

# Does Employee Silence influence employee commitment of communications companies in Qatar?

Mohd Abdulla Al-Hajri

Researcher, Department of Public Administration, School of Business, Mutah University

## *Abstract*

*This research paper aims to examine the influence of employee silence on employee commitment of communications companies in Qatar. The population of this research consisted of all employees working in the communications companies in Qatar. Two hundred fifty employees (250) of communications companies in Qatar were randomly selected as a sample for the current study. Two hundred and thirty five (235) questionnaires were returned. A good response rate (94%) was reached. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used as a statistical analysis method to test hypothesis. The result of the research indicated that there is a negative significant influence of employee silence on employee commitment. Hence, Employee silence reduces organizational commitment. Based on the study results, it was concluded that employee voice is one of the most important factors that derive employee-related outcomes such as employee commitment.*

**Keywords:** *Employee Silence, employee commitment, communications companies, Qatar.*

## **1. Introduction**

For employees to derive benefits from their precious assets particularly their employees, dozens of factors were elaborated in an effort to bring the goal into effect. The literature is rich in thoughts, opinions, practices and suggestions that help organizations the desired organizational goals. Employee satisfaction, loyalty, commitment, engagement, relationships, motivation, training, performance, promotion, innovation, citizenship and intention to leave were just examples of weighty concepts that organizations need to consider in this respect. One more factor that gained little attention despite its prevalence in organizations regardless of their country of origin is employee silence.

Employee silence was first evolved by Morrison and Milliken (2000) in a conceptual paper entitled “organizational silence: a barrier to change and development in a pluralistic world”. The aim of the paper was to explore motives as well as influences of silence that constitute the climate of silence within organizations. In another seminal work conducted by Pinder and Harlos (2001) entitled “organizational silence: a barrier to change and development in a pluralistic world”, employee silence was defined as an employee retention of knowledge, ideas, thoughts or opinions about, or simply keep silent, in response to their feelings of injustice. According to Morrison (2014), consequent studies were based on Pinder and Harlos’s (2001) definition with an expanded view of employee silence.

On the strength of Morrison and Milliken (2000), Pinder and Harlos (2001) and Morrison (2014), one can conclude that employees choose to speak up or hush up to express or retain their information. Employee choice, of course, is conditional and driven by numerous factors. Rajesh and Priyadarsini (2016) identified the lack of convenient communication system within the organization as a key inhibitor of employee voice. Other factors that result in employee silence were reported in numerous studies. Examples of these factors include employee fear (Karaca, 2013) such as fear of to be marked as a troublemaker or to obtain underestimated performance appraisal (Morrison, 2014), absence of self-confidence and protecting relationships with colleagues and supervisors (Akin and Ulusoy, 2016) and deficiency of experience (Bastug et al., 2016).

On the other hand, Demiralay and Lorcu (2015) confirmed that employee silence is related to numerous outcomes on both organizational and individual levels. Wang and Hsieh (2013) cited various destructive outcomes emerged in consequence of employee silence such as reduction of employee innovation, employee resistance to change, and reduction of employee satisfaction along with employee commitment. OC is the basis of commitment of an individual to the organization and empowering the relation between individual and the organization (Nafei, 2016). Silence outcomes on the organization itself are beyond the objectives of

the current study. Akin and Ulusoy (2016) identified that employee silence is positively correlated to employee burnout. Doğu and Yilmaz (2015) found a significant as well as direct relationship between organizational silence and employee performance. However, no significant influence of organizational silence on employee commitment was found according to Mirmohammadi and Marefat's (2014) results. Particularly, Sayğan (2011) detected a negative relationship between organizational silence and employee commitment. Singh and Malhotra (2015) found a negative relationship between organizational silence and organizational trust.

There is a growing awareness about employee silence in organizations and literature about the relationship between commitment and employee silence. There have been no consistent results (Deniz et al., 2013). Although most researchers consider silence meaningful beyond the absence of voice, there has been little accomplished in the way of construct development, operationalisation and empirical research (Brinsfield, 2009 as cited by Cetinkaya & Karayel, 2019). Therefore, the present study aims to extend the silence literature by providing empirical evidence of the relationship between silence and employee commitment. There is little empirical evidence in the literature aimed at defining, analyzing, and coping with it. Silence climate has an impact on the ability of organizations to detect errors and learn. So the main objective of the study to examine the influence of employee silence on employee commitment of communications companies in Qatar.

