



The effect of employee silence dimensions on affective commitment (study on employees of kpp pratama purwokerto)

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Abstract

This research is a survey research at employees of KPP Pratama (Tax Service Office) Purwokerto branch. This study takes the title: "The Effect of Employee Silence Dimensions to Affective Commitment". The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of Employee Silence dimensions (in Indonesian silence means silence, silence, silence, or silence) on employee affective commitment. The population in this study were employees of KPP Pratama (Tax Service Office) Purwokerto branch. The number of respondents taken in this study was 54 respondents, then purposive sampling method was used as a means of capturing respondents in accordance with this study. Based on the results of the study and data analysis using Multiple Regression Analysis shows that: (1) Acquiescent Silence has no significant effect on Affective Commitment, (2) Defensive Silence has a negative effect on Affective Commitment, (3) Diffident Silence has no significant effect on Affective Commitment, and (4) Deviant Silence negatively affects the Affective Commitment. The implication of the above conclusions is that it is better for Purwokerto Primary KPP employees to maintain a loyal attitude and willingness to share opinions or input to the organization as a form of participation in order to build a solid and solid organization. In the process, there is a need for positive enthusiasm and healthy competition among employees to strengthen family values as fellow members of the organization.

Keywords

Employee silence; acquiescent silence; defensive silence; diffident silence; deviant silence; affective commitment.

INTRODUCTION

Employees, as individuals, possess differences in behavior and experience. This gives unique contribution to employee behavior within the organization and how they work hard to build and maintain their social capital, which may become the reason why they typically do not engage in behaviors that may weaken or severe these vital social ties. It is only natural that employees, as human being, maintain their life and prosperity to the extent that they could keep themselves secured especially in terms of finance and social relationship. Milliken, Morrison, and Hewlin (2003) suggested that employees do not want to risk looking bad, as this will reflect on their identity, their role and their overall connection to the organization.

Similar to them, organizations too struggling to develop their strategy to recruit

the right man for the right place. According to Effendy (1982:52), it is not only the organization needing the employee; individuals join to an organization because they expect the organization to provide what they need. In other words, in order these needs to be fulfilled by the organization employees will expect that they are to be helpful and beneficial to the organization.

Despite the expectation, in reality, grievances and grudges can often be felt yet cannot be expressed. In the study carried out by Ryan and Oestreich (1991; quoted by Morrison and Milliken, 2000) on 260 employees in 22 organizations in the United States of America (USA), it has been stated that 70% of employees do not have the courage to openly speak about work related problems of issues. The issues are common, such as the process of decision-making,

inefficiency of the management, unjust sharing, organizational ineffectiveness and poor organizational performance were among issues emphasized as “indisputable areas” (Aydin et al., 2016). Furthermore, Aydin et al. (2016) stated that the most two common reasons for the silence of employees are the belief that talking about these issues openly will not create a change and the fear of receiving a negative answer. Milliken and Morrison (2003) stated that employees remain silent with the fear of being punished by their superiors or being stamped as a person who is a complainer and a problem maker by their co-workers as well.

Due to the reason above, it indicates that employees are more into keeping their jobs secure than risk it in one way or another. Research has indicated that employees often feel a sense of insecurity when asked by management to express opinions and ideas, as they believe that comments and recommendations for change may upset the current balance and organization or upset administrators (Deniz, Noyan, and Ertosun, 2013). It is this feeling of insecurity by employees, which results in the subconscious or conscious decision by an employee to remain silent. Penttila (2003) stated that this phenomenon is a sad fact of downturns: when employees stop speaking their minds because they fear losing their jobs, instead, they would stay to make peace of their current working life and perhaps avoid obstacles that may go in their way later.

Van Dyne, Ang, and Botero (2003) defined the phenomenon of Employee Silence as intentionally withholding idea, information, and opinions with relevance to improvements in work and work organizations. Although employee silence can some-times help decreasing managerial information overload, reduce interpersonal conflicts, and increase private informational privacy of co-workers (Tangirala and Ramanujam, 2008: 37), most of the time employee silence is a dysfunctional behavior. Employee silence can be very destructive to the extent that it possibly affects organizational success (Beheshtifar, Borhani and Moghadam, 2012). This is because employee is seen as one of the most critical organizational assets and recognized as fundamental for the effectiveness, competitiveness, and survival of organizations (Saks, Schmitt, and Klimoski, 2000:11), which are critical factors to the

success of organizations (Beheshtifar, Borhani and Moghadam, 2012).

