Do the Organizational Rumors Emphasize the Influence of Organizational Silence over Organizational Commitment?

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Abstract— One of the most critical engagements of organizational managers is to establish their staffs' commitment in regard with work, values, and beliefs of their organization. They also come across a couple of chief behavioral challenges in terms of organizational staffs. These include organizational rumors and organizational silence which effect organizational commitment of the staffs. Present research found the relationship between organizational silence and organizational commitment and a thorough international literature was scrutinizes and studied in this field. Accordingly, among all distributed questionnaires in Provincial Municipality Organization of Qom, 50 questionnaires were used for the analysis. The results indicated that, through controlling the organizational rumors, the organizational silence possesses a meaningful and reversal influence over organizational commitment. Also, without controlling the rumors, the influence of organizational silence over organizational commitment increases; however, it is still reversal. This research proved that there is a strong meaningful relation between organizational silence and organizational rumors, and that organizational silence powerfully accentuates organizational rumors.

Index Terms— Organization, Organizational commitment, Organizational Rumors, Organizational Silence, Provincial Municipality of Qom.

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1 INTRODUCTION

ORGANIZATIONAL commitment is one of the chief factors in terms of organizational behavior of the staffs and organizational output. The undertaking staffs of the organization regard the goals of their organization in order with those of themselves, and attempt in their actualization. They depend upon their organization through which they achieve identity [12]

During fifty successive years, researchers have focused on some concepts relevant with silence and voice, and the staffs have usually possess some ideas, information, and opinions for beneficial methods in work progress and working organizations. Every so often, these staffs elaborate and discuss about their ideas, information, and/or opinions, and some other times, they keep silence and let not their ideas to be known [30]. It is considering that the staffs' organizational commitment is affected by either their silence or their voice. The organizations, in which silence is the dominating atmosphere, witness changes in organizational commitment of their staffs. Not only the organizational silence causes organizational commitment changes, but also it leads to the appearance of a behavior entitled organizational rumors. As a matter of fact, whenever the staffs of an organization, in the field of organizational structure and formal communications, are not able to discuss with managers or their colleagues, they choose informal communications or friendly groups for discussion which results in organizational rumors. Consequently, organizational rumors appear on the basis of informal communications, and they refer to non-

documentary oral discussions with no written form confirmed by anyone.

Organizational rumors effect organizational commitment and result in its variation. This relationship among variables evoked the authors of present paper, in addition to studying the meaningfulness of the factors such as organizational silence, organizational commitment and organizational rumors, to state their apparent and hidden functions, and finally, to investigate the influence of the organizational silence over organizational commitment both with regard to organizational rumors and without.

2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Today, the engagement of managers is to make organizational staffs committed to the goals of their organization, and in this regard, managers do their best to make them as more loyal as possible. Some managers believe that, through collective management, staffs can gain commitment and reduce disastrous behaviors such as turnovers, attendance, hardiness, and absenteeism to the least; however, creating an atmosphere of distrust and pessimism cause their staffs not to feel safety and peace in contraction with their manager, and prevent opinion making and speaking; in fact, such managers strengthen organizational silence [4] and result in the reduction of organizational commitment level. Accordingly, organizational silence is one of factors that can effect organizational commitment. As Morrison & Milliken (2000) proved that organizational silence may include cognitive incompatibility, and therefore, reduces motivation, commitment and satisfaction [17].

One of the issues that facilitate Organizations' achievement to pre-determined purposes is communications [29] which happens in two types of formal and informal. Organizational rumors rise in organizations which contain informal

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communications. Such rumors appear in organizations in which silence is dominant atmosphere and there is no formal communication network. Since staffs tend to communicate, state their thoughts, beliefs and occupational problems, informal communication channels are formed and lead to organizational rumors, and eventually make changes in organizational commitments.

3 THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Organizational Commitment

One of the subjects that is the focus of researchers of management is the various aspects of the concept of commitment, because a staff is not only committed to the organization, but also to other referees such as occupation, family and direct supervisor [1]. Staff's commitment to the organization produces invisible properties. In other words, one can regard organizational commitment of the staffs as a purpose rather than a device [12]. At the beginning of the 1980s, staff's organizational commitment was one of the leading factors that drew the attention of numerous researchers, and wide number of studies were performed in this regard [2]. Even in their book Understanding Organizational Behavior, Klein and Ritti declare the importance of this issue and say that the lack of commitment is much more dangerous than what is known as 'Lack of Ethics'. The lack of commitment shadows on organization and reduces effectiveness in almost all activities [11].

According to above statements, it is hard to define commitment and seldom there are agreements on its essence. Frequently, commitment is defined as a tendency to keep ties; some other times, as a promise one has taken to the other. Recently, commitment has got a definition as resistance before changes, and this concept has roots in determination of identity, common values, belonging, devotion and similarity [8]. In a simpler word, one can say that commitment means to devote one's self or a part of one's strength to a specific purpose [2].

