RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEE SILENCE AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT IN HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

The intension of the study is to understand the reason behind employee silence in their workplace and the level of commitment towards their job. Here the survey was conducted for the purpose of obtaining the employees views on various intra-organizational activities that are influenced by Employee Silence. The study was carried over in Multi-speciality Hospitals during 2013-14. The study includes 193 employees selected on the basis of stratified sampling method. Primary data is collected through well-structured questionnaire and used for the study. Six independent variables in two dimensions such as employee silence and organizational commitment have been included in the study that is Acquiescent silence, Defensive silence, Pro-social silence, Affective commitment, Continuance commitment, Normative commitment and Job satisfaction treated as a dependent variable. Analysis is carried out using Percentage analysis, Regression analysis, Correlation. Inferences are prepared from the analysis and out of it the suggestions and conclusions are made for the study.

Key Words: Employee silence, commitment, job satisfaction, morale.

INTRODUCTION

Each and every employee possesses information, experience, institutional knowledge and ideas about their organizations. The employees encounter many problems at all stages of their work. Although it is expected from them to report the problems or share the solutions and information they have, but sometimes choose to remain silent. Understanding the employees perspectives are very important and need the reasons they behave in an undesired manner. This study is aimed at determining what reasons that negatively affect employee’s decisions to remain silent. The research displayed that administrative and organizational reasons are the most effective reasons impacting employee silence.

Employee Silence

Employee silence refers to situations where employees withhold information that might be useful to the organization of which they are a part whether intentionally or unintentionally. This can happen if employees do not speak up to a supervisor or manager. Within organizations people often have to make decisions about whether to speak up or remain silent - whether to share or withhold their ideas, opinions, and concerns. Employee silence does not only occur between management and employees, it also occurs during conflict among employees, and as a result of organizational decisions. This silence keeps managers from receiving information that may help to improve the organization.
Categories of Silence

Acquiescent Silence (AS)

This silence relates to occasions where employees chose not to express relevant ideas, information and opinions based on resignation which suggests disengaged behavior. This is a kind of passive behavior demonstrated by low levels of involvement. Thus acquiescent silence is synonymous with employees who are essentially disengaged and are unwilling to take steps to enact change.

Defensive Silence (DS)

Defensive silence is based on an employee’s personal fear of speaking up. This can be termed as “Quiescent silence” (www.hrmars.com/admin/pics/1314.pdf). It is also consistent with psychological safety and voice opportunity as critical preconditions for speaking up in work contexts. Individual’s making a conscious choice to withhold ideas information and opinions as the safest option for the individual at that point in time.

Pro-Social Silence (PS)

Pro-social silence is withholding work related ideas information or opinions with the goal of benefiting other people or the organization. It is intentional and primarily focused on others. Pro-social silence involves conscious decision making by an employee, arises from a concern for others instead of fear of negative personal consequences. This silence is refusal to express ideas information or opinions so that others in the organization might benefit from it. This silence is motivated by the desire to help others and share the duties.

Organizational Commitment (OC)

Organizational commitment describes the attitude and behavior of an employee towards an organization goal. Organizational commitment explains employees’ psychological and emotional attachment to their workplaces. This sort of behavior indicates that some employees identify themselves with their organizations. It is also an attitude or tendency of connection between individuals and their organization. Organizational commitment is considered to be the emotional, rational and moral commitment of an employee to the goals and ideals of the organization to which the employee belongs. Organizational commitment occurs for a variety of reasons based on employees’ beliefs about the organization and its goals. Organizational commitment can be enhanced or obstructed by management. Organizational commitment accounts the bond that occurs between an employee and employer. The three categories of commitment are:

Affective Commitment (AC)

Affective commitment is the emotional attachment of an employee to, identification with and involvement in the organization. This can be demonstrated by a sharing of the values, a desire to maintain membership and working without any expectations for the benefit of the organization. In consequence of the affective commitment, employees want to maintain their membership in the organization. It alludes to a sense of belonging and attachment to an organization and has been affiliated with personal characteristics organizational structures and experiences in the workplace including pay, supervision, clarity of the job description and skill variety.

Continuance Commitment (CC)

Continuance Commitment is based on employees perceived cost of leaving the organization or on a perceived lack of alternative employment opportunities. It describes employees evaluation of
whether the cost of leaving the organization outweighs the cost of staying. This means that employees stay in an organization for fear of losing benefits, pay or unemployment.

