

Study of Employee silence, Organizational Justice and Work Engagement: Mediation Analysis

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Summary

This study aims to investigate the influence of employee silence (ES) on work engagement (WE). Moreover, Organizational justice (OJ) is observed as mediator between (E) silence and (W)engagement. The contextual frame of this study refers to faculty members of public sector universities in Sindh. Following (Baron & Kenny, 1986) mediating effects of OJ is observed. The outcomes of the study seen as significant and negative relationship between ES and WE. Furthermore, OJ fully mediates the relationship between ES and WE. Study is noteworthy and imperative because it has attempted to explore a rarely explored area in research. Management can use results to decrease employee silence and increase work engagement level in public sector universities specifically and in other public sector organizations generally ensuing in prosperity of employees, public sector and economy.

Key words:

Employee Silence (ES), Organizational Justice (OJ), Work Engagement (WE)

1. Introduction

According to Nafei (2016), the employee silence is considered as a particular conduct in which employee chooses to remain quiet and halts giving their view in an organization in order to remain harmless from any negative results. Choudhary (2011) steered on construct of OJ and explained it as reasonable, unbiased and justice in conduct attained by employee who are performing job in any organization and acclaimed that this fairness in treatment is a major value addition in the performance of employees. WE has assumed as a significant role in organizational research because it catters behavior of keeping employees involved in their assigned tasks. (Chandani & Mehta, 2016). OJ is also a significant behavioral construct that can intervene between the relationship of ES and WE (Aylsworth, 2008). Study is an effort to know the influence of ES on WE with intervention of OJ. The study context belongs to public sector universities of Sindh. Public sector organizations are measured as organizations dealing with general public with considerable impeding to serve them (Hadiyati, 2006). Public sector mainly functions to help overall public directly in contrast to privet organizations which usually are functioned to slurp the profit. Currently

many opportunities are there for the taking in organizations has better mechanisms to cope with competitive challenges hence management and researchers are now focusing on field of occupational psychology. This research work is important because it has attempted to focus on occupational psychology. Further it holds the importance because its findings are supposed to given an addition in current literature review available on variable of interests. This study undertakes importance as it has filled the research gap as it has endeavored to investigate the effect of ES on WE followed by intervention of OJ for which rare studies are being conducted. Moreover this study is imperative as its findings will be helpful for administration of universities (especially public sector) for devising different strategies for benefitting employees and improve efficiency. Geographic scope of study is that it has been conducted in province of Sindh and thematically it has attempted to find mediating relation between ES and WE.

2. Research Problem

This study intends to investigate the effect of employee silence (ES) on work engagement (WE) having mediating effects of organizational justice. This association between the variables made this study unique that it fills the research gap in the existing literature. Moreover employee silence can be catastrophic if not controlled and leaves disengaged employees. This untoward situation can be mediated by organizational justice. Hence research problem for current study is to see whether organizational justice mediated the relationship between employee silence and work engagement.

3. Objectives

- To examine ES, OJ and WE among universities (Public Sector) situated at various places of Sindh.
- To determine the mediating effect of OJ on the relationship between ES and WE amongst universities (Public Sector) situated at various places of Sindh.

4. Literature Review

Employee Silence

In the very beginning the concept of ES was given by (Hirschman, 1970). He defined ES as a particular behavior of enduring a silent attitude to avoid any negative consequences. It is a conduct linked to employees who are devoid of giving their own ideas and opinions relating to their dispensed work and tasks. (Bastug, Pala, Yilmaz, Duyan, & Gunel, 2016). ES is a particular conduct where which employee chooses to keep himself quiet and cessations in giving their views within organization in keeping himself remain protected from any negative consequences (Nafei, 2016). Results suggested that employee silence is of larger importance because it directly influences on capacity of an employee to achieve and attain anticipated objectives.

Employee Silence

ES is considered into four different dimensions or indicators that reflects to the ultimate consequences in making employee silence.

Pro-social silence

Pro-social silence is stopping and holding any information to benefit whole organization and its workers (Van Dyne, Ang, & Botero, 2003). Employees having pro-social silence are remaining silent because they want a general benefit of workers and organization (Podsakoff, McKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach , 2000).

Acquiescent Silence

This type of employee silence associated with barriers of information to avoid any change in the organization (Nafei, 2016). Acquiescent silence is hiding the information of any resignation (Van Dyne, Ang, & Botero, 2003).

Defensive Silence

Defensive silence is a preventive effort to hide and not to reveal any information because of fear of costs (Van Dyne, Ang, & Botero, 2003). Defensive silence is associated with stopping the information in order to remain safe from any adverse (Pinder & Harlos, 2001)

Organizational Justice

Greenberg (1987) conducted his research work on construct of OJ to determine its previous prospects, present themes and upcoming directions. He explained it as employee's tendency to identify the system predominant in the organization which leads to just behavior.

Choudhary(2011) steeredon construct of organizational justice and explained it as fair, impartial and justice in conduct attained by a group of employees or an individual employee working in any organization and recommended that this fairness in treatment is a major value addition form performance of employees. Moreover, dimensions of organizational justice are as follow.

