



Investigating the Relationship between Silence and Organizational Commitment (Case Study: Shiraz University of Medical Sciences)

Revista Publicando, 5 No 15. (2). 2018, 893-906. ISSN 1390-9304

Investigating the Relationship between Silence and Organizational Commitment (Case Study: Shiraz University of Medical Sciences)

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between organizational silence and organizational commitment among employees of Shiraz University of Medical Sciences. This research is applied in terms of purpose and is correlational in terms of nature and method. The statistical population of this research is the employees of Shiraz University of Medical Sciences in 2017 and their number is 961 people. To determine the sample size, 276 people were selected as the sample size through the Morgan table. The data gathering tool is a questionnaire which has been proved in a preliminary study of validity and reliability of these questionnaires. In order to analyze the research data, descriptive and inferential statistics (structural equation model) were used using LISREL software version 8.7. Structural equation modeling results on research hypotheses show that there is a significant and negative relationship between organizational maintenance with organizational commitment among employees of Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, and organizational silence has a good effect on organizational commitment of employees. People need to have the power to control their environment and make decisions for their tasks, if they do not give them the opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings, they lack control over their work environment, and this causes self-doubt and loss of confidence leading to loss of credit of employees about organization. It means that the more scare feeling exists in the organization with atmosphere of silence. So, the commitment of employees of organization will decrease.

Keywords: Organizational commitment, Organizational silence, Acceptance silence, Defensive silence, Altruistic silence



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1. INTRODUCTION

Organizational silence is the refusal of employees to express behavioral, cognitive, and effective evaluations of organizational situations (Pinder and Herloss, 2001). But at the same time, the two main factors that cause employees to be silent in the organization are: Managers' fears of negative feedback from employees due to the risk of their interests and their position and the employee's perception of management's beliefs about it (Slad, 2008).

Although theorists express organizational commitment as predictors or silent commentators, Morrison and Mullickon, on the contrary, emphasize this variable as consequences of organizational silence. Marison and Millon suggest that organizational silence has led to cognitive imbalance among other variables, especially strong evidence to support the negative response of top executives and supervisors to negative feedback that prevents or delays or distorts (Mahmoudi et al., 2014).

Studies show that organizational silence leads to cognitive imbalance among other variables, and therefore, it results in lower motivation, satisfaction and commitment, which confirms this research results (Zhu, 2018). After reviewing the literature and theories about organizational silence, it can be said that organizational silence is a common phenomenon in today's organizations and a sign of identifying an organizational disease. Managers should track, identify and resolve the symptoms of the disease. Disregarding this can lead to stagnation and even death of the organization (Pinder and Herloss, 2001).

In the works of management, the employee is considered as the main source of change, creativity, learning and innovation. In the current situation, more successful organizations are able to make use of these resources and vital factors in their best form (Zareinejad et al., 2014). Therefore, the existing of conditions that employee can demonstrate the best efficiency and effectiveness are very necessary. The existence of human relationships and interactions among individuals is one of the factors to be considered. Unfortunately, in many organizations there is no room for employees to easily comment on their organization. In such a situation, employees will select the silence and the organization will no longer be able to use these valuable resources.



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Despite the fact that employee silence has become a common phenomenon in organizations, it is a concept that has not been well-known and has little scientific research done. Therefore, the researcher in this research is seeking to answer the question whether there is a meaningful relationship between organizational silence and organizational commitment in Shiraz University of Medical Sciences.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational silence

Organizations are now struggling in an environment that is constantly changing. The environment of most organizations is complex and unsustainable. Organizational managers also expect employees to be more responsible and innovative than ever, and to talk about organizational issues and problems so that they can respond to such a challenging environment. By providing their points of view, employees can provide the empowerment of the system and individuals.

One of the major barriers to the success of change programs is the lack of information and trust, and something called the key to the success of change programs, the lack of information and trust, and something called "organizational silence," which scientists call it "refusing to express opinions and beliefs about organizational issues and problems "(vakola, 2006).

Many employees have valuable suggestions to improve efficiency and resolve issues, but the ruling atmosphere and fear and threat have made employees reluctant to feel responsible, think about problems and aware others about their creative point of view. These people do not like to talk and debate about these issues just in their privacy and in friendly circles.

