of diverging interests and information asymmetry
Bargaining	focus on the process through which groups and individuals pursue their interests in exchange systems
Evolutionary	focus on the process through which patterns of inter-organizational relationships evolve, are maintained and changed
Structuration	focus on the interplay (duality) of structures and actions in the generation of order
Labour law	focus on how union regulations, policies, and labour legal issues affect inter-organizational relations
Industrial marketing	focus on expectations concerning how markets function and how buyers will respond to different corporate actions
Individual initiative	focus on using skills to achieve goals
Human capital	focus on the economic value of a worker's abilities and skills
Social capital	focus on social relationships are resources that can lead to the development and accumulation of human capital
Utilitarianism	focus on the consequences of any action are the only standard of right and wrong
Psychological capital	focus on positive situation for personal development with the features of self-reliance while dealing with the challenges (self-efficacy), positive expectations for the future success (optimism), being full of determination (hope), and accomplishment in spite of obstacles (resilience)
Opportunism	focus on self-interest and using others to achieve goals
Relational Contracting	focus on contracts as relationships rather than discrete transactions
Ability-motivation-opportunity	focus on organizational interests by a system that attends to the employees ability, motivation, and opportunity

According to the review of the mentioned theories, it was found that dark networking can be conceptualized using four theories. These theories are: individual initiative, social capital, social exchange and utilitarianism. These theories are explained below.

Individual Initiative Theory

Personal initiative is a work behavior that is characterized by the nature of self-initiation, proactive approach and persistence in overcoming problems that arise in achieving a goal. One of the consequences of such an active approach is that the person seeks to change the environment (Frese and Fay, 2001). Some people succeed in dealing with society's challenges as a result of initiative (Nsereko *et. al.*, 2018).

The theory of individual initiative is used to predict the effect of political skills on the relationship between internal networking behaviors and work results. This theory suggests that people use their individual initiatives (i.e., different skills and characteristics) as an initiation approach to achieve their goals and overcome their obstacles (Fay and Frese 2001; Wihler *et. al.*, 2017). Based on this, it is argued that political skills affect the dynamics of networking behaviors and, accordingly, networking behaviors affect work results (Haider *et. al.*, 2020).

In this way, different levels of political skills probably affect internal networking behaviors. Networking literature suggests that employees with strong political skills are likely to use their networking behaviors to exploit and identify a wide range of opportunities (Ferris *et. al.*, 2007; Jawahar *et. al.*, 2008; Wei *et. al.*, 2012).

Social Capital Theory

In the second half of the 20th century, the concept of networking was promoted to help people create a social capital (Maqsoudi, 2019). The theory of social capital is based on the assumption that personal relationships and connections and social networks provide actors with a value that enables them to benefit from the resources embedded in that relationship (Acquaa, 2006). Social capital is considered to be the sum of actual and potential resources within and resulting from the networks of relationships of a person or a social unit.

This capital comes from relationships and interactions between people (Khamechi and Rangriz, 2018). Social capital is situations and relationships that increase access to job opportunities, theories, power and influence, information, guidance, financial capital, trust and cooperation, emotional support and benevolence within groups and social networks. Give (Ramezanzpour *et. al.*, 2014; Zarei Matin *et. al.*, 2016). Resources, opportunities and information that are available to individuals and organizations as a result of personal and social networks and relationships with other institutions are called social capital.

Individuals and organizations therefore develop networked relationships and connections with other entities to satisfy their specific needs for economic resources, information, knowledge, social recognition, political protection, and legitimacy that would otherwise be unavailable without such relationships and connections. was not Based on the conducted research, it can be said that there is a positive relationship between social capital hidden in relationships and network relationships and organizational performance (Acquaa, 2006).

However, social capital is not always positive and constructive, and sometimes it acts negatively and causes the emergence and strengthening of behaviors that lead to corruption. Social capital and corruption are based on two different views of nature and humans; The first is based on an optimistic view of the world and the second is based on a completely opposite view (Danaee Fard *et. al.*, 2020). One of the causes of administrative corruption is the network of informal relationships, man is a social being and interested in social relationships (Zarandi *et. al.*, 2016).

As soon as people enter the organization for various reasons- such as common interests and tastes, like-mindedness and empathy, affection and closeness, etc. - they establish relationships with each other that do not correspond to formal and expected communication. This communication network sometimes develops to such an extent that official communication disappears, and from this the ground for the occurrence of administrative corruption is prepared (Danaee Fard *et. al.*, 2020). Networks and norms benefit those who belong to them;

Adler and Kwon state that social capital may also have potential risks for the organization, including the formation of groups opposed to some organizational goals, or the possibility of not accepting new ideas and innovations, or fanatical adherence to group goals that sometimes conflict with organizational goals. Cohn believes that social capital in the group may cause a pessimistic attitude towards people outside the group Zarei Matin *et. al.*, 2016).