However, if employees oppose to share their ideas and thoughts regarding problems within the organization, not only that it will reduce innovation in the workplace (Argyris and Schön, 1978), decrease employees’ positive job attitudes such as satisfaction and commitment (Morrison and Milliken, 2000; Vakola and Bouradas, 2005), it can even result in serious corruption in organizations (e.g. Enron and WorldCom; Ashforth and Anand, 2003). In fact, employee silence is inefficient process, which may take various forms, such as collective silence in meetings, low levels of participation in suggestion schemes, low levels of collective voice and so forth (Liu, Wu, and Ma, 2009). Another study by Milliken, Morrison, and Hewlin (2003) also argue that silence behavior may also cause cognitive dissonance, perceived lack of control, and not being viewed value resulting to low commitment of the employees.

From the studies above, it can be seen that silence gives many negative consequences to organizations, and one of the most critical factors to be concerned is level of commitment of employees (Irefin and Mechanic, 2014). As defined by Meyer and Herscovitch (2001:301) as well as Meyer, Becker and Van Dick (2006:666), commitment refers to a force that binds an individual to a target (social or non-social) and to a course of action of relevance to a particular target. When employees committed to organization, they have a serious urge to make a significant contribution to the workplace and go beyond the standard job obligations (Eroglu et al., 2011). It is an important attitude in assessing employees’ intention to quit and the overall contribution of the employee to the organization.

However according to Becker (1960), employees never commit to the organization emotionally, but what they just do is to continue working because they do not want to lose its status and salary. Senge (1999) added that one of the reasons why is because some employees have been familiar with environments where fear, intimidation, and silence are the norms, so they have to reconsider their way of working and behaving. This limits the capacity for openness and results in remaining silent, reinforcing the existing dissatisfying situation and creating “silent” norms and behaviors for the newcomers. Particularly when they

withhold their ideas and opinions based on the motive to make the workplace atmosphere and relationship to each employee not being uncomfortable and awkward. Thus, they can continue on their own pile of work since it seems safer to go along to get along (Penttila, 2003).

According to Nikmaram et al. (2012), the association between employee commitment and employee silence can vary significantly within an organization. Li - hong et al. (2011) and Nikolaou et al. (2011) also perused this relationship empirically, in which the studies confirm that there is a significant negative relationship between silence and commitment in organizations. Furthermore, since affective commitment is the issue here, the damages caused by silence may not only harm the organization, but also the employee himself.

One of many organizations in Indonesia that requires high commitment yet provides great deal of responsibility and risk is DJP (Direktorat Jenderal Pajak). The tax organization is well known to be one of the vital organizations in Indonesia, particularly because through DJP the tax can be regulated and functional to use as source of the nation's primary funding. Therefore, it is understandable if DJP have to search for competent and dedicated employees. This is because without them, the organization would likely to suffer from a weak sense of purpose and of the importance, function, contribution and significance of the work (Evetts, 2014), which can be risky since DJP is an official organization serving for public.

According to its blogpost titled "6 Alasan Mengapa DJP Harus Berubah" (6 Reasons Why DJP Should Change), the service quality offered by DJP has not been optimal towards taxpayers. Said that this was because of the mutations, job promotions, and remunerations that have not been regulated well, which later cause employees to less engage to the organization. The lines were intended referring to some problems often happened within an organization, yet cannot be addressed well to their superiors, which can cause the individuals to take option of silencing themselves. According to Morrison and Milliken (2000) as well as Hozouri, Yaghmaei, and Bordbar (2018), employees often feel that they are enforced to be silent in facing with concerns or difficulties. The reason maybe because they are expected to adapt to the work environment with less complaints since they

were recruited through highly competitive job market and so expected to be highly skilled, able to cope with uncertainty, able to work under pressure, demonstrate self-confidence, management skills, and a willingness to learn (Raybould and Sheedy, 2005; Daud et al., 2010).

