

Investigation of Relationship between Organizational Silence and Job Satisfaction in Teachers

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ABSTRACT

The main target of the present research is to investigate relationship between organizational silence and job satisfaction in teachers of west Mazandaran Province educational system. The present research is a descriptive correlation study. Statistical population of the research includes all teachers of educational system of western Mazandaran Province (Iran). 121 people were selected by means of simple random sampling method. Data collection instruments included organizational silence questionnaire (which contains 23 questions) and job satisfaction questionnaire (which contains 19 questions). Data were analyzed by Pearson correlation coefficient and multivariate regression. Results of the analyses showed that:

There is a negative and significant relationship between organizational silence and job satisfaction ($p < 0.01$).

There is a negative and significant relationship between managerial factors and teachers' job satisfaction ($p < 0.01$).

There is a significant relationship between organizational factors and teachers' job satisfaction ($p < 0.01$).

There is a negative and significant relationship between individual factors and job satisfaction of teachers ($p < 0.01$).

KEYWORDS: organizational silence, managerial factors, organizational factors, individual factors, job satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the problem

In the present complex world, there is a fierce competition among different communities and entities in achieving new technologies, resources and most experienced human forces and human resources and especially innovative employees are the most beneficial assets of organizations. New organizational structures have been changed and undergone different threats. One of these threats is organizational silence. In an organization, individuals usually have ideas for improving their organizations. This refers to a concept called "organizational voice". Some employees express their ideas but some others keep silent and suppress their constructive ideas. Morrison and Milikon (2000) call this "organizational silence" (DanayeeFard et al, 2011). Expression of ideas (organizational voice) or suppression of ideas (organizational silence) may seem two contradictory behaviors because silence involves "the fact of not speaking" while voice involves expression of problems in an organization. However, it must be noted that silence is not necessarily a phenomenon opposing organizational voice. In fact, speaking is not the difference between silence and voice but this difference lies in individuals' motivation for avoiding expression of ideas (ZareiMatin et al, 2011). The productive motor of organizational knowledge will stop if employees remain silent. Management will confront a big danger if employees remain silent. Organizational silence can have adverse impacts on decision-making and change process. This is resulted from preventing from presenting different methods, negative feedback and correct information (Huang, 2005). Pinder&Harlos (2011) defined organizational silence as an intentional, purposeful, active and conscious behavior. In fact, organizational silence is an ineffective organizational process which wastes resources and can exist in different forms like collective silence in meetings, low levels of pragmatism in plans, low levels of collective voice. Although organizational silence refers to intentional non-expression of ideas, information and ideas by employees, its nature will be different considering employees' motivations for silence. Sometimes, silence can result from submission towards all conditions. It can be also due to conservative tendencies and awe. In some cases, it can be aimed at providing opportunities for others' expression (Tulubas&Celep, 2012). Silence, is affected by many organizational features. These include decision-making processes, culture management processes and employees' perceptions of factors affecting silence (Dimitris&Vakola, 2007). DanayeeFard and Panahi (2010) conducted a research to explain organizational silence. They showed that there is a relatively severe negative relationship between dimensions of organizational silence ((high-rank management attitude to silence, supervisors' attitudes to silence and communication opportunities. Khanifar et al (2010) conducted a research titled "organizational silence (in search for presenting a domestic model for Iranian organizations)".

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They showed that if managers are sensitive about their organization's progress, they must try to create an atmosphere in which employees freely express their ideas. Marrison & Milliken (2000) showed that silence is the outcome of managerial ideas and attitudes. A manager's fear from negative feedback, his or her ideas about in-bred laziness of individuals, his or her special characteristics like financial background or organizational culture result in development of silence in organization. The authors also showed that organizational silence results in recognized incompatibility and low motivation, commitment and job satisfaction. ZareiMatin and YousefZadeh (2010) showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between managers' communication skills and employees' job satisfaction. SayyadZadeh (2010) showed that there is a significant relationship between collaboration, forgiveness, reconciliation, avoidance (conflict management styles) and job satisfaction of employees in universities. He also showed that application of avoidance style reduces employees' job satisfaction and there is no significant relationship between competition style and job satisfaction. Togia et al(2004) investigated job satisfaction in academic librarians in Greece. Their findings showed that these librarians were satisfied mostly with work nature, supervisors and working conditions and were not satisfied with their salaries and promotion conditions. Considering the above discussion, we try to investigate relationship between organizational silence and job satisfaction in teachers of Western Mazandaran Province. Results of the present research can help educational system with achieving their goals and managers can make use of the results of this research.

