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# Gossip, induced hypocrisy, and knowledge sharing at work

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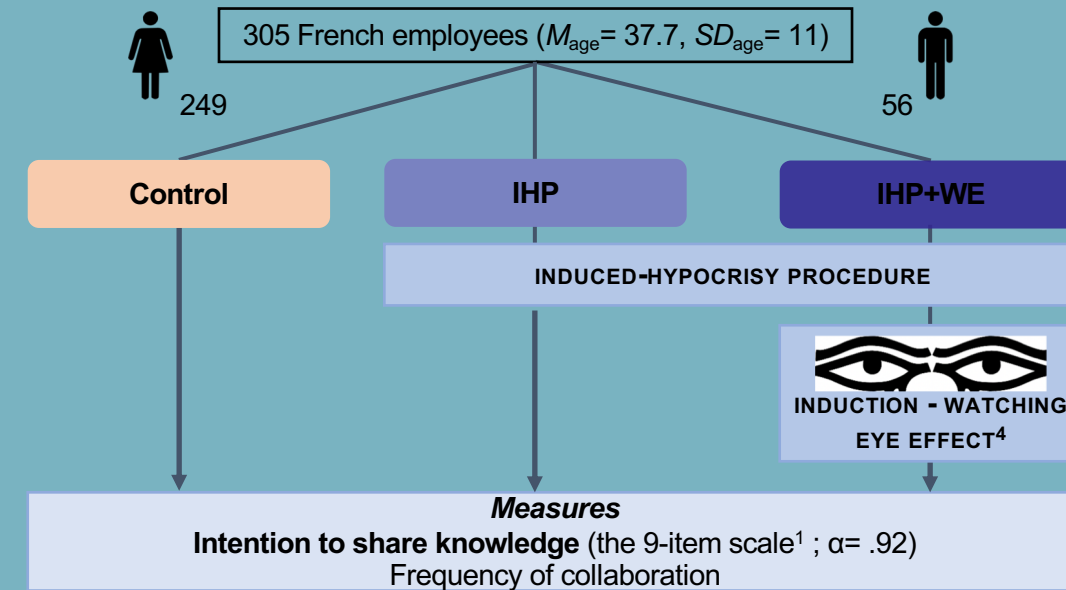
## INTRODUCTION

- **Knowledge sharing (KS)** is a key of collective performance, but spreading gossip may reduce its efficiency.
- Since **spreading gossip is inconsistent with organizational norms**, the **induced hypocrisy paradigm (IHP)** could be used to enhance KS.
- A study shows that **this discrepancy arouse cognitive dissonance, decreasing employees' KS**, but its procedure can be considered as **an incomplete version of the IHP**<sup>1</sup>.
- The IHP is a **two-step procedure**: advocating a norm (do not spread gossip) and then recalling past failures (spreading gossip)<sup>2</sup>. **It promotes pro-social behavior**.
- The hypocrisy effect is reinforced by the presence of others during the first step. In online IHP, the **watching eyes (WE)** technique, which involves adding a pictogram of human eyes, strengthens the presence of others<sup>3</sup>.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

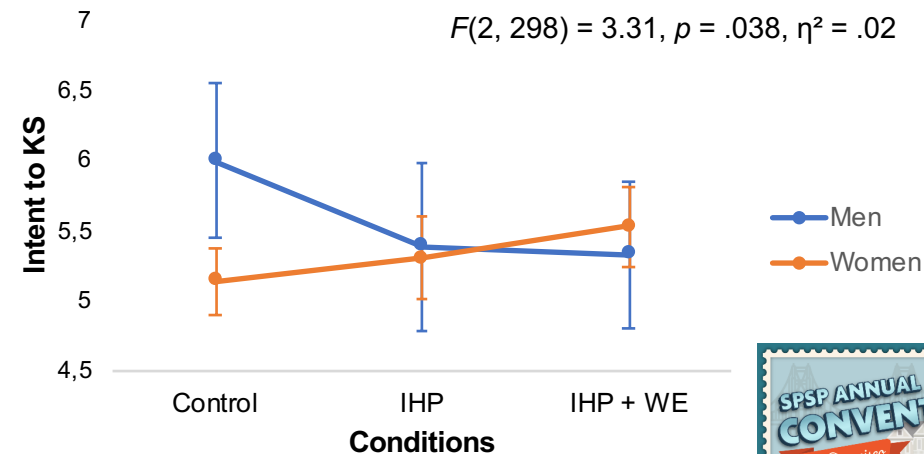
- Testing the effectiveness of a complete online IHP on improving KS by targeting gossip.
- H1: KS should be stronger when IHP is combined with WE compared to IHP alone and a control group.

## METHOD (online survey)



## RESULTS

### Strengthened Induced Hypocrisy enhances knowledge sharing at work among women



## KEY RESULT

- KS is stronger when IHP is combined with WE compared to IHP alone and to a control group, but only for women.

## DISCUSSION

- These results suggest that **WE can enhance IHP efficiency, but that it depends on gender stereotypes and on the topic of IHP**.
- **Cognitive dissonance** – when used appropriately – appears to be an effective way to enhance knowledge sharing at work.
- This study also provides information on **applying IHP with an online procedure**.
- Further studies should examine in more detail the effects of gender in IHP and KS, and the role of stereotypes.

## REFERENCES

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- <sup>2</sup>Aronson, E., Fried, C., & Stone, J. (1991). Overcoming denial and increasing the intention to use condoms through the induction of hypocrisy. *American Journal of public health*, 81(12), 1636-1638.
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