Distributive Justice

Distributive justice is a method and procedures adopted by management giving a positive message to employees regarding fair and just in sharing of resources and rewards (Cropanzano & Ambrose, 2001). Grondelle (2018) elucidated distributive justice with mechanisms adopted by organizations to calculate and distribute rewards with full equity and in fairness.

Procedural Justice

According to Wendy (2007) the term procedural justice is very crucial and significant indicator in determining organizational justice. It works to reduce the biasness and partiality and setting of such environment that shows equality among the people working in the organization. Moreover, it also includes justice and fairness in different procedures of organization that allows employee to take stand against unfair procedural mechanisms (Nabatchi et al., 2007).

Interactional Justice

According to Jawahar (2002) interactional justice related in noticing and evaluating the impartiality and unbiased presence of interpersonal attitudes. Dai and Xie (2016) conducted their research on interational justice and concluded that interactional justice is as significant as procedural and distributive justice and is explained as level of unbiasedness and fairness present in relationship among management and employees.

Work Engagement

Initially the term Work engagement was introduced by (Kahn, 1990). WE referred such behaviors of full attentiveness for assigned work. There is a sharp upsurge in research of work engagement in previous ten years as it has become important to retain employees involved in organizations to attainmaximum profit(Pollak, Pniak, Rudnicka, & Paliga, 2017). They added that organzaitons, companies and scholars have determined that work egagement has assumed a significant role in organizational research because it catters behavior of keeping employees involved in their assigned tasks.(Chandani & Mehta, 2016). Their resultsalso suggested that work engagement is a cognitive understanding where employee remains active in

work and also defends the interests of organization. Their outcomes established that engaged workers surge output and dishearten turnover intentions. Work engagement can suitably be segmented into three dimensions. Following headings give a brief discussion.

Vigor

Vigor is considered as a psychological incline in which employee has a resolve to complete the assigned task effectively (Chughtai & Buckley, 2011). Vigor is explained as optimum level of exertion, energy, vivacity, spirit and flexibility to given job by an employee in an organization (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Dedication

Dedication is robust and strong mental regard in assigned task or work (Chughtai & Buckley, 2011). Dedication is a general attachment with job and organization as employee endeavors to place all efforts in completing job and profiting organization. (Mauno, Kinnunen, & Ruokolainen, 2007).

Absorption

It is a significant element of WE liable to make charm and fascination in assigned task (Chandani & Mehta, 2016). Absorption is also defined as healthy and strong attentiveness and appeal in assigned task eventually generating strong attachment helping both employee and organizations (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Intervention of OJ between ES and WE

Employee silence being an operative tool to decrease work engagement can be intervened if employees are treated with fairness in the organization (Beer & Noria, 2000). Organizational justice has the tendency to intervene the relationship between employee silence and work engagement (Aylsworth, 2008)

5. Conceptual Framework

Grounded on existing literature following framework has been deliberated.

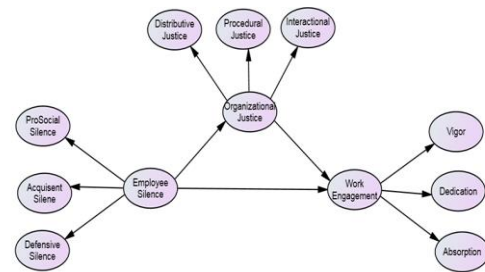


Fig. 1 Conceptual Framework

Previous scholarly review and findings were used for developing this study model. This specific model elucidates that employee silence performances as an independent variable while work engagement acts as a dependent variable. Role of organizational justice is of intervening variable between employee silence and work engagement.

6. Hypotheses Development

Following hypotheses have been developed and given the literature support

H: 1: ES has negative and significant relation with WE. (Aylsworth, 2008).

H: 2: ES has negative and significant relation with OJ. (Ledimo & Hlongwane, 2014).

H: 3: OJ has positive and significant relation with WE. (Yigitol & Balaban, 2018).

H: 4: OJ fully mediates the relationship between ES and WE.

7. Research Methodology and Design

This particular endeavor has causal research design because effect of ES on WE is presented in the presence of intervening variable OJ. Data is collected through questionnaires and investigated quantitatively. Population for this research work consists of faculty members of universities (Public sector) situated at various places of Sindh having 200 or more faculty. Population size obtained through respective websites of universities is 2200. All male and female faculty members were taken as sample for this particular research endeavor along with sample size of 333 obtained through table developed by (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). Response has been collected through proportionate stratified random sampling. Questionnaires used in measuring ES, OJ and WE have been measured using instruments of (Van Dyne et al., 2003), (Niehoff &

Moorman, 1993) and (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003) respectively.

