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The Relationship between Organizational Citizenship Behaviour and Organizational Silence

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to empirically investigate the effect of organizational silence dimensions on organizational citizenship behaviours. This study considers organizational silence as a multidimensional construct and compares the effects of these dimensions on organizational citizenship behaviours. The research sample formed by 462 full time employees of one multinational private company which is headquartered in Istanbul. The data was provided by a questionnaire which was structured according to the research questions. Regression was performed to test our hypothesized model. On the basis of using regression, we found that: i) acquiescent silence and defensive silence have a negative effect on organizational citizenship behavior, ii) prosocial silence has a positive effect on organizational citizenship behavior.

Keywords: Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Organizational Silence

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1. Introduction

Many studies have noted social functionality and contribution of helping behaviors, volunteering and altruism towards individuals, groups or institutes. In recent decades this fields has also received considerable attention in management studies and added new insight into our understanding of organizations, and the workplace in the modern societies. Hence, beyond its general social relevancy, these altruistic and helping behaviors have proven to have interdisciplinary meanings (Gadot, 2006: 77).

Organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) are discretionary behaviors on the part of an employee that directly promote the effective functioning of an organization, without necessarily influencing an employee's productivity. Organ (1997) stated that, although various descriptions of specific dimension underlying the concept of OCB abound, the overall construct is generally referred to as those sets of individual behaviors that contribute to the social and psychological context in which the task performance of a job must function (Todd, Kent, 2006: 253).

Since the development of the concept, much research has been focused to explore the antecedents of OCB. The most research on OCB has related to individual antecedents of OCB (Bateman and Organ, 1983, Organ and Lingl, 1995; O'Reilly and Chatman, 1986; Moorman, et al., 1993; Williams and Anderson, 1991; Paille, 2011) and contextual antecedents of OCB (Podsakoff & McKenzei, 1995; Randall, et all, 1999; Chu, Lee, Hsu, 2006; Padsokoff, et al., 1990, Truckenbrodt, 2000; Zellars, et al, 2002; Somech, Drach-Zahavy, 2004; Feather and Rauter, 2004). Because OCB has become a major research topic in the last decade, the lack of research associating organizational silence and OCB is surprising. Recently, Bolino and Turnley (2005:740) pointed out that today "the ideal worker is an employee who does not only demonstrates high levels of task performance, but also engages in high levels of contextual performance or OCB as well (Paille, 2011: 2). According to researches (Podsakoff, et al., 2000), OCB increases organizational efficiency by increasing production, improving the quality of service provided, raising client satisfaction or decreasing customer complaints.

Organizational silence is a new concept in the literature and was first introduced in the 2000 by Morrison and Milliken. While Morrison and Milliken (2000: 706) defined the organizational silence as "a collective phenomenon that impedes the development of a hazard and a pluralistic organization that hinder organizational change and development", Tangirala and Ramanujam (2008: 39) defined it as "not to share with others, and to keep themselves for the employees of businesses or organizations important situations, issues or events". In the context of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), organizational silence is an important organizational behavior issues that arise in lack of having the relationship equitable social change.

Although employees who are the most reliable source of data and information in the organization (Clapham and Cooper, 2005: 307), it is seen that employees generally tend not to express their ideas, views or feedback consciously. While it is accepted that employees are participating to organizational activities voluntarily on the basis of organizational citizenship behavior, organizational silence behavior theory says that employees avoid revealing their views and ideas with a conscious decision. Accordingly, the employees who are in the behavior of organizational silence also has lower tendency for organizational citizenship behavior.

Within this framework it is possible to say that both organizational silence and organizational citizenship behavior are very important subjects for organizations to reach desired objectives. In this context, the aim of this study is to examine the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and organizational silence. According to this purpose, first of all, conceptual framework will be discussed in the subsequent section and after that, methodology of the study will be discussed. This study reveals the causes and the results of these variables and differentiates with using organizational citizenship behavior in a one dimension and investigates the relationship between this dimension and organizational silence.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses
2.1. Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

According to Organ (1988) OCB represents individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization. By discretionary, we mean that the behavior is not an enforceable requirement of the role or the job description that is the clearly specifiable terms of the person's employment contract with the organization; the behavior is rather a matter of personal choice, such that its omission is not generally understood as punishable. A key component of the OCB definition is that omission of the OCBs is not punishable (Zellars, et al., 2002: 1068).