Research questions

1. is there any relationship between organizational silence and teachers' job satisfaction?
2. is there any relationship between managerial factors and teachers' job satisfaction?
3. is there any relationship between organizational factors and teachers' job satisfaction?
4. is there any relationship between individual factors and teachers' job satisfaction?

METHODOLOGY

Statistical population, statistical sample, sampling method and sample size calculation

Since the present research investigates the relationship between organizational silence and teachers' job satisfaction in western Mazandaran Province in Iran, the research is a correlation study. Statistical population of the research included all teachers who worked in eastern Mazandaran Province educational system. 121 teachers were selected by means of simple random sampling.

Data collection instrument

1. Organizational silence questionnaire: this questionnaire contained 23 questions and evaluates three dimensions: managerial factors, organizational factors and individual factors. 15 questions concern managerial factors, 4 questions concern organizational factors and 4 questions are related to individual factors. Validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by experts and professionals and professors. Its reliability coefficient (Chronbach's alpha) was equal to 0.88.

2. Brifildworthjob satisfaction questionnaire: this questionnaire has 19 5-choice questions. The choices are in the form of Likert scale from completely disagree to completely agree and its target is to evaluate job satisfaction.

In order to obtain overall point of the questionnaire, the sum of all questions scores must be added. This score ranges between 19 and 95. Higher scores indicate higher levels of satisfaction. Cut score in this questionnaire is 57. Validity of the questionnaire was verified by professors and experts and reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) was 0.78.

Descriptive statistical indices (mean, standard deviation ...) and inferential statistical methods (Pearson correlation coefficient And multivariate regression analysis were used for data analysis.

Findings

In order to investigate research questions, correlation and simultaneous regression method were used.

Regression is a statistical method which allows for prediction of an individual's score in one variable via his or her scores in some other variables. The higher the correlation is, the closer the scores are to regression line and therefore the prediction will be more exact.

Descriptive statistical indices of the variables are summarized in table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistical indices of the research variables (n=121)

Standard deviation	mean	variables
7.080	56.01	Job satisfaction
9.254	43.24	Managerial factors
3.540	11.07	Organizational factors
3.543	11.88	Individual factors

As it can be seen in table 1, job satisfaction variable mean value is equal to 56.01 and its standard deviation is 7.080. The highest mean value among independent variables belongs to managerial factors (43.24) with a standard deviation equal to 9.254 and the lowest mean value belongs to organizational factors (11.07) with a standard deviation equal to 3.540.

In order to test research hypotheses, correlation coefficient results were analyzed.

Table 2. Correlation coefficient matrix for job satisfaction and predicting variables

Variable	1	2	3
Job satisfaction	-.322**	-.220**	-.292**
Predicting factors			
Managerial factors	-	.052	.226**
Organizational factors	-	-	.294**
Individual factors	-	-	-

** P<0.01

Simultaneous regression method and partial correlations were used to determine the best predictor of job satisfaction.

Results of variance analysis of the model 1 have been indicated in table 3.

Table 3. Results of variance analysis of the model 1 regression

model	Source of variations	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean of squares	F	P
1	regression	1053.371	3	351.124	8.278	.000
	error	4962.596	117	42.415		
	sum	6015.967	120			

Data summarized in the above table indicate results of model 1 variance analysis. As it can be seen in model 1, the calculated F is significant in (0.01) level (f(3, 117)=8.278, p=0.000). Therefore, we conclude (with 99% of certainty) that there is a relationship between organizational silence and job satisfaction and organizational silence can predict the independent variable.