Considering commitment, as a satisfactory occupational value, has begun from initial works done on occupational features. Interest in commitment has more appeared through Gouldner Work which investigated the duality between commitment to organization and professional commitment for professional people in bureaucratic organizations [27].

Porter defines organizational commitment as accepting the values of the organization and dealing with it. Also, Chatman and Ovrilli describe organizational commitment as emotional support and cohesion with purposes and values of an organization, for its sake and to achieve other purposes.

Santos regards professional commitment as the feeling of identification and reliance upon a particular career, and emphasizes the interest and tendency to work in an occupation [1]. Professional commitment refers to dependence of individuals on their career. In fact, professional commitment includes believing in the purposes and values of the career, tending to perform outstanding attempts in terms of career, and preserving the membership in career [7].

Wallace's and his follower's definition of professional commitment, similar to that of Allen and Meyer [1], regards three dimensional aspect including emotion, constancy, and method; they describe occupational commitment as identifica-

tion with an occupation, need to constant service in a career, and high feeling of responsibility to it [20].

3.2 Advantages of Professional and Organizational Commitment

Professional commitment relates to crucial outputs such as improvement in work operation, reduction in relocating decisions, and higher level of satisfaction both in organizational level and in professional one [7]. Relevant studies indicate that higher levels of staffs' commitment result in further motivation and satisfaction, and decline of turnovers.

3.3 Organizational Silence

Competent and qualified staffs are tremendous capitals of an organization. To succeed, organizations ought to ask their human-capital to be innovative, to comment about various issues and feel responsibility. Different, numerous and even sometimes opposite points of view are of vital importance in effective decision-making in organizations; however, the results of field studies illustrate that most staffs feel they have to stay silent before problems or anxieties.

The question, that today engages scholars' minds, is whether remaining silent is right or not. Primary definitions of silence equal loyalty; that is, if there is no discussion about presented issues, there is no dilemma. Though, nowadays, researchers demonstrate that silent atmosphere may avoid satisfactory efficiency in organizations (Shojaei et al, 2011: 1732). Silence is relevant to various facts such as humility, respecting others, caution and propriety [21]. Morrison and Milliken believe that the organizational silence roots in personal and individual silence, and it indicates when the majority of the staffs of an organization remain silent, silence becomes a group behavior, and this phenomenon is called organizational silence [17]. Brinsfield's results (2009) indicate that organizational silence is pervasive, multi-dimensional, accurately calculable, and to a large extent related to other chief phenomena of organizational behavior [3].

Morrison and Milliken target organizational silence as a chain between silence and voice, and describe the silent behavior through dimensions of organization atmosphere. They do believe that organizational silence ends in the feeling of the lack of evaluation, the lack of control understanding, and lack of cognitive agreement and all of these result in decreasing satisfaction, commitment and motivation. Also, Oliver (1990) argues that above factors influence some results like flow, stress level, and occupational attempt regarding organization; in this regard, the concept of commitment differs from that of career satisfaction [19].

Morrison and Milliken have defined organizational silence as a collective phenomenon and the staffs' tendency to unrevealing their opinions and anxieties about organizational problems [28]. They seek the root of the question "why silence?" rather in sociology of career context than the psychology of every staff. Through organizational atmosphere, staffs understand whether speaking and expressing their opinions are dangerous and invaluable or confident and valuable [28].

3.4 Organizational Rumors

As an unethical behavior among staffs, rumor is a defined da-

ta that conveys through **grapevine** ant its effect is determined by the level of the stress of those individuals who hear it [5]; [24]. Rumors, unlike their long lasting validity, influence forecasting the behaviors as unreliable predictor [6]. Rumors are unreal data that disperse through face to face models or other complicated models [31]. Accepted concept of rumor says that it is an inter-personal communication that possesses no document proving its truth or reality [16]. Rumor is a collective behavior in which an unproved news is stated by a group in a way that all welcome it [13].

Knapp defines rumor as "a status before believing a referred subject dispersed without official prove" [14]. Peterson and Gist studied rumor and general thoughts, and explained rumor as "an unproved definition or description about events dispersed among individuals and result in general stress about an issue or an event [22]. Michelson and Moulay describe rumor as "informal communication exchanged with other individuals regardless of whether this communication is based on truth or not" [16]. Hakayawa defines rumor as a type of social events in which a similar expression is dispersed at a large scale, in a short time through communicational chains [10]. Shibutani, also, says that rumor is a collective problem resolve in which people deal with harsh conditions and try to infer meaningful interpretations through gathering mental sources [25]. Table (2) illustrates a summary of mentioned definitions about rumor.