Although there is no clear consensus with the literature on the number of dimensions of OCBs, Organ (1988) and other studies (Padsakoff and MacKenzei, 1994; Padsakoff et al, 1997; Farth, et al.,, 2004) have proposed a variety

of forms, including altruism (discretionary behaviors that aid a specific other person or group in task related matters) courtesy (constructive gestures that help prevent problems for coworkers), sportsmanship (tolerating in good spirit the occasional hardships and deprivations that unpredictably befall individuals in the course of organizational endeavors), civic virtue (constructive involvement in the political life of the organization), and conscientiousness (discretionary behavior on the part of an employee that goes well beyond the minimum role requirements of the organization, in the areas of attendance, obeying rules and regulations) (Chu et al., 2006).

In conclusion, the practical importance of OCB is that they improve organizational efficiency and effectiveness by contributing to resource transformations, innovativeness and adaptability (Organ, 1988).

2.1. Organizational Silence

As if the silence concept might bring to our minds the situation of being closed to communication, it is actually considered as an important form of communication. Employees convey a variety of messages "being silence" with many issues related to the work colleagues, managers, and the organizations in their business lives. As in the case of protection not telling the others any information relating to safety of employees, silence structure may be strategic and proactive (Dyne et al., 2003: 1360-1361). Employee in such a silence can be in communication by showing a behavior done actively, consciously, and willingly as serving a purpose.

Çakıcı (2007) defined in her study the concept of organizational silence, as a negative phenomenon, as the employees being silent and withholding their opinions and thoughts related to technical and/or behavioral issues about their work or workplace in order of improvement and development.

Employees' choosing to keep their thoughts, opinions and criticism consciously have many negative results both on organizations and on themselves. Owing to employees not talking and managers not listening to their employees, they feel that they are worthless, not given importance, leads to lower motivation and lower job satisfaction (Ehtiyar and Yanardağ, 2008: 58). At the same time, organizational silence is caused the reduction of employee commitment (Vakola and Bouradas 2005), increase in the intention to leave (Acaray, 2014). In organizations context, organizational silence is caused impede to organizational change and development (Morrison and Milliken, 2000), give damage to adaption of the learning organization and environment, and close organizational communication (Premeaux and Bedeian, 2003; Tangirala and Ramanujam, 2008).

When the literature is reviewed, organizational silence studies have focused on the three dimensions of silence. These dimensions are acquiescent silence, defensive silence and prosocial silence.

2.1.1. Acquiescent Silence

Acquiescent silence is defined as employees withholding their work-related opinions, ideas and information, based on resignation. Employees in acquiescent silence, who consent to organizational conditions, is judged himself/herself in a kind of "trust and endure his/her fate". Employee is not reluctant to enter into any effort to change the conditions and to talk, in other words, employee is being to withdraw himself/herself and is pleased with to continue the status quo (Dyne et al., 2003: 1366). Therefore, acquiescent silence is a passive behavior. Employees exhibit passive behavior deliberately and enter into unrelated to behavior (Çakıcı, 2008: 87).

Employees in acquiescent silence behavior, as well as being acquiescence to organizational conditions, are not aware of too many alternatives for changing the conditions (Pinder and Harlos, 2001: 349). Employees have accepted the situation in a state of despair and that has given up correcting the conditions that cause dissatisfaction. Because employees choose silence with the thought that the speech is a vain attempt (Brinsfield, 2009: 41). A part of acquiescent silence is employee obedience too (Pinder and Harlos, 2001: 349-350).