Organizational silence does not just mean not speaking, but it can also mean not writing, not presenting, not listening, and ignoring. In addition, force to silence, silence, censorship, repression, marginalization, depreciation and deprivation are also other indications of organizational silence (Hazen, 2006).

Organizational silence is an inefficient process that can eliminate all efforts by an organization and may occur in various forms, such as collective silence in meetings, low levels of participation in proposed schemes, low levels of collective voice, etc. (Cinaret et al., 2013).



Organizational silence models

1- Pinder and Harlose organizational silence Model

Pinder and Harlose (2001) define organizational silence to discourage employees from expressing behavioral, cognitive and effective assessments of organizational situations. The efficiency and development of each organization depends to a large extent on the proper application of human resources. As the corporations and organizations grow older, the problems of this massive power are also added.

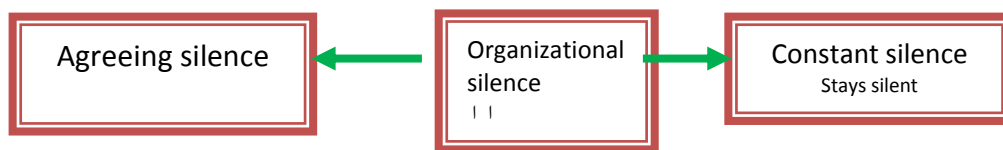


Figure 1: Pinder and Harlow organizational silence Model
(Source: Pinder and Harlose, 2001)

2. The organizational silence of Dyne et al

Silence is not always indicative of passive behavior; silence can be active, conscious, deliberate, and purposeful. This is an important point because it reveals the complex and multidimensional nature of silence. In reality, some forms of silence are strategic and non-passive - conscious, purposeful and intentional - such as when employees refrain from providing confidential information in front of others. The silence that is intentional and passive (based on submission and satisfaction to any situation) differs from silence that is intentional but non-passive (Van Dean et al., 2003: 100). Therefore, based on the presented content, the organizational silence dimensions are presented as follows.

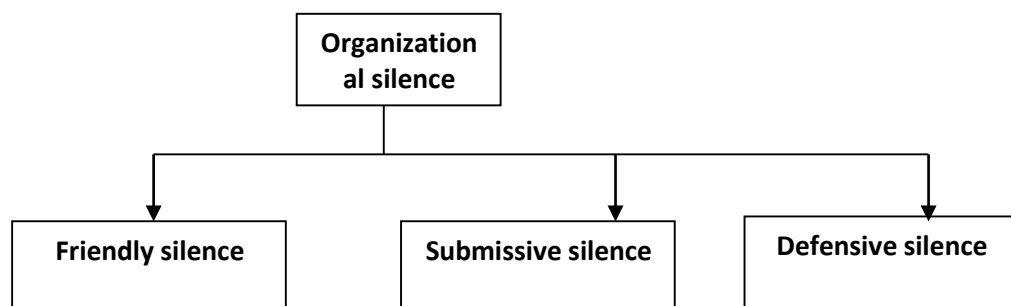


Figure 2: Van Dyne's Enterprise Silence Model (2003)



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1. Passive silence

When most people name someone as a silent person, they often mean that he is not actively communicating (Kronte, 2000: 281). The silence resulting from this kind of behavior is called passive silence, and refers to the refusal to provide ideas, information or opinions on the basis of submission and consent to any circumstance (Pinder & Harlose, 2001: 140).

2- Defensive silence

The motive for this type of silence is the fear of giving information. In fact, individuals may occasionally refrain from providing ideas, information, or comments, for the protection of their situation (self-protection motive). (Cheraghchi Haram, 2011 and (Aleksandrovna Maximova and Aleksandrovich Belyaev, 2017)

3. Prosocial Silence or friendly sound

The altruistic silence of the literature is based on organizational citizenship behavior, which is the refusal to express ideas, information or opinions related to work with the purpose of benefiting other people in the organization and based on the motives of altruism, sharing, and collaboration (Zarei et al., 2011).