TABLE 1
ILLUSTRATES A SUMMARY OF MENTIONED DEFINITIONS ABOUT RUMOR

Researcher	date	definition
Rosno and Fayne	1976	Connected data through Grapevine (informal communication network)
Knapp	1994	Believing an issue with no official prove
shibutany	1966	Attempt for gathering mental sources through inference and meaningful interpretations
Michelson and Moulay	2000	Informal communication among people regardless of the truth of communication
Hayakawa	2002	Expansion of a similar expression in a short time and large scale

3.5 Generating factors of Rumor

A proper field and some factors are required to hasten the

formation and expansion of rumor among people. They include:

1. Intensity of excitations and emotional tensions

2. Information gap

3. Tendency to fraud and deviation

4. Threatening tendencies

5. Evident and hidden malice

6. Curiosity and query

7. Making others satisfied

4 CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF RESEARCH

According to theoretical frame and international theoretical literature, a concept is provided on whose base organizational silence is regarded as independent variable, organizational commitment as dependent variable, and organizational rumors as modifier..
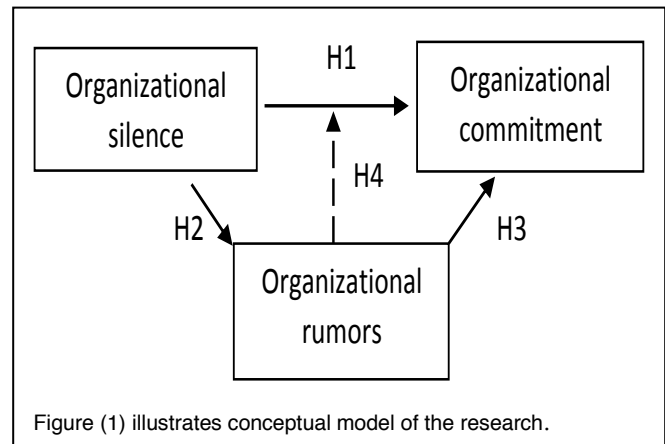

Figure (1) illustrates conceptual model of the research.

5 RESEARCH GOALS

• Studying the status of factors such as organizational silence, organizational rumors and organizational commitment

• Studying the influence of organizational silence over organizational commitment in the light of organizational rumors

6 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

• There is a relationship between organizational silence and organizational rumor

• There is a relationship between organizational silence and organizational rumor.

• There is a relationship between organizational rumors and organizational commitment.

• Organizational rumors influence the relationship between organizational silence and organizational commitment.

7 METHODOLOGY (RESEARCH DESIGN, RESEARCH DIMENSIONS, STATISTICAL POPULATION AND SAMPLE)

As a survey, and belonging to descriptive type of researches, this study is a subcategory of coherence researches. Local dimension is staffs of Provincial Municipality of Qom. The questionnaire was dispersed among statistical population including all staffs of Municipality, in fall 2011. Eventually, 50 questionnaires were under consideration and study.

8 AUTHORITY AND PERMANENCY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES

Before dispersion, the authority of the designed questionnaires was investigated by some professors and experts from Municipality of

Qom, and after such investigation and gathering experts' opinions required reforms were made. After dispersing a 30- number sample of questionnaires about organizational silence, organizational rumors, and organizational commitment among statistic population, it was concluded that the permanency of questionnaire for organizational silence was 0/681; that of organizational rumors was 0/ 853; and that of organizational commitment was 0/742. According to achieved indexes, and that all of them are higher than 0/6, the permanency of the questionnaires is proved.

9 FINDINGS

According to descriptive statistics, %16 of the statistic population was women and %84 was men. According to educational level, %32 have just finished high school, %14 associate degree, %42 bachelor degree, and %12 master degree and higher. In accordance with proficiency, %18 held less than 5 years of employment record, %26 between 5 to 15 years, %38 between 15 to 25, %18 more than 25 years. Based on employment status, %58 were officially employed, %24 contractual, and %18 other types.

TABLE 2

ILLUSTRATES DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS RELATED TO VARIABLES SUCH AS ORGANIZATIONAL SILENCE, ORGANIZATIONAL RUMOR, AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Statistic variable Factor	Num	Min	Max	Ave	Std Dev	Status
Organizational commitment	50	2.13	6.2	4.727	0.870	✓
Organizational silence	50	1.00	7	3.986	1.153	✓
Organizational rumors	50	1.50	7	4.176	1.439	✓

Utilized spectrum in this research is Sept-Likert. If the average 3 is regarded as border between satisfactory status and non-satisfactory one, according to essence of organizational commitment, this is a satisfactory average for organizational commitment. Also, based on the increase in the average, organizational silence indicates it expansion in organization, and that this average is below 3 in Municipality of Qom, it is interpreted that the silence status in this area is acceptable. So, the staffs of the Municipality of Qom have little tendency to organizational silence, and silent atmosphere is not dominant. There is the same conditions for organizational rumors; that is, if the average of rumors is higher than 4, there are much more rumors in organization. Since the data is numerical, we use Pearson's coherence spectrum. Accordingly, the results of this test are illustrated in table (3).

