

Research Article

EXPLANATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL SILENCE, SCRUTINY OF THE CREATING FACTORS, AND ELIMINATING THEM

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ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that organizations and managers re-affirm channels of communication, but results of studies show that many people complain organizations do not support their ideas and it may explain all managers' objectives and plans failures in organizations. Nevertheless little research has been done extensively on this subject. This paper seeks to address the phenomenon of silence, analyses different kinds of it, expresses organizational and managerial variables affecting on creating organizational silence, describes the reasons for the creation and the consequences of it. This study was conducted individually among employees of a governmental organization in Iran and it is hoped to be effective in improving level of management and optimization of human resources.

Keywords: *Organizational Silence, Obedient Silence, Defensive Silence, Friendly Silence*

INTRODUCTION

In modern managing literature, human capital management is the concept which allocates the largest share to itself and perhaps its importance depends on importance of human capital, because human capital enjoys special value and importance among other capitals.

Human capital is the only capital does not decrease by consuming, but on the basis of experiences gained will have additive effect (Qhodsy, 2013).

One of the major obstacles to the success of the programs and goals of the organization is: lack of information, lack of trust, and lack of what the researchers called it organizational silence, which contains refraining from expressing the ideas, opinions and information about organizational problems. Organizational silence is a common phenomenon in most organizations (ZareiMatin *et al.*, 2011).

Literature of Subject

Research Background

Zareiematin and his co-workers (2011), Studied the causes and consequences of organizational silence. In this study, they compared the phenomenon of organizational silence and voice. They analyze philosophical aspects of silence and prospects associated with them, express organizational and managerial variables affecting on creating organizational silence, enumerate silence content, and describes the reasons for the creation and the consequences of it.

Esfahani and Aghababa (2011), study the relationship between organizational identity and organizational silence with their case study conducted at Isfahan University.

The research method was descriptive survey. The significant relationship between the two main indicators was studied by testing the results and using coefficient of correlation that the answer was 60 percent and it was compute to determine the meaningful relationship between organizational identity and its component with organizational silence of staffs that these positive amounts show that, this relationship is direct and there is a positive and meaningful correlation among these components and organizational silence. Dalvi and Sefiddashti (2012) study the effect of internal marketing on organizational silence in tax administration of Isfahan. They compute Cron Bach alpha coefficient to determine their questionnaire reliability. Based on the results of data analysis of questionnaire, it was determined that the domestic market has a significant effect on the silence of organization.

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Organizational Silence

Organizational Silence is a new phenomenon in which employee's refuse talking about their ideas in relation to issues of organization because of different reasons and remains silent. Silence is a sign for the organizational disease and managers should detect and eliminate its main agent. Inattention to this can cause stagnation and even death for organization.

Kinds of Silence

- 1- Obedient silence: resigning, obeying and acceding anything are the motivations of this kind of silence
- 2- Defensive silence: self-protection is the motivations of this kind of silence. It means that fear is the reason for staffs silence.
- 3- Friendly silence: being interested in others and creating opportunities for collaboration is the motivations of this kind of silence.

Creating Factors of Organizational Silence

Managers in relation to various issues try to control their employees continuously as they suppose that when a person is employed in a position to accept all of its terms. Some managers insist on the fact that employee satisfaction can be increased through reward and encouraging to do their work. Perhaps they only imagine that employees are their subordinates and must accept their orders. although, these days staffs' attention and willingness is toward economic aspect of working because of financial problems, but gradually people are interested in doing more meaningful work and having more independence in their job, so that they will feel valued in their job and if they face to any obstacles regarding their job or considering disregarded by the managers, they will see withdrawal and frustration in their organization and it will lead to phenomena such as organizational silence and stagnation (Ahmadi, 2013).

Morris and Nomiliken noted that silence has become a powerful force within organizations, but the serious research has not been done about them. Morris and Nomiliken have introduced this concept and indicate that organizational silence is a social phenomenon which has been created in an organizational level and affected by many organizational features. These organizational features include processes of decision-making, management, culture and employees' perceptions of effective factors on silent behavior (Ahmadi, 2013).

Consequences of Organizational Silence

Based on studies have been done, consequences of organizational silence include: limiting data and information, lack of analysis of the decision-making ideas and alternatives , the effective reducing of decision-making, reducing the ability of the organization to identify and correcting errors, undermining the organizational commitment and confidence of employees, feeling lack of staff control, reducing employees' motivation and increasing frustration, employees' cognitive dissonance, reducing participation and creativity among employees.

Silence of the Organization

Several factors provoke organizational silence that some of the most important factors are mentioned below. The first organizational factor is management. The style of managing organization, his willingness to Dictatorial style of management, and his point of view about staffs that how much developed they know themselves, effect organizational silence amount.

Another role of the manager is controlling the amount of communication, especially communication from the least to the top standing of the personnel. The second factor is the organization and its processes. Some of the variables that are effective in organizational silence consist of: the organizational culture, method of decision making in organization, and methods and current processes in factors which are impacted in organization.

Another factor is the staffs themselves who remain silence because of different reasons. Some of these personal reasons are: maintaining the current situation, lack of confidence, pessimism about director and lack of development of the duties. All of these factors lead to an inner fear which prevents people to comment, because everybody concerns about his job status to be endangered.