Relevant to the study, those conditions may construct culture of silence among employees. The factors can be vary, such as the high tension within relations between manager and subordinate (particularly if the manager known as a difficult person), lack of confidence (working around chosen people can often cause individuals to feel that they are not good enough compared to their co-workers), high competition among employees, and fear of damaging relationship (employees have workloads to be done well and should adapt to organization's environment in no time; if they cannot do it well, this can cause others to gossiping and talking about their incompetence, thus cause awkward communication among them). As a result, these actions may harm their commitment towards the organization as commitment is viewed as an important predictor of employee loyalty and the performance of an organization (Hoek, 2016).

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Despite the discovery of negative relations and consequences of silence toward commitment of employees to organization mentioned earlier, it has not been widely studied (Amah and Okafor, 2008). Therefore, there is the need for more studies aimed at understanding the association between employee silence and affective commitment under researched area as previous study has shown affective commitment as the core essence of commitment (Mercurio, 2015). Though a lot of research has been carried out on these two construct individually, very few studies explore how they both are related to each other (Pinder and Harlos, 2001) especially the current study including diffident and deviant silence, which have not been widely studied. Yet, the current study will not carry the prosocial silence since it has been proven empirically to affect commitment positively (Deniz, Noyan, and Ertosun, 2013; Laeeque and Bakhtawari, 2014; Dedahanov and Rhee, 2015). This is based on the focus of the study that is scrutinizing the negative relations between employee silence and

affective behavior of employee commitment. Hence, the purpose of this study is to determine how employee silence dimensions influences affective commitment and extend these findings with different samples (Meyer, 2007) to previous studies.

Based on the discussion above, the researcher is interested to do the study of under research area with title "The Effect of Employee Silence Dimensions on Affective Commitment (Study on Employees of KPP Pratama Purwokerto)" and propose hypotheses as indicated below:

H1(a) : Acquiescent Silence has negative and significant effect on Affective Commitment

H2(b) : Acquiescent Silence has the most negative and significant effect on Affective Commitment

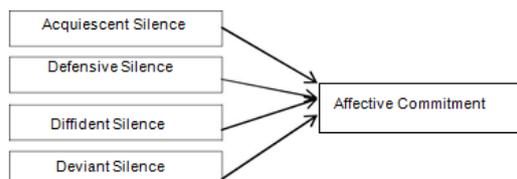
H3 : Defensive Silence has negative and significant effect on Affective Commitment

H4 : Diffident Silence has negative and significant effect on Affective Commitment

H4 : Deviant Silence has negative and significant effect on Affective Commitment

METHODS

Figure 2.1. Research framework



Population and Research Subject

Type of the current research is quantitative research using survey method, which aims to collect data through questionnaire to analyze the causal relationships and hypotheses testing to examine the research objects.

Population refers to the entire group of people, events, or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate (Sekaran, 2003:265). The population to be studied is employees who currently working for KPP Pratama Purwokerto. While sample is defined as a subset of the population, which comprises some members selected from it (Sekaran, 2003:266).

The sampling technique within the current study is based on nonprobability sampling, which refers to technique that does not provide the opportunity or an equal opportunity for each element or members of the population for being selected as a sample (Sugiyono, 2012). This implies the meaning that findings related to the current study cannot be generalized to population, which is due to the use of purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling refers to sampling confined to specific types of people who can provide desired information, either because they are the only ones who have it or conform to some criteria set by the researcher (Sekaran, 2003:277). Thus, the criteria can be arranged as follows.

- 1) Employee enlisted as fixed employee at KPP Pratama Purwokerto (not the temporary ones).
- 2) Employee who currently and has minimum 1-year experience working for KPP Pratama Purwokerto

Conceptual and Operational Definitions of Variables

Dependent Variable

Affective Commitment

Conceptual definition: Affective commitment is an affective or emotional attachment to the organization (Meyer and Allen, 1997).

Operational definition: Employees' perceptions based on affective behavior to contribute towards and stay at the organization.

Indicators : Feel happy to spend career with the organization, perceive the organization's problem as if it is theirs, perceive a strong sense of belonging to the organization, feel emotionally attached to the organization, feel like part of family at the organization, and perceive a great deal of personal meaning towards the organization (Meyer and Allen, 1997)

Independent Variable

Acquiescent Silence

Conceptual definition : Acquiescent Silence is withholding relevant ideas, information, or opinions based on resignation (Van Dyne, Ang, and Botero, 2003).