TABLE 3

Research variables		Org comm	Org silence	Org rumors
Org Comm	Coherence index	1	**0.449-	*0.357-
	Meaningfulness	-	0.001	0.011
Org silence	Coherence index	-	1	**0.788
Org rumors	Meaningfulness	-	-	0.000
	Coherence index	-	-	1
	Meaningfulness	-	-	-

Table (4) demonstrates that there is a reversed and meaningful relation between organizational silence, organizational rumor, and organizational commitment. That is, the increase in either organizational silence or rumors in Municipality of Qom led to lessening organizational commitment and vice versa. On the other hand, there is a meaningful direct relation between organizational silence and organizational rumors, in other words, they are both ipsilateral factors. That is, when organizational silence increases, the silent atmosphere in Municipality of Qom thickens by managers, and more organizational rumors go among staffs.

According to chief aim of this research mentioned above, studying the relation between organizational silence and organizational commitment happens through organizational rumor variable.

Table (4), also shows the relation between organizational commitment and organizational silence in the light of organizational rumors.

TABLE 4

ALSO SHOWS THE RELATION BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL SILENCE IN THE LIGHT OF ORGANIZATIONAL-RUMORS

Controlled variable		Research variables	Org silence	Org com
Org rumors	Org com	Coherence index	0.291-	1
		Meaningfulness	0.042	-
	Org silence	Coherence index	1	-
		Meaningfulness	-	-

This table indicates that there is still a meaningful and reversed relation between organizational commitment and organizational silence. However, through controlling organizational rumors, this relation does not strengthen, but rather weaken. That is, some effects of organizational silence over organizational commitment lessen through controlling the organizational rumors; some variations in organizational commitment are due to the effects of organizational rumors. Organizational rumor is regarded as a variable that influences the relation between organizational silence and organizational commitment, and strengthens the reversed relation among this pair.

Finally, table (5) indicates to what extent the changes in organizational commitment are predictable through organizational silence and organizational rumors. Accordingly, %20 of changes performed by organizational silence, and %13 happened through organizational rumors, are predictable.

TABLE 5

Statistical variable	Std. Error of the	Adjust R Square	R Square	R

Indep variable	Estimate			
Org silence	0.78588	0.185	0.201	0.449
Org rumor	0.82143	0.109	0.127	0.357

10 CONCLUSION

The organizational in which silent atmosphere is dominant, staffs have little tendency to official communication. Since people need to communicate in organization and state their thoughts, ideas, career or even personal problems, they cling to informal and unauthorized channels of communications and rumors, and in this field, they speak about their thoughts and problems or even their feelings. Consequently, organizational silence is one of influential factors in organizational rumors. Also, Morison and Milliken (2000) showed that organizational silence affects the scale of staff's commitment toward organization and may result in changes in such commitment.

In addition to organizational silence, organizational rumors effect organizational commitment as well. Rumor is regarded as a behavioral phenomenon and a subcategory of communicational issues; organizational rumor takes place when communication is performed in an informal ground and out of domain of organizational conventions. Whenever there is a bulk of rumors in an organization, the staff's commitment is changeable. Positive or negative changes in organizational commitment depend upon suitable or damaging content of the message dispersed among staffs.

On the basis of mentioned issues, conceptual model of this research is designed and the relation between and the influence of organizational silence over organizational commitment, both dependent on and independent from organizational rumors, was studied. The results indicate that the status of commitment and silence in organizations, regarding two other factors, are satisfactory.

Also, primary results of this research show that without controlling rumor variables, there is a reversed relation between organizational commitment and organizational silence. Considering the same conditions, there is a direct relation between rumors and silence in organizations. That is, while the organizational silence of staffs increases and silent atmosphere intensifies, organizational rumors increase and vice versa.

Complementary results indicate that, through controlling organizational rumors variable, there is still a reversed relation between silence and commitment in organizations. That is, as organizational silence increases, organizational commitment of staffs reduces.

11 SUGGESTIONS

According to stated issues, following suggestions are presented:

1. Organizational managers ought to attempt to classify and produce structural rules for staffs' communications.

2. If the formation of informal organizational groups has discipline, organizational rumors are prevented.

3. Make a frame for informal communications so that there is no permission to speak about any issue in informal relations.

4. The managers should listen to their staffs' ideas, attitudes, and confabulations. Opposition is not accepted.

5. Replace silent atmosphere with supporting one to make staffs speak; if the staffs do not communicate, their minds waste.

6. Programs in terms of organizational staffs' commitment and their reliance on values, beliefs and methods must seriously be followed.

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