## **2. Literature review and hypotheses development**

### **2.1 Employee silence**

Silence can be studied at two levels: the individual level (employee silence) and the organizational level (organizational silence). Silence is the employee's motivation to withhold or express ideas, information, and opinions about work related improvements " (Donaghey, et al. 2011). According Çinar et al. (2013), the first term could take over the second when the majority of the employees say nothing about organizational issues. In other words, organizational silence refers to a collective behavior in which all employees or at least most of them engaged in silence. For this study, silence was examined at the individual level. Therefore, the study uses employee silence as an individual behavior. The silence of an employee that contains failure to disclose emotions, ideas and opinions related to employee organizations and the silence and harm to organizations and therefore is seen as undesirable behavior in organizations (Gürer & Deniz, 2018). Organizational silence is expressed in contrast to the organizational voice, as the condition of employees is unable to advertise their ideas on organizational matters freely (Coban & Sarıkaya, 2016). Although employee voice and silence are seem to be different from each other, actually they are so interrelated terms and have equivalent importance in organizations (Moaş, 2013). Tan (2014) defined organizational silence as a behavior of an organization as it cannot produce solutions required to solve its problems. Employee silence is intentional withholding of any form of genuine expression about the individual's behavioural, cognitive and affective evaluations of their organisational circumstances to persons who are perceived to be capable of affecting change or redress (Akcın et al., 2016) Employee silence can be defined as censorship, quieting, suppression, exclusion, marginalization trivialization and other forms of discounting (Nafei, 2016) Employee silence is intentional withholding of any form of genuine expression about the individual's behavioural, cognitive and affective evaluations of their organisational circumstances to persons who are perceived to be capable of affecting change or redress (Akcın et al., 2016) Employee silence can be defined as censorship, quieting, suppression, exclusion, marginalization trivialization and other forms of dis.101). According to Reزابeygil and Almasi (2014), silence behaviour states not speaking situation and voice behaviour states speaking about the existing issues and events in organizations (ülgen et al., 2019). Employee silence is intentional withholding of any form of genuine expression about the individual's behavioural, cognitive and affective evaluations of their organisational circumstances to persons who are perceived to be capable of affecting change or redress (Akcın et al., 2016). Employee silence is intentional withholding of any form of genuine expression about the individual's behavioural, cognitive and affective evaluations of their organisational circumstances to persons who are perceived to be capable of affecting change or redress (Akcın et al., 2017) Employee silence can be defined as censorship, quieting, suppression, exclusion, marginalization trivialization and

other forms (Coban & Sarıkaya, 2016 ). Morrison and Milliken (2000) regarded employee silence as employee's retention of knowledge about job or organization improvement. More understanding of employee silence can be achieved through the identification of dimensions of this construct. However, employee silence may develop into team and organizational level Phenomena (Cetinkaya & Karayel, 2019 ). Said and Diar (2014) defined silence as when the members prefer to be silent about some secret and confidential information and statistics.

Academics have described employee silence in four different forms based on employee behaviours; acquiescent silence, defensive silence, prosocial silence and protective silence. (e.g. Pinder and Harlos 2001; Cakici 2010; Perlow and Repeating; 2009, Alparslan 2010 ). Dyne et al. (2003) identified three main forms of silence: acquiescent silence, defensive silence and prosocial silence. Subsequent research on organizational and employee silence adopted these three forms. Tan (2014) predicted organizational silence by organizational justice using acquiescent silence, defensive silence and prosocial silence as three main dimensions to measure organizational silence. Employee silence may be divided into two types as defensive silence including disengaged behaviour based on resignation and self-protective behaviour based on fear and proactive silence, which is proactive and other-oriented silence based on altruism and cooperation (Song et al., 2017; as cited by Cetinkaya & Karayel, 2019 ). The employee's silence has three dimensions including defensive silence (employees conceal their thoughts because of fear), acquiescent silence (employees conceal their thoughts due to fear of fire) and pro-social silence (employees do not want to benefit their colleagues) (Shaikh & Amar, 2017). Subkowiak (1997) classifies silence as acoustic silence and pragmatic silence; Bruneau (1973) classifies it as psycholinguistics, interactive and sociocultural silence [cited in Gencer et al., 2018]. Zehir and Erdogan (2011) used acquiescent silence, defensive silence, and prosocial and silence to measure employee silence. According to Tan (2014), acquiescent silence is stamped by passiveness that refers to employee rejection to share knowledge, ideas or opinions. Employees in the second form of silence, defensive silence, engaged in silence behavior in order to protect him. The third form of employee silence related to prosocial silence, in which the employee keep silent in order to protect his colleagues. Princfield (2013) introduces broader dimensions of the behavior of silence as follows: deviant silence (silence as deviant behavior), relational silence, defensive silence,, diffident silence, acquiescent silence (silence that stems from the perception that "there is no use in speaking out"), and "factor six" (silence that stems from indifference) (as cited by Alparslan & Erdem, 2015 ). According to Rajesh and Priyadarsini (2016), acquiescent silence is grow when an employee beliefs that his voice makes no difference. When employees feel fear, they show a defensive behavior as a way of self-protection. In the final type of silence, which as prosocial silence, employees seek to protect the interests of their colleagues. Wang and Hsieh (2013) stated that these three dimensions of employee silence were categorized based on employee motives. For example resignation is the stimulation of acquiescent silence, fear is the stimulation of defensive silence and cooperation is the motive of prosocial silence.