Normative Commitment (NC)

Normative commitment deals with the employees feeling of obligation to stay with the organization. The employee stays with an organization out of a perceived obligation to the company which may arise from variety of causes. These can include employees who have received large amount of training and feel obliged to “repay the debt”. These feelings of loyalty to one’s organization can also arise from one’s upbringing or other socialization processes.

Relationship Between Employee Silence and Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment can be referred as double edged sword. Although high commitment can result in active coping in some situations, inversely it can also result in an employee being particularly vulnerable to psychological stress in that area of commitment. Hence organizational commitment can have both positive and negative effects on organizational silence depending upon the particular commitment of the employee. Studies have found a correlation between organizational silence and employee commitment. It has also been found that the relationship between organizational commitment and silence can vary greatly between groups within an organization. These groups remain silent for different reasons which depend on the situation of the employee group. It is believed that by reducing factors which lead to organizational silence eliminate silence behavior within employee groups. This in turn makes employees feel more secure within the organization and hence improves effective commitment of employees to the organization.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nevin Deniz & et al (2013) attempted to find the awareness about silence in organizations and about the relation between commitment and employee silence. It has also been found that an employee’s commitment to the organization can produce both positive and negative effects on the choice of an employee to speak their mind or remain silent depending on the situation and particular type of commitment.

Linn Van Dyne & et al (2003) presented a framework suggesting silence. Based on fundamental differences in the overt behavioral cues provided by silence and voice, this study present a series of propositions predicting that silence is more ambiguous than voice, observers are more likely to misattribute employee motives for silence than for voice, and misattributions for motives behind silence will lead to more incongruent consequences (both positive and negative) for employees (than for voice). Stephen Jaros (2007) predicted that AC have wider range of behaviors more strongly than do NC or CC, it could be that rather than AC being an inherently stronger/broader binding force, perhaps AC is typically a better predictor of non-turnover behaviors such as absenteeism, job performance, and citizenship because its items do not specifically reflect turnover cognitions while the NC and CC items do. Sahar Nikmaram (2012) explained the difficulties like increase in a level of job dissatisfaction and a decrease in a level of organizational commitment. In this research, in addition to explain the association between dimensions of organizational silence climate and commitment among employees Ahmed S. Al-Ameri (2000) found out the extent to which nurses in public hospitals are satisfied with their jobs and committed to their hospitals. Also, it is intended to assess the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, as well as to examine the effect of nurses’ demographic factors on these two variables.
Frances J. Milliken (2003) investigated the types of issues that employees are reluctant to raise, and identify why employees sometimes decide to remain silent rather than voice their concerns. Festinger noted that structuring groups into hierarchies automatically introduces restraints against free communication, particularly criticisms by low-status members toward those in higher-status positions, it appears that employees are most likely to filter information that they convey upward when they have high mobility aspirations and when they lack trust in their supervisor.

CemalZehir & et al (2011) examined the association between organizational silence and leadership behavior in case of ethical leadership. Further, examined the employee performance through these variables. OrhanCinar & et al (2013) stated that employees are sources of change, creativity, learning and innovation which are strategic factors to achieve organizational goals, many of them choose to be silent and not to convey their valuable opinions and concerns about the problems in their organizations. Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is determined as a set of discretionary workplace behaviors that exceeds one’s job requirements. Organizational citizenship is important in organizations because it can be highly valuable to organizations and can contribute to performance and competitive advantage. OCB include actions in which employees are willing to go above and beyond their defined role requirements. The factors that cause the silence in organizations are Fear, Embarrassment, Narrow conceptions of ethical responsibility, Implicated friends, Lack of opportunity for voice, Lack of organizational political skills. 

ChiokFoongLoke (2001) aimed to determine whether the use of certain leadership behaviors in the various clinical settings makes a difference in employee outcomes, specifically job satisfaction, productivity and organizational commitment. Lynn McFarlane Shore et al (1989) aimed to find the associations that job satisfaction and organizational commitment have with job performance and turnover intentions. It is reported that significant correlation between turnover intension and satisfaction with the work itself. This study concluded that job turnover have strong relationship with job satisfaction whereas performance have strong relationship with organizational commitment.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the impact of employee silence on organizational commitment.
- To understand various reasons behind employee silence.
- To find out the dimensions of employee commitment.
- To identify the relationship between employee silence and employee job satisfaction.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based on survey and fact-finding enquiries with the employees. Here the descriptive method of research has been followed. The sample size adopted for the study is 193. The pilot study was conducted with 30 employees. The sample size is calculated by the formula,

\[ N = \text{Sample size} = \left(\frac{Z \cdot \sigma}{e}\right)^2 \]

\[ N = (1.96 \times 0.355/0.05)^2 = 193.65 \]

Where Z= Statistics at 5% level of significance, \( \sigma \) = Standard deviation of the pilot study of 30 samples, \( e \) = Acceptance level of sampling error.
ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the present study, we examined relationship between employee silence and organizational commitment in healthcare industry and the results are discussed below.