Organizational commitment

The concept of organizational commitment was first introduced in 1961 by Ezioni, described as a general acceptance by the organization. He identifies three types of commitment of the members of the organization as follows: 1) Commitment with alienation means that a person does not feel psychologically obligated, but he has to remain as a member of the organization, and 2) a calculus-based commitment which means that the individual has a commitment to fair pay for fair work; (3) moral commitment, meaning that the individual internally values the mission of the organization and the job he himself has in the organization, and based on the value he believes does it (Safari and Ebrahimi, 2009: 96).

In general, scholars have identified three categories of commitment that lead to organizational commitment, emotional commitment, normative commitment, and continuous engagement. Obligations in terms of words are the use of work, the taking, keeping, covenant and covenant. It is:

1. Acting to commit a responsibility or belief;



2. Referral operation or referring to a subject;
3. Committing or accepting to do something in the future. (Sadeghi Far, 2007: 37)

Multidimensional Organizational Commitment Patterns

1. Eryc and Chantman models

Eryc and Chatman (1986) established their multidimensional model based on the assumption that commitment, attitudes toward the organization, and mechanisms have been developed through which they can develop an attitude (Modi, 1998: 390) believe that the link between the individual and the organization can take on three forms of compliance, replication, and internalization.

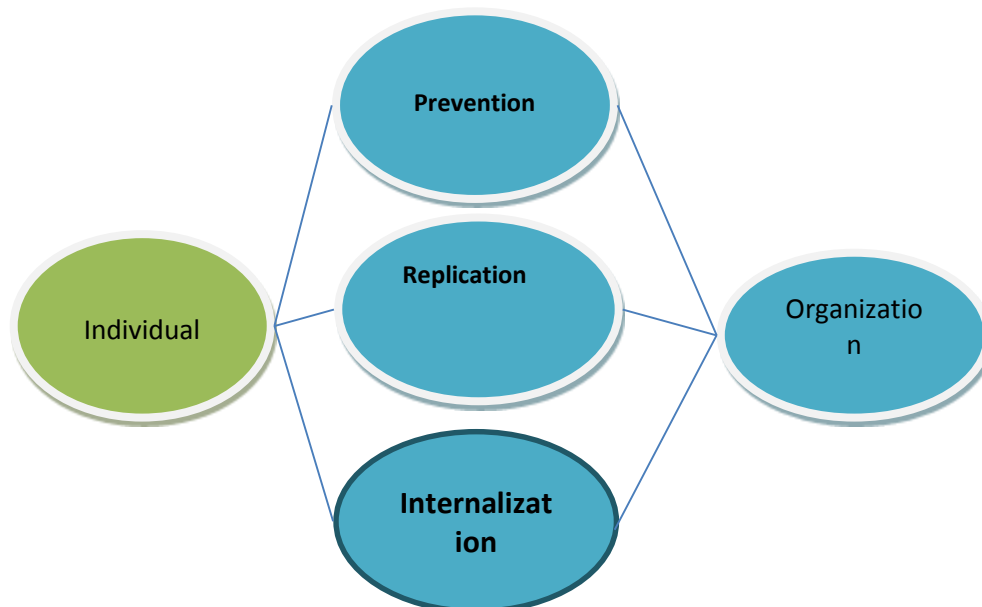


Figure (3): Eryc and Chutman's Model (1986)

Replication:

Replication occurs when an individual acquires the influence to create or maintain satisfactorily (Miir & Herscovich, 2001).

Prevention:

Compliance comes when common attitudes and behaviors are taken with them in order to obtain special rewards (Miier and Herscovich, 2001).

Internalize:

Internalization reflects the behavior of values and objectives that are consistent with the values or goals of the organization (Modi, 1998).



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A newer study of a larger sample revealed two types of commitment rather than three types of commitment that were called the instrumental commitment (compliance) and normative commitment (replication and internalization) (Robbins, 2011).