2.1.2. Defensive Silence

Defensive silence is employee behavior to defend himself/herself against external threats consciously and proactively (Schlenker and Weigold, 1989: 30). Defensive silence is that employee refrains from expressing his/her thought and information, depending on the employee's fear. Defensive silence is more proactive than acquiescent silence; containing of being aware and considering alternatives and follows after hiding ideas, thoughts, and information for the self-preservation is a conscious decision on the best personal strategy for the moment. While acquiescent silence means passive obedience, defensive silence means a sense of fear of the consequences of making proposals for change. Defensive silence contains fear that expressing ideas includes the personal risk factors based on information of self-storage (Dyne et al., 2003: 1367).

2.1.2. Prosocial Silence

Prosocial silence is employee behavior to withhold and to hide his/her work-related opinions, ideas, and information in order to provide benefits to organizations or other employee depending on the factors thinking others or collaborators (Dyne et al., 2003: 1368). Prosocial silence occurs in two ways. The first one is that employee remains silent with motive to protect the benefits of organization; the second one is that employee remains silent with motive to protect the other employees' benefits. In organizational citizenship behavior way, prosocial silence is a proactive behavior that employee thinks to protect other employees' and organization's benefits, not himself/herself firstly. Instead of self-preservation instinct based on fear, the benefit of others and self-sacrifice for others is prioritized in prosocial silence. Prosocial silence dimension of organizational silence is a positive kind of silence contrast to acquiescent silence and defensive silence.

2.2. The Relationship between Organizational Silence and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

When the literature is reviewed, it is seen that there is a limited number of papers that studies the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and organizational silence. The researches pointed out that there is a strong and negative relationship between organizational silence and organizational citizenship behavior (Çınar et al., 2013; Şehitoğlu, 2010; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002; and Corporanzo et al., 1997). This means, if employees are not allowed to express their ideas related to work then their level of organizational citizenship behavior decreases. Organizational citizenship behavior is an important organization behavior that all organizations should have for healthy functioning and continuity. The researches that were conducted in the last 20 years show that organizational citizenship behavior has been increased individual performance and organizational performance (Özdevecioğlu, 2003: 117). Organizational silence occurs depending on various factors within the organization and if it is ignored, employees will continue to remain silent and are not be likely to show the organizational citizenship behavior. In other words, employees in acquiescent silence and defensive silence will not be expected to exhibit organizational citizenship behavior, employees in prosocial silence behavior will demonstrate organizational citizenship behavior more strongly.

In this context, the hypotheses of research are developed as follows:

H₁: Acquiescent silence dimension of organizational silence has a significant effect on organizational citizenship behavior.
H₂: Defensive silence dimension of organizational silence has a significant effect on organizational citizenship behavior.
H₃: Prosocial silence dimension of organizational silence has a significant effect on organizational citizenship behavior.
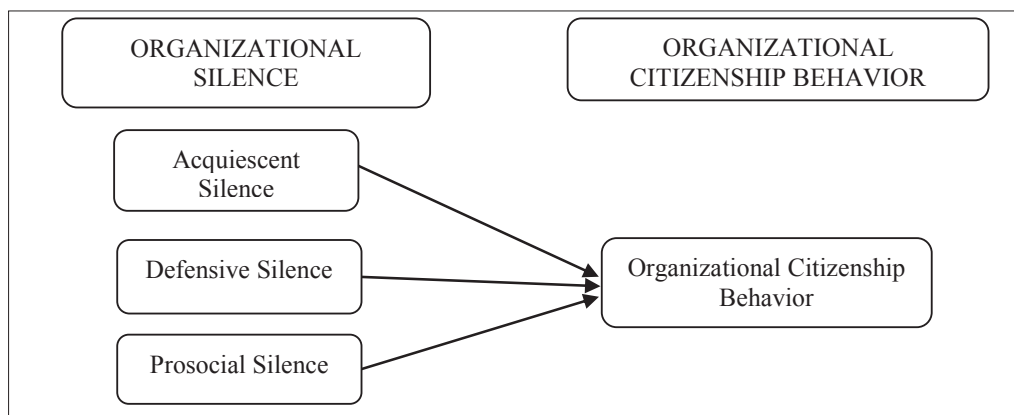
3. Methodology

Figure 1. Research Model

As data collection method, questionnaire was used in this study. Questions were asked in three separate categories in this research to learn demographic characteristics of employees and in order to measure employees' organizational citizenship behavior and organizational silence attitudes in this research. Except for the first section containing demographic information, all of the variables used in the second and third sections of the questionnaire were measured with a Likert-type scale. Responses were elicited on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from totally disagree (1) to totally agree (5).