Informal networks move freely in any direction, ignore organizational authorities and administrative hierarchies, bypass managers, and are usually in such a way that they meet the social needs of group members and thus they satisfy Informal communication sometimes develops so much that they overshadow official communication in the organization and official communication disappears in informal lines of communication, and from this the ground for the occurrence of administrative corruption is prepared (Zarandi *et. al.*, 2016).

Utilitarianism Theory

A classic question in social sciences is what are the reasons why people act in a certain way, and a classic answer to this question is that their interest requires them to act in this way (Swedberg, 2005). Utilitarianism is considered one of the prominent schools of moral philosophy and political philosophy, and among the epistemological foundations of the intellectual system of desire. The main founders of this school are Jeremy Bentham, James Mill and John Stuart Mill (Rajabi and Shamsollahi, 2019).

The inherent characteristics of humans are self-love, selfishness and self-love. This trait leads him to gain personal benefit and avoid loss, and perhaps self-interest is the only (or at least the strongest) factor that drives people to work and acquire life skills. It makes suffering and hardship seem reasonable and justified for them (Nazemi and Imani, 2017). Egoism is a moral word used to mean selfishness. This word is the opposite of altruism. The point of gravity of this point of view is special attention to the personal benefit of man (Azizi Alawijeh, 2016).

The dictionary defines utilitarianism as concern for one's own benefit and well-being,

which is interpreted as opportunism; Opportunism is the extent of a person's influence and dominance over his other party, by which he convinces the other party to fulfill his wishes. With the increase of a person's influence on the other party, others get hold of him and do what he wants and it becomes what he expected. People with high opportunism tend to win and their basic attention is on the task and the work they have to do and nothing else. In this regard, they use the people under their control as a tool to achieve their goals (Nazemi and Imani, 2017, Fatahi *et. al.*, 2019).

Organizations are formed by people with personal agendas who seem to act to gain power and influence over others and show self-interested behaviors (Rezaian, 2012). Small states that "strictly speaking, the last elements to which we can reduce human actions are the units that we may conventionally call interests." In other words, "interests are the simplest ways of movement that we can trace in human behavior" (Akbari *et. al.*, 2019).

Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory, whose roots go back to the 1920s (Malinowski, 1922; Mauss, 1925), in various fields such as social psychology (Homans, 1958; Thibault and Kelley, 1959; Gouldner, 1960), sociology (Blau, 1964) and human - Science (Firth, 1967; Sahlins, 1972) is used. It was Homans (1958) who first proposed the idea of "social behavior as exchange" in literature (Ahmad *et. al.*, 2023).

Social exchange theory posits that how people feel about a relationship depends on their perceptions of the rewards they receive, the costs they incur, their beliefs about what kind of relationship they deserve, and the likelihood that they can have a better relationship with another person (Aronson *et. al.*, 2015). Social exchange theory is one of the golden standards for understanding behavior in the workplace (Ahmad *et. al.*, 2023).

Social exchange theory asserts that relationships evolve over time and include trust and mutual obligations, but for this to happen, parties must follow certain rules of exchange that prevent selfish behaviors.

However, such selfish behaviors are likely to occur in many internal networking efforts, as a short-term oriented party seeks to obtain a critical resource from a partner and fails to reciprocate the efforts necessary to keep the relationship strong (Dugan *et. al.*, 2019)

Identifying Concepts

At this stage, according to the research literature, the key concepts related to each of theories are explained. Then the concepts are classified in the relevant theory and demarcation is determined in the last part. In the first step, fourteen concepts were identified, which reached eleven concepts after the initial review by experts.

After secondary review, nine concepts were identified with the approach of removing similar concepts and also merging close concepts. Predicting the future and Political skill are key concepts in the theory of individual initiative.

Trust building, Access to information and Achieving power & influence are key concepts in the theory of social capital. Mutual commitment, Trust building and Benefit–cost are key concepts in the theory of social exchange. Opportunism, Egoism and Benefit–cost are key concepts in the theory of utilitarianism.

In Organizing concepts stage and Determining boundaries stage Conceptual blending method was used. Conceptual blending refers to a set of cognitive operations for combining (or blending) words, images, and ideas in a network of mental spaces to create meaning. Fauconnier and Turner define conceptual blending as a deep cognitive activity that makes new meanings out of old. Conceptual Blending Theory assumes that meaning construction involves the selective integration or blending of conceptual elements and employs the theoretical construct of conceptual integration networks to account for this process.

