

The Study of Organizational Learning Influence on Organizational Silence

Abbas Samadi¹, Rouholahsohrabi², Elham Sarayvand³

¹Ph.D. Faculty Member of Economics and Social Science Bu Ali Sina University, Hamedan Branch, Iran

²Ph.D. Faculty Member of Bu Ali Sina University, Hamedan BranchIran

³Student of Islamic Azad University, Malayer Branch, Iran

ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to study the influence of organizational learning on organizational silence in Hamedan Maskan Bank. One of the most important barriers in reaching the goals and the programs of the organizations is the lack of information and knowledge and also existence of what researchers called as organizational silence which refers to being silent in expressing ideas and creative alternatives. Now days, organizational silence is popular and epidemic around the world, therefore; organizational management should find out the factors influencing on organizational silence and try to remove the negative elements and beside, try to improve the positive effects which lead to the increasing of job satisfaction and organizational motivation. The study is practical due to its aims and is descriptive due to its methodology. The statistical society included all 260 staffs of Hamedan Maskan Bank among whom the researcher selected 152 persons according to Krejcie and Morgan Table and random selection was used to do this. The hypotheses of the research were: (Main Hypothesis) There is a negative relationship between organizational learning and organizational silence; (1st alternative) there is a negative relationship between knowledge learning and organizational silence; (2nd alternative) there is negative relationship between employees' information interpretation and organizational silence; and (3rd alternative) there is a negative relationship between organizational memory and organizational silence. In order to collect the data needed, the researcher used Questionnaire of Vakula (2003) which is consisted of 23 questions, and Toy Questionnaire which is consisted of 12 questions. The validity and reliability for questionnaire was 0/83 which was tested through Alpha Coefficient, and then it was accepted. In order to evaluate the relationship between the variables, we used K-S test and also SPSS software (version 19). The results showed that there is a negative relationship between the organizational learning and organizational silence. It means that the more we have organizational silence, the less we have organizational learning.

KEY WORDS: Organizational Learning, Organizational Silence, Knowledge Gaining, Information Interpretation, Organizational Memory.

INTRODUCTION

In spite of the fact that the views in management are putting the emphasis on the issue that there must be the improvement and establishment of connection, the results of the researches show that many employees believe that their organizations do not support communications and knowledge sharing and gaining both directly and indirectly. All of these barriers can be very important and strong building block in the way of goals and become the reason of managers' failure. One of these factors influencing on organizational silence remove is to increase the ability of learning and the use of learning strategies (Modarsi Rad 2003). The concept of organizational learning was introduced in 1970. The world seems to be changing faster and faster—from the technologies available to us, to the increasingly global scope of our interactions. Moreover, the problems facing us as a global community seem to be growing ever more complex and serious. How do we navigate such change and address these problems—not only in our work lives but also in our families, communities, and schools?

We believe that organizations—groups of people who come together to accomplish a purpose—hold an important key to these questions. The field of organizational learning explores ways to design organizations so that they fulfill their function effectively, encourage people to reach their full potential, and, at the same time, help the world to be a better place.

This field is rooted in a set of powerful principles, values, and disciplines. As Peter Senge wrote in his seminal book **The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of the Learning Organization**, an organization is learning when it can bring about the future it most desires. In the business community, learning is much more than just a way to create the future you want; in today's fast-paced, highly competitive work world, it may actually give your organization the edge it needs to survive—and thereby keep fulfilling its purpose.

Learning is considered as the best competitive advantage for these new business paradigms. Consequently, an organization can be regarded as a small community which has a set of values regarded as organizational culture of that organization or business affecting the possibility of organization and management techniques and concepts' successful implementation (Alireza Amirkabiri, 2011, p. 35). Today's environment is a complicated and unpredictable one (Frankema, Rosendaal & Taminiau, 2006, p.291) and organizations constantly face with social developments such as technological progress, increase in world competition and globalization (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy & Baert, 2011, p. 35).

In such environment, some will be successful but some encounter a failure. Now, we should answer this question "what distinguishes successful organizations from unsuccessful ones?" In this regard, De Geus (1997) argues that when an organization's learning ability is faster than the competitors, it can be considered as a competitive advantage. Organizational learning improves the organization abilities in order to encourage and apply knowledge in accordance with outside changes (Loon Hoe, McShane, 2010, p. 364).

Job dissatisfaction is a problem which leads to repetitive job changing, absence, self-dissatisfaction, feeling of insecurity, and anger from work. The more we have negative attitudes toward job, the more bad effects we have, and these attitudes leads to negative aspects of business.

One of the factors having direct relationship with negative attitudes is organizational silence (Heydari 2000). An organization that is not potential cannot be adapted with the time, economic and political events of the world and therefore, it would collapse. In addition, organizational silence is a worldwide problem and is not limited to a range of certain nations and countries.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Organizational learning: In organizational levels, it refers to the systems, procedures and acceptable instructions for all the organization members and at group levels, indicates the common values, attitudes and expected behavioral patterns transformed into the databases which are easily to be accessible by each member in the organization (Alireza Amirkabiri, 2011, pp. 369-370). Simon (1991) has defined the organizational learning as the knowledge growth, structure renovation and successful reviews of problems. Organizational learning whose results are reflected in the structural factors and organizational achievements by the individuals is regarded as a social process which provides opportunities to make the organizations repeat their past successes. In fact, organizational learning is a way to achieve a competitive advantage (Hong, 1999, p. 173).