Research was performed in a multinational company operating in different sectors (e.g., food and cleaning sectors) on 900 full time employees. Sampling method was applied. Questionnaires were sent to all employees of the company. The numbers of returning questionnaires were 470 and 8 of them which were not healthy questionnaire, were not included in the analysis. 462 questionnaires were included in the study. As return rate of samples selected from the universe in the applied researches is considered usually between 20% and 40% (Öğüt, 2003: 293), a return rate of 51.33% can be counted as a good return rate.

3.1. Measures

Organizational silence behavior was measured with organizational silence scale which was developed by Dyne, Ang and Botero (2003) and organizational silence scale consists three dimensions as acquiescent silence, defensive silence, and prosocial silence. Organizational silence scale consisted of 15 Likert type items including "Because it is not about me, I am reluctant to talk about the suggestions made for change in our company".

Organizational citizenship behavior scale was developed by Dyne, Graham and Dienesch (1994). For this study, obedience and participation sections of scale are appropriate for measuring organizational citizenship behavior (it was decided to use 12 of the scale consisted of 13 items). Organizational citizenship behavior was assessed with 12 items including "I always come to work on time", "I rarely waste time while at work".

4. Data Analysis and Findings

To summarize the data in the study and to get a general idea about the distribution, frequency, mean; and Cronbach's alpha analysis to measure reliability of variables were used. In addition, correlation and regression were used for the analysis.

4.1. Demographic Characteristics of Sample

Table 1. Characteristics of the Study Sample

Variables		Frequency	Percent (%)
Age	25 years old and lower	53	11,5
	26-35	297	64,0
	36-45	91	19,7
	46-55	16	3,5
	56 years old and higher	5	1,1
Gender	Female	231	50,0
	Male	231	50,0
Marital Status	Married	251	54,3
	Single	211	45,7
Education	High School	66	14,3
	University	335	72,5
	Master	61	13,2
Total Working Time in This Workplace	Less than 1 year	59	12,8
	1-5	219	47,4
	6-10	105	22,7
	11 years and over	79	17,1
Position at This workplace	Employee	262	56,7
	Expert	116	25,1

Mid- Level managers	77	16,7
Senior executives	7	1,5
Total	462	100,0

Table 1 shows information about the demographics of the firm employees responding the questionnaire. Accordingly, 50% of employees are female and 50% are male; 64% of employees are between 26-35 ages; 54% of employees are married; 72.5% of employees are university graduated; 47% of employees are working this workplace between 1-5 years, and 56% of employees are working as employee in this workplace.

4.2. Factor Analysis

The relationships between variables were tested using correlation, reliability, regression and factor analyses firstly. It was measured reliability value of organizational citizenship behavior and organizational silence in this study, and then exploratory factor analysis was performed to organizational silence behavior variable whether relevant factors of dimensions were separated or not. The result of the factor analysis, after it was seen that the structure of organizational silence factors were formed as expectedly, degree of reliability for each factor was determined. According to these results, it can be said that the organizational silence dimensions are reliable scale. The scale factor used in study and the results of reliability were located in Table 2.

It was decided to be done factor analysis because questions of organizational citizenship behavior have Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling adequacy; 0,834 and Bartlett's test of sphericity, value of sig.; 0.000. Since value of sig. is lower than 0,05, it means there is a strong relationship among the variables. Organizational citizenship behavior questions were grouped in a single dimension in the result of the factor analysis except of four questions. Cronbach' alpha of organizational citizenship behavior is 0,709. These 8 questions are explained 43,041% of the variance in organizational citizenship behavior.