2. Organizational commitment from Allen & Meyer's perspective

Allen and Mayer (1997) examined organizational commitment from three aspects:

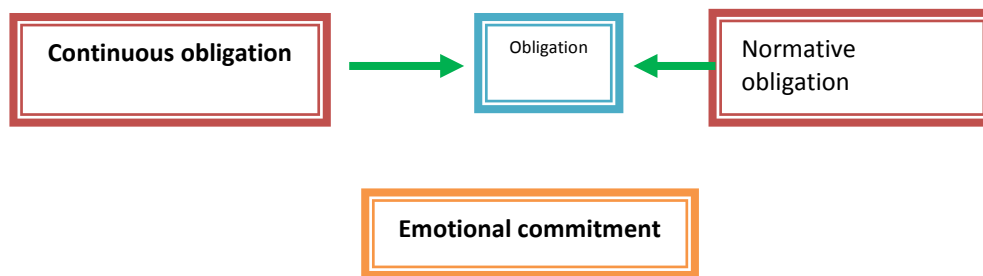


Figure (4): Organizational commitment from Allen & Meyer's perspective

(Source: Allen & Meyer,1997)

3. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Tavakoli, Arayesh et al. (2014) examined the relationship between organizational silence and organizational commitment of employees of Mobin Petrochemical Company. The main results of this research indicate that there is a negative and significant relationship between organizational silence and its dimensions with organizational commitment.

Mahmoudi et al. (2014) studied the factors affecting organizational silence and its relation with commitment, motivation and job satisfaction of employees. The results of this study indicate that the attitude of managers and supervisors to silence has a negative and inverse relationship with silence of employees and direct and positive relation with employees' silence behavior.

In addition, it was found that the attitude of high management and supervisors to silence with the commitment, satisfaction and job motivation of employees is inverse and directly related to communication opportunities. Moreover, the results showed that the effect of silence dimensions on the variable of employees' silence behavior is different. Supervisors' attitude toward silence had the most impact and the effect of



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employees' silence behavior on job variability, job satisfaction and job motivation. The existence of communication opportunities had the most impact on employees.

Tahermoghanlo et al. (2015) have investigated the effect of organizational silence on the emotional commitment of employees in the Tamine Ejtemaei Hospital in Ardabil. The result of the analysis showed that the common aspect of the four variables (silence obedience, defense silence, friendly silence, conservative silence) explain more than 60% of the variance of emotional commitment.

Harris Lacquai and Zafar Bakhtavari (2014) have examined the silence of the employee as determining the organizational commitment (Case study: Pakistan's higher education sector). The results showed that employees' silence has a negative relationship with organizational commitment and a significant statistical predictor of organizational commitment.

Research methodology

This research, in terms of purpose, is an applied research, and in terms of its nature and method, is correlated in the research section and it is periodically cross-sectional. The statistical population in this research is Shiraz University of Medical Sciences employees in 2017, which the total is 961 people. To determine the sample size from Morgan table, 276 people were selected as sample size. In this study, non-random sampling method was used.

In this research, for collecting information for the development of general research principles such as defining key concepts, designing the necessities, expressing the uses and explaining its importance from library studies such as Persian and Latin papers and Persian and Latin books on the variables of research and dissertations in this field, and internet resources and seminars have been used. In the field method, tools such as consulting and interviewing experts are used in designing the questionnaire and analyzing it. In this study, the main instrument of measurement is a questionnaire which is one of the common tools of research and direct method for obtaining research data. The questionnaire consists of two sections of general questions (gender and degree, degree of service experience and marital status) and specialized questions. The questionnaires include:



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1- The Dyne et al.'s silence questionnaire (2003), which has 13 questions and evaluates the three dimensions of admission silence, defensive silence and altruism, the items are based on the Likert 5-point option.

2- The Standard Organizational Commitment Questionnaire, Allen & Mir (1997), which includes three dimensions of emotional, continuous, and normative, and 19 questions, are measured based on the Likert scale.

Data analysis method

In order to provide a proper interpretation of the data, first, descriptive analyzes are carried out to examine the statistical population of the study. The purpose of this analysis is to evaluate the gender, academic and demographic profile of the studied samples so that a descriptive view of the subjects can be obtained. After a descriptive study, the statistical population of the study uses inferential methods to analyze the data obtained to test the hypotheses. In order to analyze the data, descriptive and inferential statistical methods of Structural Equation Modeling and LISREL software version 8.7 were used.