Conceptual blending (Figure 1) involves a basic network consisting of four mental spaces; This includes two input spaces, a generic space represents what is common to the two input spaces and new concept. Elements from the input spaces are mapped to each other and projected selectively into the blended space, to derive an integrated conceptualization.

Blending Theory can be seen as a development of Mental Space Theory, and it is also influenced by Conceptual Metaphor Theory. However, unlike the latter, Blending Theory focuses specifically on the dynamic construction of meaning.

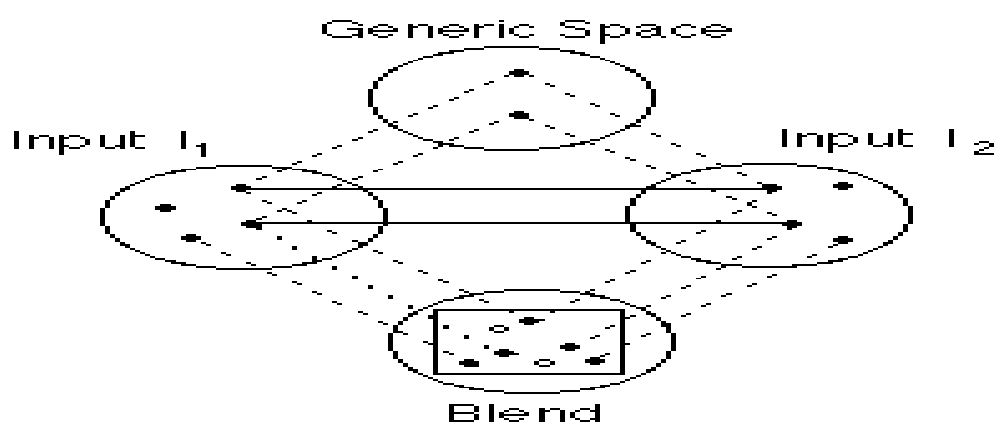


Figure 1: Conceptual blending

Organizing concepts

In order to accurately present new concepts, considering the nature of dark networking, which has a nature between psychology and

management, the opinions of two experts in the field of psychology and two experts in the field of management have been used. Figure 2 shows an example of conceptual blending.

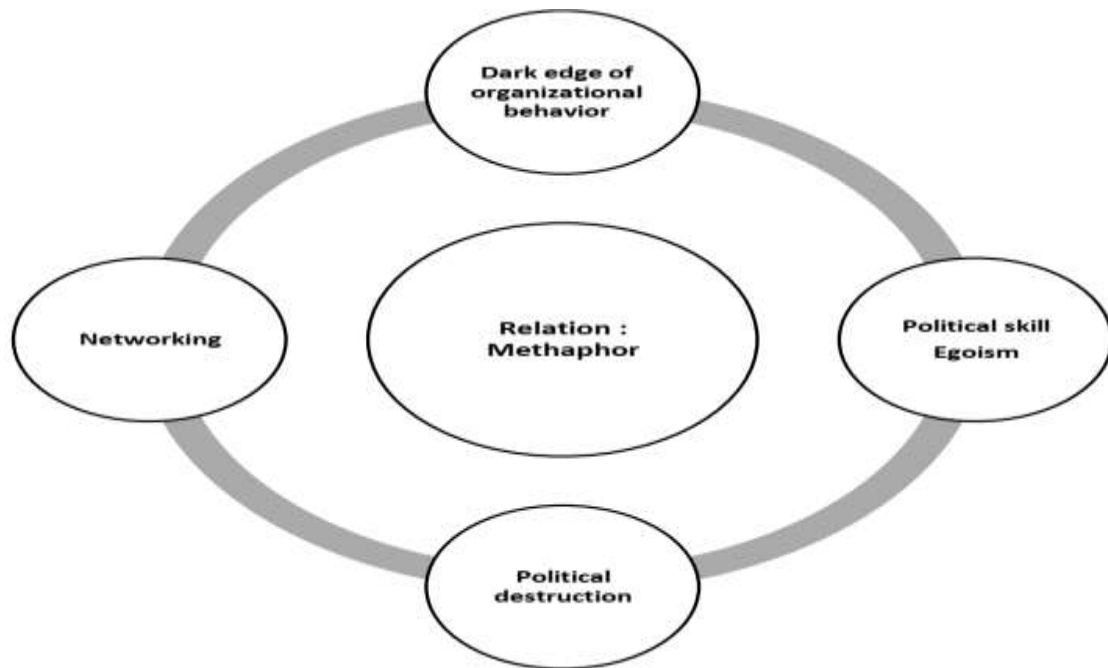


Figure 2: Conceptual blending example (Political destruction)

In Table 2, the conceptual blending of all concepts is presented. Key concepts presented for each of the theories combined with networking and the dark edge of organizational behavior, new concepts are presented, which include extreme

opportunism, political destruction, covert emotional manipulation, pretentious benevolence, dark persuasion, self-interested dickers, deep demarcation of self and non-self and machiavellianism.