Table 4. Multiple correlation coefficients and multiple correlation square for managerial factors, organizational factors and individual factors in prediction of job satisfaction

Significance level	F(3, 117) coefficient	Adjusted multiple correlation coefficient square	Multiple correlation coefficient square	Multiple correlation coefficient	Independent variable		Dependent variable
					Managerial factors	Organizational factors	
.000	8.278	.154	.175	.418-	Managerial factors	Organizational factors	Job satisfaction
					Individual factors		

According to the results of the above data, relationships between managerial factors, organizational factors and individual factors and job satisfaction are significant (f=(3, 117)=8.278, p=0.000). Therefore, linear combination of the values is significantly related to job satisfaction. Multiple correlation coefficient of the sample is equal to -0.418. This shows that approximately 17% of job satisfaction variance is predicted by linear combination of the variables (R²=0.175).

Therefore, it can be concluded that managerial factors, organizational factors and individual factors can predict the dependent variable and the regression equation can be generalized to total statistical population.

Table 5. Standard and non-standard regression analysis coefficients for predicting job satisfaction

Dependent variable	Statistical indices Predicting variable	Beta non-standard coefficients	Standard error	Beta standard coefficient	t	Significance level
Job satisfaction	constant	72.784	3.451	-	21.088	.000
	Managerial factors	-.208	.066	-.272	-3.160	.002
	Organizational factors	-.302	.176	-.151	-1.720	.088
	Individual factors	-.371	.180	-.186	-2.061	.041

Considering the results of the above table and significance of F in variance analysis table (5) and t value, regression equation is significant for prediction of job satisfaction and all three dimensions of organizational silence are effective. Considering slope coefficients (column B), regression equation will be as follows:

$$a+b_1x_1+ b_2x_2+b_3x_3+...$$

Therefore, prediction equation for job satisfaction using organizational silence dimensions is as follows: job satisfaction = $72.784 - 0.208$ (managerial factors) $- 0.302$ (organizational factors) $- 0.371$ (individual factors). Considering the slope values, higher values of organizational silence dimensions predict lower values of job satisfaction.

Indices presented in table 6 indicate relative ability of predictors.

Table 6. Mutual correlations and partial correlations between predictors and job satisfaction

variable	Mutual correlations	Partial correlations
Managerial factors	-.322**	-.280**
Organizational factors	-.220**	-.157*
Individual factors	-.292**	-.187*

As it can be seen, all mutual correlations between job satisfaction and the three predictors are significant ($p < 0.01$) and all partial correlations of job satisfaction are significant. According to this correlation analysis, it can be concluded that “managerial factors” is an effective predictor and predicts 8% of the variance of job satisfaction while the other two variables predict 9% of the variance of job satisfaction (17-8).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

1. Question 1: there is a relationship between organizational silence and job satisfaction.

Results of the research showed that the calculated correlation coefficient is significant in ($p < 0.01$) significance level ($r = -0.418$, $p = 0.000$). This shows that there is a negative and significant relationship between organizational silence and job satisfaction. In other words, as organizational silence increases, employees' job satisfaction decreases.

Results of the present research conform to the results of studies conducted by Matin et al (2012), ZareiMatin et al (2011), DanayeeFard and Panahi (2010), Khanifar et al (2010), AfkhamiArdakani and Khalili Sadr Abad (2012).

Results of the mentioned studies show that in organizational silence, employees avoid making remarks and expressing ideas about organizational issues and do not cooperate with managers and their colleagues in solving organizational problems. Individuals who cannot express their ideas and remain silent feel unappreciated, uncontrolled and recognized disharmony and these result in stress, anxiety, dissatisfaction and depression. Finally, job satisfaction and job commitment will reduce in such employees.

2. Second question: there is a relationship between managerial factors and job satisfaction of employees.

Results of the research showed that the calculated correlation coefficient (between managerial factors and employees' job satisfaction) is significant in ($p < 0.01$) significance level ($r = -0.322$, $p = 0.000$). This shows that there is a negative and significant relationship between managerial factors and job satisfaction. In other words, as managerial factors increase, employees' job satisfaction decreases.