Table 1 socio-economic background of the respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Variables</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>69.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>20 – 30</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31 – 40</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41 – 50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>24.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51 – 60</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>54.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Housekeeping</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>Below 1 year</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 year - 2 years</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 years - 5 years</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>24.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Above 5 years</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: primary data

The above table exhibits the distribution of data among the democratic factors. It shows that majority of the respondents i.e. 69% are female. It is obvious that in healthcare sector the occupancy of employment majorly filled with females. When comes to age category, the healthcare industry contains most of the people with age group from 21 to 30 and 31 to 40. Though work timing and shifts are major concern in hospitals, majority of the respondents are married as shown in the table. The table reports that 58% of the respondents are Nurses. Employee turnover in healthcare is a concern to be noted which exhibited in the above table that employees with less than 2 years of experience contribute to 52%.
Job Satisfaction (JS) and Other Independent Variables

The independent variables that are entered into the regression analysis are acquiescent silence, defensive silence, prosocial silence, affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. The dependent variable is job satisfaction. The R² value obtained in the study was 0.435 which can be interpreted as regression model and equation to be formed will have prediction value of 43%. The F value and Significance value gained in the data analysis are 119 and 0.000 respectively. It is statistically clear that the independent variables included in the study are mutually exclusive in predicting the dependent variable.

Table 2 Regression Co-efficient

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>1.749</td>
<td>.256</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>.525</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.532</td>
<td>16.714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DS</td>
<td>-.255</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>-.216</td>
<td>-6.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>.203</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td>.167</td>
<td>5.369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td>-.105</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>-.103</td>
<td>-2.924</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: primary data

From the above table it is identified that among all six independent variables only four variables (NC, DS, CC, PS) directly influence the dependent variable (JS).

The regression equation is,

\[ Y = a + bX_1 + bX_2 + bX_3 + \ldots + bX_n \]

Where \( Y \) = Dependent variable

\( X_i \) = Independent variable

\( b \) = Regression coefficient of the variable \( X_i \)

\( a \) = Constant

\[ JS = 0.532 \text{ (NC)} - 0.216 \text{ (DS)} + 0.167 \text{ (CC)} - 0.103 \text{ (PS)} \]

Thus JS is positively influenced by 53% of NC, 16% of CC and it is negatively influenced by 21% of DS, 10% of PS.
Affective Commitment and Other Independent Variables

The independent variables that are entered into the regression analysis are acquiescent silence, defensive silence and prosocial silence. The dependent variable is affective commitment. The R² value obtained in the study was 0.623 which can be interpreted as regression model and equation to be formed will have prediction value of 62%. The F value and Significance value gained in the data analysis are 341 and 0.000 respectively. It is statistically clear that the independent variables included in the study are mutually exclusive in predicting the dependent variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>1.481</td>
<td>.230</td>
<td>6.444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AS</td>
<td>.453</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DS</td>
<td>.436</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>.273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PS</td>
<td>-.255</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>-.184</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: AC

From the above table it is identified that all three independent variables (AS, DS, PS) directly influence the dependent variable (AC).

The regression equation is,

\[ AC = 0.496 \text{(AS)} + 0.273 \text{(DS)} - 0.184 \text{(PS)} \]

AC is positively influenced by 49% of AS, 27% of DS and negatively influence by 18% of PS.

Regression analysis reveals that there are four factors such as NC, DS, CC, PS have significance towards employee’s job satisfaction. Likewise AS, DS, PS have significance towards affective commitment of employees. From correlation analysis it is found that AS, DS, AC, CC, NC is much influencing the satisfaction level of job of the employees. AS and DS are negatively correlated with JS. AC, CC. NC is positively correlated with JS.

CONCLUSION

This study has helped in finding out the common factors causing organizational silence. If the silence started dominating it would affect both individual and the organization as a whole. Each and every individual in the work place have some sort of commitment based on trust, experience, passion, relationship and many. This will have greater impact on satisfaction of the job of employees. To improve further the organization can take steps to reduce communication gap with their employees and improve good intra-organizational relationship.
REFERENCES


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