8. Results and Hypotheses Testing

Table 1: Reliability Statistic

Variable	Reliability Value	Variable	Reliability Value
Pro Social Silence	.83	Interactional Justice	.81
Acquiescent Silence	.81	Vigor	.88
Defensive Silence	.82	Dedication	.85
Distributive Justice	.84	Absorption	.86
Procedural Justice	.80		

Internal consistency coefficients are inside acceptable range of $\Rightarrow .70$ as suggested by (Nunnally, 1978)
Demographic Profile based on proportionate Stratified Random Sampling

Table 2: Proportionate Stratified Random Sampling

S.NO	Category	Frequency	Ratio	Sample Size
01	Lecturers (BPS-18)	858	39%	130
02	Assistant Professors (BPS-19)	770	35%	116
03	Associate Professors (BPS-20)	132	6%	20
04	Professors (BPS- 21)	440	20%	67
	Total	2200	100%	333

Above table indicates diverse groups and their contribution in sample size. Total ratio for lecturers, assistant professors, associate professors and professors is 39%, 35%, 6% and 20% and their respective sample size is 130, 116, 20 and 67 respectively. Total sample size is 333.
Descriptive and Correlation Analysis

Table 3: Mean, Slanderred Deviation and Correlation Statc

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	ES	OJ	WE
ES	2.1	0.61	1.0	-.55*	-.61**
OJ	3.9	0.52		1.0	.52*
WE	4.1	0.78			1.0

*. At 0.05 level. **. At 0.01 level.

Correlation statics represent that employee silence has negative significant relation with organizational justice ($r = -.55, p < .05$) and negative significant relation with WE ($r = -.61, p < .01$). OJ has is positive significant relation with WE ($r = .52, p < .05$).

Hypotheses testing using Mediation Analysis

Three analysis steps of process of mediation recommended by (Baron & Kenny, 1986) have been applied for hypotheses testing.

(Path-C Analysis)

H: 1: ES has negative and significant relation with WE.

(Path-A Analysis)

H: 2: ES has negative and significant relation with OJ. (Path-B and Mediation Analysis)

H: 3: OJ has positive and significant relation with WE. (Analysis for Path B)

4: OJ fully mediates the relationship between ES and WE. (Analysis for Mediation)

8.4.1. (Path-C Analysis)

H: 1: ES has negative and significant relation with WE.

Table 4: Path (C) Analysis

Variable	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	B	Sig
ES	.65	.51	.47	-.45	.000

Dependent Variable: WE

Regression effects show a robust relationship between ES and WE and ($r = .65$) and 51% of deviation in WE is produced by ES ($R^2 = .51$). Further it is evident that ES is negatively and significantly related to WE ($\beta = -.45, p < .01$) conferencing the initial condition for path (c) suggested by (Baron & Kenny, 1986) and supporting the hypothesis

8.4.2. (Path-A Analysis)

H: 2: ES has negative and significant relation with OJ.

Table 5: Path (A) Analysis

Variable	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	B	Sig
ES	.51	.50	.40	-.46	.001

Dependent Variable: OJ

Above results obtained by using regression analysis reveal a medium association between ES and OJ ($r = .51$) and 50% of change in OJ is brought by ES ($R^2 = .50$). It is further determined that ES is adversely and significantly related to OJ ($\beta = -.46, p < .01$) satisfying the second situation for path (a) advised (Baron & Kenny, 1986) and approving the hypothesis.

8.4.3. (Path-B and Mediation Analysis)

H: 3: OJ has positive and significant relation with WE.

H: 4: OJ fully mediates the relationship between ES and WE is mediated by Employee silence.

Table 6: Path (B) and Mediation Analysis

Variable	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	B	Sig
First Model (Path C)	.65	.51	.47		
ES				-.45	.000
Second Model	.66	.60	.55		
ES				-.21	.010
OJ(Path B)				.52	.001

Dependent Variable: WE

This table covers two models. Initial model represents analysis of (path c) which was previously conducted at first step and similar results have been taken here for compare it with second analysis to identify mediating effect of OC.

Moreover, WE has been taken as a dependent variable and ES (essentially independent variable) along with OJ (mediating variable) have been carried out as independent variables as recommended by (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Outcomes of second analysis shows that 60% change in WE is caused by ES and OJ. Addition to that, results specify that OJ has a positive relationship with WE ($\beta = .52$) at ($p < .01$) level of significance which is satisfying third condition for path (b) as given by (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Hence, it concluded for accepting hypothesis 3. ES which was observed as significant in first model (path c) with a magnitude of ($\beta = -.45$) at ($p < .01$) level of significance has changed into insignificant with substantial reduction in its magnitude reflected by β value ($\beta = -.21$, $p > .05$). Hence, as per the criteria of (Baron & Kenny, 1986) it is concluded as full mediation effect of OJ on the relationship between ES and WE. Thus, H4 is also retained.

9. Conclusion and Recommendations

Research outcomes have revealed that ES has negative effect on WE. Moreover, it is seen in the outcomes that ES has negative and significant effect on OJ. In another finding study reveals that OJ has positive and significant effect on WE. At last study results suggest that OJ fully mediates the relationship between ES and WE. Management personnel, policy makers, and other stakeholders are suggested to use these findings in order to make their workforce more promised and engaged by providing more fair treatment and diminishing employee silence to reap more benefits. Investigators are also suggested to further take these findings to other segments of economy with addition of additional significant occupational psychology constructs as to more generalize the findings and richer addition in literature.

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