Table 2: Conceptual blending

Concepts derived from conceptual composition	Concepts derived from theories								
	Political skill	Predicting the future	Access to information	Achieving power & influence	Trust building	Mutual commitment	Benefit – cost	Egoism	Opportunism
Extreme opportunism	*	*						*	*
Political destruction	*							*	
Covert emotional manipulation	*	*		*	*		*	*	*
Pretentious benevolence	*	*			*		*	*	*
Deep demarcation of self and non-self	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
Self-interested dickers			*		*	*			*
Machiavellianism				*				*	

Determining Boundaries

In this stage, the limits or in other words the demarcation of the primary concepts, the way the primary concepts react with networking

and the dark edge of organizational behavior and created concepts are presented. In this way, the conceptual model of dark networking based on theoretical foundations is presented as described in Figure 3.

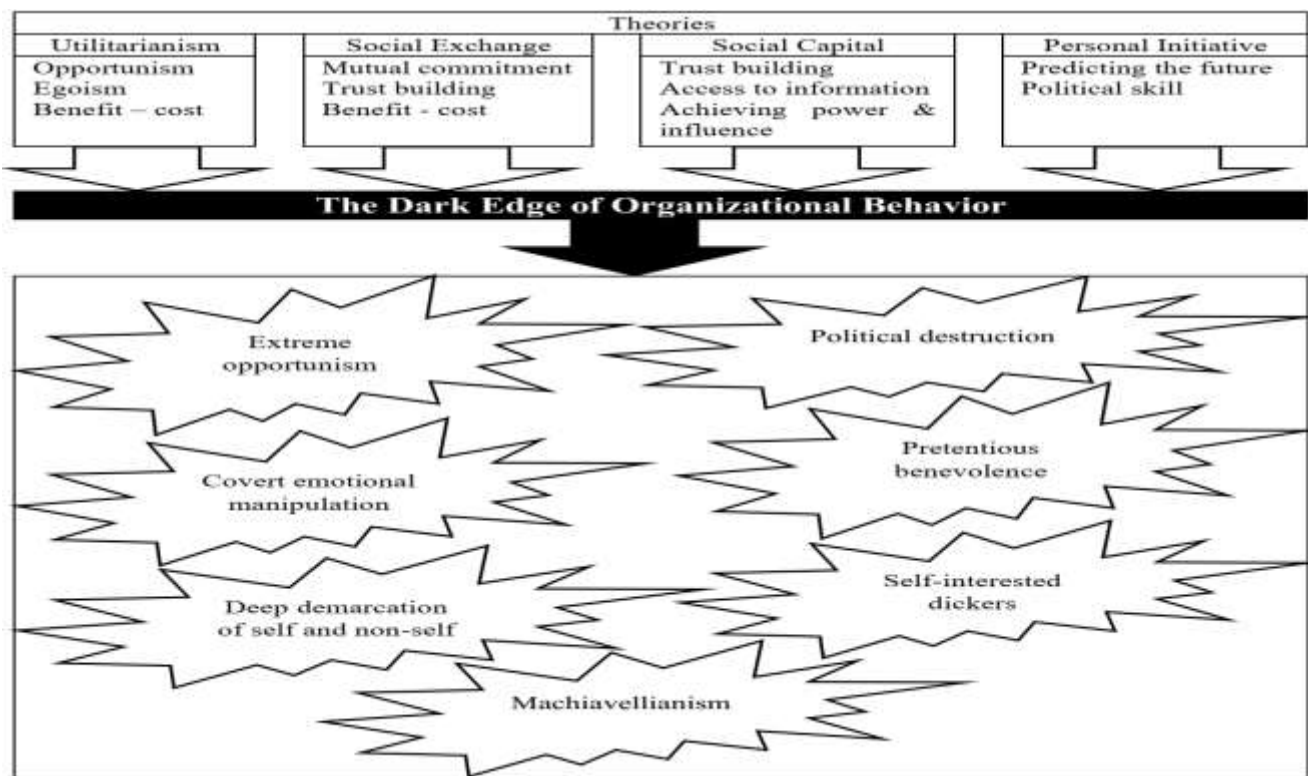


Figure 3: The emergence of the phenomenon of dark networking

CONCLUSION

At first, the researches that are related to the topic of this research are explained. Wingender and Wolff (2023) conducted a research titled the dark and light edge of networking behavior and examined three different networking processes from this point of view. Horak and et al. (2020) conducted a research titled informal networks: dark edges, bright edges and undiscovered dimensions. They examined formal and informal networks and concluded that defining the bright (positive) and dark (negative) aspects of informal networks is critical for responsible management and business success.

Abosag *et al.*, (2016) conducted a research on the dark edge of business relationships. They explored the topics related to this issue and presented a broader view of it. Crosno and Dahlstrom (2008) conducted a research titled meta-analysis review of opportunism in exchange relationships. The analysis of 183 studies extracted from 54 publications from 1982 to 2005 shows that opportunism significantly affects the relations of the parties. Jap (2005) conducted a research on the dark edges of close relationships. The results of the research showed that opportunism and utilitarianism can damage previous strong and shared relationships and lead to their termination.

In this research, the concepts related to the phenomenon of dark networking have been investigated, which will be explained in the following of each of the extracted concepts. Extreme opportunism; Employees usually seek to use the opportunity to achieve their individual goals. This issue is completely consistent with the utilitarian nature of humans. If the achievement of individual goals is a factor in not achieving organizational goals or harming others, the dark side of organizational behavior emerges. In this situation, instead of performing their duties, the employees are lurking in order to make the most of the created opportunities.

In dark networking, employees are considered opportunistic hunters. Behind the honest mask of the dark network builder, there is a dark opportunist who can remove his obstacles one by one.

Political destruction; Employees can do destructive behavior that harms the organization. It is quite clear that the increase in destructive behavior reduces the productivity of the organization. Political destruction is destructive behavior at the individual level. Political destruction happens when the actions and activities of an employee are detrimental to other employees.