Operational definition : Behavior of which employees intended to silent themselves

because they think that speaking up is pointless and would not make any difference.

Indicators : Unwilling to speak based on disengaged behavior, passively withholding ideas based on resignation, passively keeps ideas about solutions to problems to him/herself, keeps ideas for improvement to him/herself based on low self-efficacy to make difference, and withholds ideas of how to improve work based on being disengaged (Van Dyne, Ang, and Botero, 2003).

Defensive Silence

Conceptual definition : Defensive Silence is withholding relevant ideas, information or opinions as a form of self-protection, based on fear (Van Dyne, Ang, and Botero, 2003).

Operational definition : Behavior of which employees are silent to protect themselves from external threats. This type of silence is consciously held and intentional.

Indicators : Neither speak up or suggest ideas for change based on fear, withholds relevant information due to fear, omits pertinent facts as self-protection, avoids expressing ideas for improvements due to self-protection, and withholds solutions to problems as he/she is motivated by fear (Van Dyne, Ang, and Botero, 2003).

Diffident Silence

Conceptual definition : Diffident Silence refers to insecurities, self-doubt, and uncertainty in respect of a situation and what to say, which may result from the fear of suffering embarrassment or losing the job (Brinsfield, 2013). Operational definition : Behavior of which employees are silent to avoid negative outcomes for themselves because they find difficulty to defend their interests, communicate thoughts, or show disagreement.

Indicators : Not feel confident about speaking up, have high uncertainty and doubts about themselves (low self-esteem), avoid embarrassment, avoid to appear incompetent, and protect image reputation (Brinsfield, 2013).

Deviant Silence

Conceptual definition : Deviant Silence is intentionally withholding information or opinion in order to lead their superior or colleague to decide wrongly, based on evil intention (Brinsfield, 2013).

Operational definition : Behavior of which employees are silent to lead their superior or colleague to decide wrongly.

Indicators : Have intention to get even with another employee, purposefully harm another employee, retaliate against the organization, purposefully harm the organization, and make management look bad (Brinsfield, 2013).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to analyze the relationship between employee silence dimensions on affective commitment. To test the hypotheses, the study use Multiple Regression Analysis using statistics software package namely IBM SPSS version 22.

Test of Research Instrument

Validity test

Validity indicates how well an instrument measures the construct it is intended to measure (Sapp and Jensen, 1997). The research done using 26 items from five scales consisting of six items of Affective Commitment, five items of Acquiescent Silence, five items of Defensive Silence, five items of Diffident Silence, and five items of Deviant Silence. The details are presented in the table 4.5.

Table 4.1 Validity Score of Items Used in the Questionnaire

Item	rx _y	r _{table}	Item	rx _y	r _{table}
AC1	0.644	0.268	DS3	0.780	0.268
AC2	0.826	0.268	DS4	0.854	0.268
AC3	0.784	0.268	DS5	0.778	0.268
AC4	0.830	0.268	DF1	0.809	0.268
AC5	0.823	0.268	DF2	0.834	0.268
AC6	0.816	0.268	DF3	0.832	0.268
AS1	0.938	0.268	DF4	0.716	0.268
AS2	0.930	0.268	DF5	0.828	0.268

AS3	0.948	0.268	DV1	0.752	0.268
AS4	0.940	0.268	DV2	0.941	0.268
AS5	0.916	0.268	DV3	0.887	0.268
DS1	0.849	0.268	DV4	0.887	0.268
DS2	0.833	0.268	DV5	0.887	0.268

Source: Primary data 2018

Based on table 4.5, the validity score of each item, which constructs Affective Commitment (AC1 – AC6) are valued more than the rtable (>0.268). Thus, the total of six items are all valid. The validity score of each item constructing Acquiescent Silence (AS1 – AS5) are valued more than the rtable (>0.268). Thus, the total of five items are all valid. The validity score of each item constructing Defensive Silence (DS1 – DS5) are valued more than the rtable (>0.268). Thus, the total of five items are all valid.