In some cases, he afraid of wide spreading his roles and responsibilities as a result of commenting, thus he will avoid commenting. Another factor affecting organizational silence is social variables of employees.

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Some of these variables include: group thinking and willingness to comply with others. In these factors, the majority dominant over the minority and the people who have opinion against expressing their opinions against the majority avoid talking about their theory. In some cases people who have higher positions are more dominant on others' ideas and other staffs avoid opposing them (Ghasemi and Samimi, 2013).

Factors of the organizational Silence that have been used in this paper are as follows:

The management, the employees, the vertical structure of organization, the lack of appropriate organizational culture, lack of appropriate reward system, the lack of proper communicational channels between organizations and units, fearing from the consequences of these comments, creating an atmosphere of distrust and suspicion within the organization, conformity with collectors, a feeling of inability to change

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This article has utilized the application of the AHP Method whose hierarchical process of analysis is a logical framework which facilitates complicated decision makings. This process can be applied to decision makings which involve several competitive alternatives and criteria which may be qualitative or quantitative. The basis for this for this style of decision making is paired comparisons whereby the decision maker starts by forming a hierarchical decision making tree and then attempts to make a series of paired comparisons. These comparisons show the evaluation of the weight of each factor against competitive alternatives. Eventually, the hierarchical process of analysis integrates the matrix yields of paired comparisons to reach an optimal decision. The tool utilized for collecting the required data was a questionnaire filled out by relevant experts of a governmental organization in Iran.

Data Analysis

At this stage the experts made some comparisons between criteria and under criteria for decision making and the yielded scores determine their positions as compared to one another. The basis for the aforementioned comparisons is a nine qualitative table (Table 1). The preference of one alternative or factor as compared to itself equals one. Therefore, the main reversal of one factor compared to another and the preference of one alternative or factor as compared to itself are the two matrix properties of two by two comparisons in each criterion or alternatives of the decision maker which are *n* alone.

Table 1: A Nine-point importance scale

Score	Definition	Explanation
1	Equally Preferred	Two indices have equal importance in realization of purpose.
3	Moderately preferred	Experience is indicative of the fact that for realization of purpose importance of <i>i</i> is slightly higher than <i>j</i>
5	Strongly preferred	Experience is indicative of the fact that for realization of purpose importance of <i>i</i> is higher than <i>j</i>
7	Very strongly preferred	Experience is indicative of the fact that for realization of purpose importance of <i>i</i> is much higher than <i>j</i>
9	Extremely preferred	The much higher importance of <i>i</i> proportional to <i>j</i> has been definitely proven
2, 4, 6, 8 and 9	Intermediate values	When the intermediate state exists

Final Weight and ranking of criteria by AHP method as shown in table 2. The weights for each factor are: Lack of provide feedback on their ideas (0.186), Lack of proper communication channels between organizations and units (0.279), Direct superiors (0.156), Levels of management (0.119), Vertical structure (0.052), Lack of appropriate organizational culture (0.056), The lack of an appropriate reward system (0.038), Wrong previous management systems (0.043), Disregard of managers (0.015), The

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unavailability of managers (0.055). The AHP results, we can understand the first two important of factors are Lack of proper communication channels between organizations and units and Lack of provide feedback on their ideas. Moreover, the less important factor is Disregard of managers.

Table 2: Final Weight and ranking of criteria by AHP method

	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9	A10	final Weight	Rank
A1	0.172	0.117	0.319	0.243	0.161	0.166	0.127	0.198	0.132	0.226	0.186	2
A2	0.517	0.351	0.425	0.243	0.202	0.233	0.178	0.264	0.151	0.226	0.279	1
A3	0.057	0.088	0.106	0.325	0.202	0.166	0.153	0.198	0.132	0.136	0.156	3
A4	0.057	0.117	0.027	0.081	0.121	0.133	0.127	0.165	0.132	0.226	0.119	4
A5	0.043	0.070	0.021	0.027	0.040	0.100	0.102	0.011	0.094	0.015	0.052	7
A6	0.034	0.050	0.021	0.020	0.013	0.033	0.102	0.099	0.094	0.090	0.056	5
A7	0.034	0.050	0.015	0.016	0.010	0.133	0.025	0.011	0.075	0.011	0.038	9
A8	0.025	0.044	0.015	0.016	0.121	0.011	0.076	0.033	0.075	0.015	0.043	8
A9	0.025	0.044	0.015	0.012	0.008	0.007	0.006	0.008	0.019	0.009	0.015	10
A10	0.034	0.070	0.035	0.016	0.121	0.017	0.102	0.011	0.094	0.045	0.055	6

Note: A1: Lack of provide feedback on their ideas, A2:Lack of proper communication channels between organizations and units, A3:Directsuperiors, A4:Levels of management, A5: Vertical structure,A6:Lack of appropriate organizational culture, A7:The lack of an appropriate reward system,A8:Wrong previous management systems,A9:Disregard of managers, A10:The unavailability of managers

Conclusion

As for studies and researches which have been done, the managers are recommended to try to break the silence in their organization. They can improve their organization with listening to their staffs and welcoming creative ideas to have dynamic organization and active staffs. The AHP results, we can understand the first two important of factors are Lack of proper communication channels between organizations and units and Lack of provide feedback on their ideas. Moreover, the less important factor is Disregard of managers.

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