Partying, gossiping about other employees, unhealthy and destructive competition are examples of destructive political behavior.

Covert emotional manipulation; It means the attempt of a person to influence the thoughts and feelings of others, in such a way that the person accepting the influence does not understand. Covert refers to the way in which the dark networker can hide the intention and reality of his actions. The victims of this type of concealment usually do not know that they were deceived and do not even realize the motive of the dark network creator. The dark networker focuses on the emotional aspect of deception. This type of deception may involve changing a person's behavior, beliefs and will.

Pretentious benevolence; Benevolence often appears in the form of warning, prohibition, advice or opposition. It should be noted that benevolence can be on the dark side of organizational behavior. In this way, benevolence takes on a fake and artificial state, which, although it has a compassionate appearance, but inside it lies a sinister intention that is rooted in dark networking.

In this case, the dark networker sympathizes with his colleagues in a benevolent way, gives advice, sympathizes, etc.; This is done when the dark networker, despite being aware of a problem, does not make all its angles clear to his colleague, but highlights and removes the parts he wants to highlight. Or he gives them an unrealistic interpretation to hide or reverse a reality in order to lead employees in a direction that will be dangerous in the future.

Self-interested dickers; A significant number of employees believe in mutual benefit in organizational relations. In this way, they seek that if they do something for someone, the other party should do something for them. Any action that changes this balance will be intolerable for the dark networker. In the organization, such exchange behaviors can be seen in abundance, which can lead to the centrality of corruption in the administrative system. Maintaining relationships through mutual affection and fulfilling desires can be time-consuming, costly, and sometimes burdensome. **Deep demarcation of self and non-self;** When dark networkers talk about using their networks,

they often refer to using their friends, which they think is a good thing. In contrast, when dark networkers talk about others using their networks, they often use words that have negative connotations. Dark networkers form groups with each other, and within these groups there is kindness, intimacy, sacrifice and support. They draw an invisible border around this group that other employees cannot cross. Outside this border there are non-inside groups that should not be treated as an insider group.

Machiavellianism; In psychology, it refers to a personality trait that a person is so focused on his own interests that he deceives and exploits others to achieve his goals. Machiavelli's people do not believe in self-sacrifice, considering Machiavelli's instructions, and in their opinion, no relationship can have a win-win result. Machiavellianism is a personality trait that describes someone who is deeply prone to lying and pessimism. A dark networker with this feature only cares about achieving his goal without considering what will happen to others.

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