4. FINDINGS

The structural equation model, the theoretical model assumed by the researcher, tests quantitatively and shows the relation between the observed variables. In structural equations, standard coefficients and meaning numbers are used to confirm or reject assumptions.

The calculated indices and their values are similar to the confirmatory factor analysis.

The structural equation model for this research is shown in Figures 5 and 6.

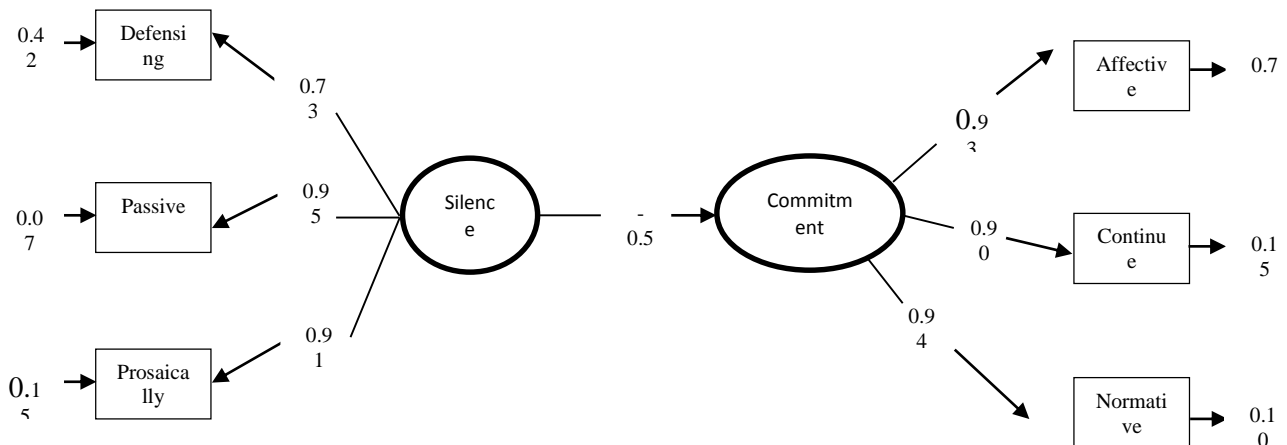
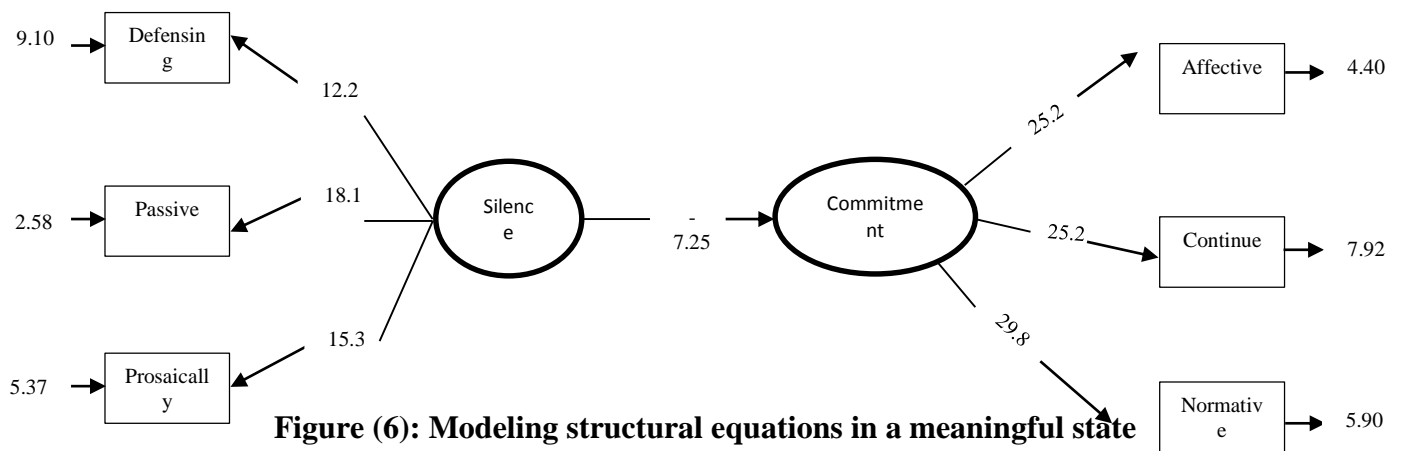