As illustrated in table 2, three dimensions of organizational silence were emerged from the factor analysis as expected. The factor loadings for organizational silence are displayed in Table 2, while total variance was explained with 56,790%.

Table 2. Factor Loadings of Organizational Silence

ITEMS	Factor1	Factor2	Factor3	Percentage Variance
Acquiescent Silence				34,045%
1. This employee is unwilling to speak up with suggestions for change because he/she is disengaged.	,686			
2. This employee passively withholds ideas, based on resignation.	,746			
3. This employee passively keeps ideas about solutions to problems to him/herself.	,783			
4. This employee keeps any ideas for improvement to him/her self because he/she has low self-efficacy to make a difference.	,706			
5. This employee withholds ideas about how to improve the work around here, based on being disengaged.	,694			
Defensive Silence				15,029%
6. This employee does not speak up and suggest ideas for change, based on fear.		,661		
7. This employee withholds relevant information due to fear.		,707		
8. This employee omits pertinent facts in order to protect him/her self.		,580		
9. This employee avoids expressing ideas for improvements, due to self-protection.		,700		
10. This employee withholds his/her solutions to problems because he/she is motivated by fear.		,730		

Prosocial Silence				7,715%
11. This employee withholds confidential information, based on cooperation.			,717	
12. This employee protects proprietary information in order to benefit the organization.			,689	
13. This employee withstands pressure from others to tell organizational secrets.			,720	
14. This employee refuses to divulge information that might harm the organization.			,671	
15. This employee protects confidential organizational information appropriately, based on concern for the organization.			,636	
Total Variance Explained				56,790%
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square df Sig.	0,870 2514,436 105 0,000			

Principal Component Analysis, Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

4.3 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis conducted to examine the relationships between variables shows the $P < .01$ level of significance at the bilateral level. The reliabilities, means, standard deviations and inter-correlations were summarized in Table 3. As it is seen diagonal of the correlation matrix, each scale has satisfactory reliability with Cronbach' alfa above 0,70. It is seen in correlation analysis Table 3 that there is a negative relationship ($r = -.277$, $p<.01$) between the organizational citizenship behavior and acquiescent silence, ($r = -.273$, $p<.01$) between the organizational citizenship behavior and defensive silence, and but there is a positive relationship ($r=.132$, $p<.01$) between the organizational citizenship behavior and prosocial silence. These results reveal that there is a negative relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and the dimensions of organizational silence.

Table 3. The Relationships between Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Organizational Silence's Dimensions (Pearson Correlation Coefficient)

Variables	1	2	3	4
1.Acquiescent Silence	**(.847)**			
2.Defensive Silence	,623**	**(.794)**		
3.Prosocial Silence	-,085	-,134**	**(.725)**	
4.Organizational Citizenship Behavior	-,277**	-,273**	,132**	**(.709)**
Mean	2,1827	1,9355	4,1423	4,1063
Standard Deviation	,78779	,66123	,58766	,52811

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Values in parenthesis are Cronbach's Alfa

4.4. Test of Hypothesis

Multiple regression models were applied to examine effect of dimensions of organizational silence on organizational citizenship behavior and hypotheses were tested according to the regression results. Regression results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Regression Results for Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Organizational Silence's Dimensions

	Dependent Variable			
	Organizational Citizenship Behavior			
Independent Variables	**β**	**t**	**Sig.**	**Vif**
Acquiescent Silence	-.174	-3.071	.002	1.636
Defensive Silence	-.152	-2.666	.008	1.654
Prosocial Silence	.097	2.170	.031	1.018
F	17.413			
R^2	.154			
Adj. R^2	.148			
*: p< 0,05				

The regression model is significant as a whole (Adj. R^2=.148, F= 27,791: p< 0,05); it explains 14.8% of the change of organizational citizenship behavior. As seen in Table 4, acquiescent silence has negative effect on organizational citizenship behavior (β= -.174, p<.05). Defensive silence has negative effect on organizational citizenship behavior (β= -.152, p<.05) in the same model. Prosocial silence has positive effect on organizational citizenship behavior (β= .097, p<.05). In this context, **H₁**, **H₂**, and **H₃** hypotheses are supported.