Furthermore, the validity score of each item constructing Diffident Silence (DF1 – DF5) are valued more than the rtable (>0.268). Thus, the total of five items are all

Table 4.2 Reliability Score of Variables Used in the Study

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
Affective Commitment	0.877
Acquiescent Silence	0.964
Defensive Silence	0.898
Diffident Silence	0.876
Deviant Silence	0.927

Source: Primary data 2018

From table 4.6, it can be seen that the reliability scores are considered high ($\alpha > 0.7$) since Affective Commitment, Acquiescent Silence, Defensive Silence, Diffident Silence, and Deviant Silence scored 0.877, 0.964, 0.898, 0.876, and 0.927, respectively. This indicates that the instruments are all sufficiently reliable, which means they can be used as measurement tool for the research.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis is the extended form of simple regression analysis that is used to analyze the effect of two or more independent variables on a single dependent

Table 4.3 Regression Statistics

Component	Value
R Square	0.402
Adjusted R Square	0.353
F	8.243
Significance value	0.000

valid. The validity score of each item constructing Deviant Silence (DF1 – DF5) are valued more than the rtable (>0.268). Thus, the total of five items are all valid.

Reliability test

Reliability is the tendency towards consistency, which found in repeated measurements of the similar phenomenon (Carmines and Zeller, 1979).

Reliability score can be seen by the value of Cronbach's alpha, with values greater than 0.70 is considered as sufficiently reliable (Dedahanov and Rhee, 2015; Deniz and Alsaffar, 2013; Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). The details are presented in the table 4.6.

variable. There are three things to be considered when using regression analysis that are R square (to acknowledge to what extent independent variable(s) is able to explain dependent variable), p-value (to acknowledge whether independent

variable(s), as a whole, has significant influence on dependent variable), and Regression coefficient of each independent variable (to see whether the coefficient is significant).

Regression model analysis



Source: Primary data 2018

As presented in the table 4.13, Coefficient of determination or R Square values 0.402. R Square is used to indicate to what extent the regression model fits the data. To simply put, it is used to determine how well the independent variables (Acquiescent Silence, Defensive Silence, Diffident Silence, as well as Deviant Silence) are able to explain or describe the dependent variable that is Affective Commitment.

The value of 0.402 indicates that the independent variables can statistically explain or describe the variance of dependent variable by 40.2%. While the rest value of 59.8% (100% - 40.2%) of the variance is caused by factors other than the proposed independent variables (unknown factors). Furthermore, it can be seen that the F values 8.243 (>2.56), meaning that the regression model fulfills the goodness of fit.

Table 4.4 Summary of Regression Analysis

Variables	β	p value	Status
Acquiescent Silence \square Affective Commitment	0.161	0.190	Not significant
Defensive Silence \square Affective Commitment	(-0.410)	0.021	Significant
Diffident Silence \square Affective Commitment	(-0.076)	0.663	Not significant
Deviant Silence \square Affective Commitment	(-0.341)	0.006	Significant

Source: Primary data 2018

The p value used to indicate the significance of statistical hypothesis test that represents probability of an event occurrence. Lower p value (typically ≤ 0.05) means stronger evidence to go against the null hypothesis. According to table 4.14, p value of four variables relationships are vary. Starting from the lowest p value possessed by relationship between Deviant Silence and Affective Commitment, meaning that this relationship is statistically significant or has chance of being true by 99.4% (1 - 0.006) with regression coefficient (β) valued (-0.341). It is then followed by the relationship between Defensive Silence and Affective Commitment with p value of 0.021 and β valued (-0.410).

However, the other two relationships have p value of more than 0.05. Between Acquiescent Silence and Affective Commitment has p value of 0.190 with β valued 0.161, followed by relationship between Diffident Silence and Affective Commitment that has p value of 0.663 with β valued (-0.076). This means that these two

relationships are not significant or slightly have chance of being true.

CONCLUSION

Based on result of the study on employees of KPP Pratama Purwokerto, the conclusions are presented as follows.