Figure (5): Modeling of structural equations in standard estimation mode



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As shown in Fig. 7, the hypothesized model presented in this study shows that the fit is a good model, and the value of the indexes of this model also indicates the fit of the model.

Main hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between organizational silence and organizational commitment among employees of Shiraz University of Medical Sciences.

According to Fig. 7, there is a significant number between organizational silence and organizational commitment (7.25) because it is less than 1.96. Therefore, this research hypothesis is confirmed, that is, the relationship between organizational silence and organizational commitment in the target society is negative and significant. According to Figure 5, the correlation coefficient between organizational silence and organizational commitment is 0.53. This is between 0.3 and 0.6, so it is clear that organizational silence has an impact on organizational commitment.

First sub hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between acceptance silence and organizational commitment among employees of Shiraz University of Medical Sciences.

According to Fig. 7, there is a significant number between acceptance silence and organizational commitment of 18.10 because this value is greater than 1.96. Therefore, this research hypothesis is confirmed, that is, the relationship between acceptance silence and organizational commitment in the target society is negative. According to Figure 5, the correlation coefficient between admission silence and organizational



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commitment is $0.4890 = 0.95 * 0.53$. This value is between 0.3 and 0.6, so it is clear that admission silence has a good effect on organizational commitment.

Second sub hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between defensive silence and organizational commitment among employees of Shiraz University of Medical Sciences.

According to Fig. 7, there is a significant number between defensive silence and organizational commitment of 12.20. Because this value is greater than 1.96, therefore this research hypothesis is confirmed, that is, the relationship between acceptance silence and organizational commitment in the target society is negative. According to Figure 5, the correlation coefficient between admission silence and organizational commitment is $0.3860 = 0.73 * 0.53$. This value is between 0.3 and 0.6, so it is clear that admission silence has a good effect on organizational commitment.

Third sub hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between altruistic silence and organizational commitment among employees of Shiraz University of Medical Sciences.

According to Figure 7, there is a significant number between altruistic silence and organizational commitment of 15.30 because this value is greater than 1.96. Therefore, this research hypothesis is confirmed, that is, the relation between altruistic silence and organizational commitment in the target society is negative. According to Figure 5, the correlation coefficient between altruistic silence and organizational commitment is $0.4591 = 0.91 * 0.53$. This value is between 0.3 and 0.6. Therefore, it is clear that altruistic silence has a good effect on organizational commitment.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of the research show that there is a significant and negative relationship between organizational silence and organizational commitment among employees of Shiraz University of Medical Sciences. Organizational silence has a good effect on employees' organizational commitment. Therefore, it can be said that if employees are reluctant to make comments and their ideas about the issues and problems of their organization and they are afraid to express their ideas, their organizational commitment is reduced.



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The results of this study are in line with the results of the researches of Valandyari (2016), Afshari et al. (2014), Tavakoli, Arayesh et al. (2014), Harris Lacavier (2014). The average organizational silence in Shiraz University of Medical Sciences was weak, and this shows that at Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, employees can express their opinions without any fear. Meanwhile, the average organizational commitment among employees of Shiraz University of Medical Sciences was moderate, which indicates that employees of Shiraz University of Medical Sciences are not loyal to their organization and have not a strong tendency to stay and continue to work at the Shiraz University of Medical Sciences.

Considering the fact that organizational silence in Shiraz University of Medical Sciences was poorly rated, it should be sought for reasons of the lack of commitment of employees in other factors. Therefore, by establishing programs for improving human resources management and setting up workshops for communication skills for managers and supervisors to address decision-making skills and eliminate conflicts in organizational problems and managers can reduce silence in employees by engaging people in communication and entering them into discussions and decisions.

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