Table 5. The Description Power of Model

Fit Measures	Endogenous Construct	Final Model
R^2	Organizational Citizenship Behaviour	0.154

R² values show that to what extent the independent variables describe organizational citizenship behavior in our model. Finally, as seen in the model in Table 5, organizational silence's dimensions explain 15.4% of variance (R^2 = .154) in organizational citizenship behavior.

Discussion and Implications

In this study, we tried to offer an Organizational Behavior literature by presenting a model for researchers and managers to understand the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and dimensions of organizational silence (acquiescent, defensive and prosocial silence). This study is one of the very few that reveals the link between organizational citizenship behavior and organizational silence

To achieve a sustainable competitive advantage is becoming effective in the continuity and success of the organization. In present day, there are many threats for organizations in competitive business environment. To survive longer, organizations have to utilize their human resources especially in terms of using their unknown potentials. Organizations, at the point of providing continuity, much more needed to workers who capable of responding to environmental threats, self-confident and not afraid to share their knowledge. Voice is a way to obtain individuals' valuable thoughts and ideas which might contribute to the objectives of organization. On the other hand, employees' over efforts not mentioned officially are very important to achieve strategic goals and to take advantages in the market.

In this study, we found firstly that acquiescent silence and defensive silence dimensions of organizational silence have a negative effect on organizational citizenship behavior. This result was consistent with the extant literature. Çınar, et al., (2013) and Alioğulları (2012) found that organizational silence is negatively associated with sportsmanship and civil virtue dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior. Kılıçlar and Harbalıoğlu (2014) found that there is a weak negative relationship between organizational silence and organizational citizenship behavior. This means, if employees are not allowed to express their ideas related to work then their organizational

citizenship behavior level decreases. Thus, the organization loses new ideas, thoughts, creative solutions and employees' efforts more than usual job duties which might be very beneficial to the organization. It can be recommended that organizations should support and create an organizational climate in which employees are able to talk.

In this study, secondly we found that prosocial silence dimension of organizational silence has a positive effect on organizational citizenship behavior. This means, if employees withhold to express their ideas related to workplace and other employees, then their organizational citizenship behavior level increase. Prosocial silence behavior might be very beneficial to the organization and employees.

Organizations, especially in terms of strategic management, organizational silence (only acquiescent silence and defensive silence dimensions, not prosocial silence) has potential effects on employees' to ignore the illegal and unethical practices, to block organizational learning effectively, to impede organizational change and development, creativity and innovativeness. In addition, if an evaluation is made of future perspective, employees' silence attitudes can decrease job satisfaction and increase intention to leave. Research studies on strategy formulation show that the lack of contradicting with each other, different perspective and alternatives in top management has a negative effects both on decision-making quality and on organizational performance. Managers need employees' multiple perspectives in order to form an effective strategy. Employees' opinions, experience and information are required to make an effective SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis. Organizational silence restricts the flow of information to decision makers in organizational hierarchy. Because of that, organizational silence means a low efficiency in organizational change processes.

In strategic management way, managers should encourage employees to articulate their ideas and views on the issues and provide support at the organizational level to reach desired objectives. In this context, organizations need employees' organizational citizenship behavior. Because, organizational citizenship behavior contributes to organizational performance as increasing employee or managerial productivity, coordinating activities within and across work groups, and enabling the organization to adapt more effectively to environmental changes.

Limitations and Future Researches

There are some methodological limitations to this study. Firstly, we conducted the survey in one firm in Istanbul; the data was limited to this sample. The generalizability of sampling is the limitation of this study. Results may differ for employees of other industries. It is important to note that readers should be cautious when generalizing the results to different cultural, environmental and political contexts.

Future researches can be applied in different organizations with different variables to generalize the findings.

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