This result conforms to the results of studies conducted by ZareiMatin et al (2011), Argris and Shawn (1979), Morrison and Milicon (2000), Edmondson (2004).

Results of the mentioned studies show that some managers tend to reject ideas or express negative responses to ideas or disagree with employees. Sometimes, individuals are afraid of telling the truth to leaders especially when leadership style is imperative. Every person who carry and deliver a bad message to such a leader will be symbolically executed. In such conditions, employees keep silent because they fear from being considered as opponent to group benefits. They put aside negative realities in order to seem optimistic. Fear from negative feedback in managers makes employees feel threatened and embarrassed. Therefore, managers should not ask their employees to help them and allow employees to present solutions for problems. Differences and disagreements (racial and ethnic factors, age, and gender and ...) among managers and subordinates contribute to emergence of organizational silence atmosphere. When a large number of employees feel that some employees are similar to them but are treated differently by managers, they may conclude that the organization does not treat the employees justly. Such conceptions may lead individuals to avoid participation and expression of ideas. Furthermore, employees keep silent in order to avoid compensation and revenge in situations which are full of reports of employees' mistakes and managers are ready to criticize and blame employees. Employees' organizational silence results in cognitive disharmony. In this case, there is a kind of difference among beliefs and individuals' behaviors. Individuals who experience this state try to change behaviors and beliefs. In such case, the individual experiences anxiety and stress and finally undergoes job satisfaction and turnover because beliefs and behaviors cannot be changed.

3. Third question: there is a relationship between organizational factors and employees job satisfaction.

Results showed that the calculated correlation coefficient between organizational factors and employees' job satisfaction is significant in ($p < 0.01$) level ($r = -0.220$, $p = 0.008$). This shows that there is a negative ad

significant relationship between organizational factors and employees' job satisfaction. In other words, as organizational factors increase, employees' job satisfaction decreases.

This result conforms to the results of studies conducted by Hichnifer (2006), ZareiMatin et al (2011), Kid (2000) and Morrison and Milikon (2000).

Results of studies show that there is little chance of promotion in organizations which adopt privatization and out-sourcing and shrinkage and individuals get adapted to conditions easily. Inactivity in carrier is closely related to absence of motivation. This is because employees are made to do works in which they are not interested and gradually experience stoppage and suspension. Therefore, a plateau in carrier indicates inactivity, absence of progress and reduction in individual learning and inspires some kind of depression and sense of defeat. Occupational plateau results in inactivity and therefore silence. A hierarchical organizational structure automatically prevents from free communications in an organization and this brings silence in the organization and the fact of not allowing employees to express their thoughts and ideas brings a sense of lack of control in employees and they feel they lack enough control over their working environment. This feeling has some adverse effects like reduction in motivation, job dissatisfaction, stress-related problems, psychological or physical isolation and even deviation and sabotage.

4. Fourth hypothesis: there is a relationship between individual factors and employees' job satisfaction.

Research findings showed that the calculated correlation coefficient between individual factors and job satisfaction of employees is significant in ($p < 0.01$) level ($r = -0.292$, $p = 0.001$). this shows that there is a negative and significant relationship between individual factors and job satisfaction of employees. In other words, as individual factors increase, employees' job satisfaction decreases.

This result conforms to the results of studies conducted by ZareiMatin et al (2011) and Lynd and Taylor (1998).

Results show that an internal fear which is resulted from factors like keeping current situation, lack of self-confidence, pessimism towards management, and ambiguity in duties prevent employees from making comments. This is because employees are afraid of jeopardizing their occupational status. When employees feel they cannot express their ideas easily, they feel valueless. This reduces employees commitment and loyalty to organization. This has some adverse effects like reduction in motivation and satisfaction, psychological isolation, job dissatisfaction and even turnover.

Considering the above discussions and recognition of silence and its adverse and dangerous impacts on organizations, managers should consider this phenomenon and remove it from their organizations if it is present.

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