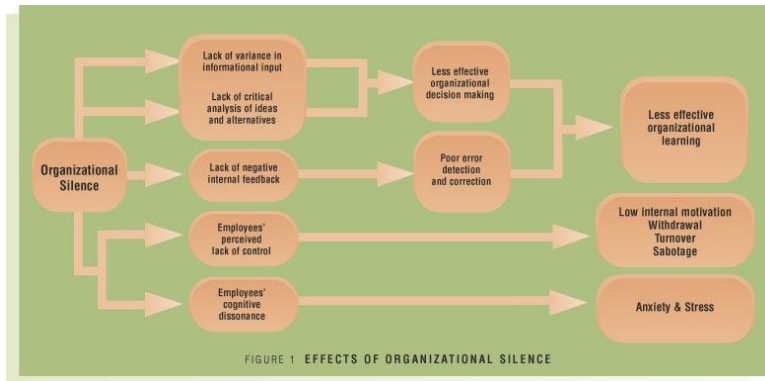
In Haaber's view, Organizational learning is containing 4 stages and levels which assist the organizations to have better kind of learning:

1. Knowledge gaining which refers to an activity increasing and learning knowledge and science.
2. Information sharing which refers to an activity spearing the information within an organization.
3. Information interpretation which refers to an activity explain and interpreting the information within an organization.
4. Organizational memory which refers to an activity leading to save the knowledge within an organization.

Organizational Silence: Harlouz and his co-workers defined it as the refusal of employees from expressing their behavioral, cognition oriented, and effective assessments about the organizational chances.

They showed that organizational silence in business is a common phenomenon which leads to mental problems for employees and affects organizational productivity in a negative way. This kind of silence is the result of many organizational characteristics such as the process of decision making, management of employees' culture and the control on employees.

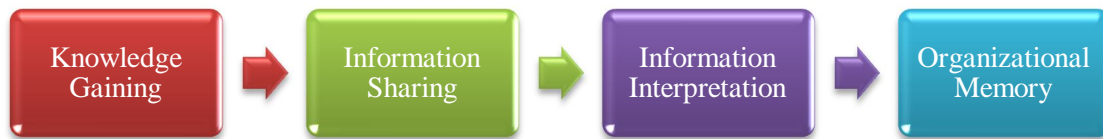
Moreover, Organizational Silence is the actor's motivation to with-hold versus express ideas, information, and opinions about work-related improvements (Van Dyne, Ang&Botero, 2003 qtd. in Vakola, M., Nikolaou, I., & Bourantas, D. 2004). A potentially dangerous impediment to organizational change (Morrison & Milliken, 2000 qtd. in Vakola, M., Nikolaou, I., & Bourantas, D. 2004),silence is not only ubiquitous and expected in organizations but extremely costly to both the firm and the individual (Perlow& Williams, 2003 qtd. in Vakola, M., Nikolaou, I., & Bourantas, D. 2004). Figure 1 describes the effects of organizational silence from Elizabeth Wolfe Morrison and Frances J. Milliken view point.



In this regard, there have been done many researches inside and outside of Iran. In a study under the title of “The adaptive nature of organizational silence: A cybernetic exploration of the hidden factory” by *Slade, Michael Ross*, Ed. D., in THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, 2008, the adaptive behaviors of silence in organizations was studied. It builds upon organizational silence research conducted by Morrison and Milliken (2000) and Morrison, Milliken, and Hewlin (2003). This study utilized a phenomenological approach grounded in both detailed empirical data and the dynamic structures found in the second-order organizational learning and cybernetic models to create a deeper understanding of the complex and dynamic behavior of silence in organizations. Applying the detailed empirical data to the dynamic structures provided a means to advance our understanding of silence in organizations and further inform how the role of silence provides an adaptive means to balance organizational change with stability.

Another research was done by Hassan Zareii Matin in 2011 under the title of “Organizational silence and its factors and effects” which resulted that this organizational silence has negative effects on employees.

The Conceptual Framework of the Study



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The aim of this research is to study the influence of organizational learning on organizational silence in Hamedan Maskan Bank. The study is practical due to its aims and is descriptive due to its methodology. The statistical society included all 260 staffs of Hamedan Maskan Bank among whom the researcher selected 152 persons according to Krejsi and Morgan Table and random selection was used to do this. In order to collect the data needed, the researcher used Questionnaire of Vakula (2003) which is consisted of 23 questions, and Toy Questionnaire which is consisted of 12 questions. The validity and reliability for questionnaire was 0/83 which was tested through Alpha Coefficient, and then it was accepted.