- a. Acquiescent Silence does not have negative and significant effect on Affective Commitment, meaning that an increase on Acquiescent Silence will not be followed by a decrease on Affective Commitment. Instead of silencing themselves, employees of KPP Pratama Purwokerto choose to share their ideas with their colleagues or managers in order to make difference when the situation needed as well as to improve the quality of their work performance since they are seriously attempt on accepting organizational aims and values, as well as achieving organizational goals. Thus, it proves that the employees of KPP Pratama Purwokerto are disengaged from Acquiescent Silence.

b. Acquiescent Silence does not have the most negative and significant effect on Affective Commitment, instead Defensive Silence proves to have the most negative and significant effect on Affective Commitment.

c. Defensive Silence has negative and significant effect on Affective Commitment, meaning that an increase on Defensive Silence will be followed by a decrease on Affective Commitment. When an employee actually has relevant ideas that might bring solution or improvement for change, he feels reluctant to speak based on fear. The fear can come from many directions such as fear that the ideas would cause him to perceive negative risks he is unable to handle and fear that his information might hurt or damage his relationship with other employees or managers. Thus, it proves that employees of KPP Pratama Purwokerto are engaged to Defensive Silence.

d. Diffident Silence does not have negative and significant effect on Affective Commitment, meaning that an increase on Diffident Silence will not be followed by a decrease on Affective Commitment. The occurrence can be explained by factors such as employees tend to speak up about what bothers them rather than keeping it only for themselves based on protecting image reputation or avoiding embarrassment. They feel less uncertain or doubt about themselves or what they can actually do, so speaking up about problems or concerns would likely be done than to have the uncertainties and worries left unspoken, which can add up anytime and affect their work performance. Thus, it proves that employees of KPP Pratama Purwokerto are disengaged from Diffident Silence.

e. Deviant Silence has negative and significant effect on Affective Commitment, meaning that an increase on Deviant Silence will be followed by a decrease on Affective Commitment. The occurrence can be explained by factor of employees leading their superior or colleagues to decide wrongly because they want to be even with other employees or to make the management look bad. This may be caused by a strong motivation to prove that they are worth and do deserve to stay at the organization. Thus, it proves that employees of KPP Pratama Purwokerto are engaged to Deviant Silence.

Implications

Theoretical Implications

1. Despite the fact that previous study done by Dedahanov and Rhee (2015) concluded that Acquiescent Silence to be the main negative predictor of Affective commitment, the current study contributes to the silence literatures that the main predictor, which in the current study is Defensive Silence, can be vary depending on the chosen organization structure and employee behaviors.

2. The study covers up the investigation of two dimensions of silence, which are still not widely known, namely Diffident Silence and Deviant Silence (Brinsfield, 2013).

3. The study can be used as a guideline to do future studies on similar theme, namely Employee Silence and Employee Commitment.

Practical Implications

1. Result of the study demonstrated that Acquiescent Silence and Diffident Silence does not have negative and significant effect on Affective Commitment, meaning that employees of KPP Pratama Purwokerto shall maintain these acts since they might bring meaningful discussion, ideation, or groupthink that can be source of feedback and invite different perspective.

2. Result of the study demonstrated that Defensive Silence has negative and significant effect on Affective Commitment, meaning that employees of KPP Pratama Purwokerto shall be given chance to actually realize expressing ideas or solutions to problems are the primary thing to consider in order to improve the organization as where they want to stay.

3. Result of the study demonstrated that Deviant Silence has negative and significant effect on Affective Commitment, meaning that employees of KPP Pratama Purwokerto shall consider carefully about their behaviors in finding a way to remain at the organization. Somehow, it is where they want to stay so acts such as harming another employee or even the organization could possibly bring negative impact on the organization as a whole. For instance, cause confrontation,

anger, and stress among organizational members.

4. The paper can assist management of KPP Pratama Purwokerto to be more aware of employees engaged to silence since it can be a culture, which might damage the organization, thus can take necessary steps to encourage employees voicing up their concerns and ideas.

5. Hopefully, management of KPP Pratama Purwokerto will keep maintaining the employees to feel positive about the organizational aims, value, and goals in order to increase their emotional bonds and sense of belonging towards KPP Pratama Purwokerto as a whole organization.

Limitations and directions for future research

Based on result of the study on employees of KPP Pratama Purwokerto, the limitations and directions for future research are presented as follows.

a. Responses of the respondents are related to their perceptions at that moment. This can cause response bias since researcher did not have control over the time spent to respondents filling in questionnaires.

b. The study investigated the link between four dimensions of silence and only one type of commitment. Therefore, it is suggested to future studies conducting research on associations between the multidimensional construct of silence and other types of commitment, namely Normative Commitment and Continuance Commitment.

c. Even though the study has covered up four dimensions of silence, it did not take account on investigating other dimensions of silence namely Relational, Ineffectual, and Disengaged (Brinsfield, 2013).

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