The hypotheses of the research were: (Main Hypothesis) There is a negative relationship between organizational learning and organizational silence; (1st alternative) there is a negative relationship between knowledge learning and organizational silence; (2nd alternative) there is negative relationship between employees’ information interpretation and organizational silence; and (3rd alternative) there is a negative relationship between organizational memory and organizational silence. In order to evaluate the relationship between the variables, we used K-S test (for the normality test) and also SPSS software (version 19).

FINDINGS

There is 1 main hypothesis in this research which leads to 3 alternative hypotheses as below.

The Main Hypothesis

H₀: There is a significant relationship between organizational learning and organizational silence.

H₁: There is no significant relationship between organizational learning and organizational silence.

Table 1: coefficient relationship between organizational silence and organizational learning

Organizational silence	Organizational learning		
-0.544	1	Organizational learning	Spearman correlation
1	-0.544	Organizational silence	
-	0/000	Organizational learning	Significancy (2-tailed)
0/000	-	Organizational silence	
152	152		N

According to table 1, the p-value is equal to 0/000 and it means that correlation is in average and significance is 0.01 with the amount of -0.544, the hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the main hypothesis is accepted. It means that there is no significant relationship between organizational silence and organizational learning.

The 1st null Hypothesis

H₀: There is a significant relationship between knowledge gaining and organizational silence.

H₁: There is no significant relationship between knowledge gaining and organizational silence.

Table 2: coefficient relationship between organizational silence and knowledge gaining

Organizational silence	knowledge gaining		
-0.489	1	knowledge gaining	Spearman correlation
1	-0.489	Organizational silence	
-	0/000	knowledge gaining	Significancy (2-tailed)
0/000	-	Organizational silence	
152	152		N

According to table 2, the p-value is equal to 0/000 and it means that correlation is in average and significance is 0.01 with the amount of -0.489, the hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the main hypothesis is accepted. It means that there is no significant relationship between organizational silence and knowledge gaining.

The 2nd null Hypothesis

H₀: There is a significant relationship between information sharing and interpretation and organizational silence.

H₁: There is no significant relationship between information sharing and interpretation and organizational silence.

Table 3: coefficient relationship between information sharing and interpretation and knowledge gaining

Organizational silence	information sharing and interpretation		
-0.456	1	information sharing and interpretation	Spearman correlation
1	-0.456	Organizational silence	
-	0/000	information sharing and interpretation	Significancy (2-tailed)
0/000	-	Organizational silence	
152	152		N

According to table 3, the p-value is equal to 0/000 and it means that correlation is in average and significance is 0.01 with the amount of -0.456, the hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the main hypothesis is accepted. It means that there is no significant relationship between organizational silence and information sharing and interpretation.

The 3rd null Hypothesis

H₀: There is a significant relationship between organizational memory and organizational silence.

H₁: There is no significant relationship between organizational memory and organizational silence.

Table 4: coefficient relationship between organizational memory and knowledge gaining

Organizational silence	Organizational memory		
-0.692	1	Organizational memory	Spearman correlation
1	-0.692	Organizational silence	
-	0/000	Organizational memory	Significancy (2-tailed)
0/000	-	Organizational silence	
152	152		N

According to table 4, the p-value is equal to 0/000 and it means that correlation is in average and significancy is 0.01 with the amount of -0.692, the hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the main hypothesis is accepted. It means that there is no significant relationship between organizational silence and organizational memory.

As the tables all showed, between organizational silence and all elements of organizational learning, there is no significant relationship and all of them are negative. Therefore, there is a negative relationship between the organizational learning and organizational silence. It means that the more we have organizational silence, the less we have organizational learning.

CONCLUSION

The importance of learning in organizations has been recognized since the early twentieth century. Organizational learning was implicitly applied by Henry Ford in developing the Model T. This work demonstrated the existence of learning curves, whereby the time and cost needed to assemble products decreased by a constant percentage—usually 20 to 30 percent—for every doubling of output.

The phenomenon of learning curves, also called experience curves, progress curves, or learning by doing, became very popular in the 1960s and 1970s. At that time, many managers were held up to (and fired for not reaching) the 80 percent mark, meaning, with each doubling of output, costs were expected to decrease to 80 percent of the prior cost level. This overly simplistic view of learning curves resulted in disgruntlement with them in the 1980s.

According to what is said, the aim of this research was to study the influence of organizational learning on organizational silence in Hamedan Maskan Bank. The study was practical due to its aims and is descriptive due to its methodology. The statistical society included all 260 staffs of Hamedan Maskan Bank among whom the researcher selected 152 persons according to Krejsi and Morgan Table and random selection was used to do this. The hypotheses of the research were: (Main Hypothesis) There is a negative relationship between organizational learning and organizational silence; (1st alternative) there is a negative relationship between knowledge learning and organizational silence; (2nd alternative) there is negative relationship between employees' information interpretation and organizational silence; and (3rd alternative) there is a negative relationship between organizational memory and organizational silence. In order to collect the data needed, the researcher used Questionnaire of Vakula (2003) which is consisted of 23 questions, and Toy Questionnaire which is consisted of 12 questions. The validity and reliability for questionnaire was 0/83 which was tested through Alpha Coefficient, and then it was accepted. In order to evaluate the relationship between the variables, we used K-S test and also SPSS software (version 19).

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