## **2.2 Employee Commitment**

Organizational commitment is conceptualized and measured in various forms (Korkmaz, 2018 ). These different perspectives are more focused on the attitudinal and behavioral orientation of organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). So Organizational commitment describes the attitude and behaviour of an employee towards an organization goal (Deniz et al., 2013 ). Employee commitment is viewed as an important variable in facilitating the understanding of an employee's attitudes and behavior in the workplace (Hui et al, 2000). Joo and Park (2010) defined organizational commitment in terms of employee's feelings towards the organization as a whole. For the current study, employee commitment refers to employee emotional attachment to his job and aspires to stay doing that job due to his perception of job importance for him in comparison with other external jobs. A committed employee is the one who is unwilling to leave the organization (Baba and Ghazali, 2017; Al-Hawary & Alajmi, 2017 ). According to Morrison and Milliken (2000) as well as Hozouri et al, (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 . In the commitment model developed by Meyer & Allen (1987), these three themes are conceptualized as, affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1993, Gellatly et al., 2006). Employee commitment has three dimensions: affective commitment, continuous commitment, normative commitment (Allen and Meyer, 1990).

### **2.3 Employee silence and employee commitment**

There is an increasing awareness about the silence in organizations and literature about the relation between commitment and employee silence has not consistent findings (Deniz et al., 2013). Employee silence is feeling worthless, perceived lack of control and creates cognitive dissonance that leads to decreased motivation, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction (Otsupius, 2019). A study by Deniz et al., 2013 found a significant and negative relationship between affective commitment and one of employee silence dimension (defensive silence). Kim & Lee (2015) found that there is positive relationship between organizational commitment and organizational silence in their study on travel agencies employees in South Korea. One of the dysfunctional employee behaviors at workplace is silence, which can lead to negative outcomes (Karabay et al., 2018 ). Employee silence can be very destructive to the extent that it possibly affects organizational success (Beheshtifar et al., 2012). According to Allen and Meyer (1990), commitment was categorized into three forms: affective commitment, normative commitment and continual commitment. Affective commitment is employee attachment to the organization, normative commitment refers to employee willingness to stay with organization, while continual commitment is a result of a comparison between the perceived cost of staying with the organization and the perceived cost of opportunity (Deniz et al., 2013). Hesam & Raeesi (2016) found that there is positive relationship between organizational commitment and sub-dimensions and organizational silence in their study on health employees in Iran. One of the most negative outcomes of silence cited by Wang and Hsieh (2013) were employee attitudes like job satisfaction and commitment. For Deniz et al. (2013), defensive silence has a negative influence on one dimension of commitment, which is affective commitment. Silencing an employee not only slows down organizational development, but also causes many consequences such as low levels of employee commitment (Nafei, 2016 ). Moreover, employee silence reduces organizational commitment (Vakola and Bouradas, 2005). Seymen & Korkmaz (2017) found that there is positive relationship between organizational commitment and organizational silence in their study on public health employees. OS is a variable which can prevail about barriers to effectiveness, commitment and performance (Beer 2009 as cited by Nafei, 2016c). Accordingly, the following hypothesis was supposed:

**H1: employee silence has a significant as well as negative influence on employee commitment.**

More specifically:

H1a: Acquiescent silence has a significant as well as negative influence on employee commitment.

H1b: Defensive silence has a significant as well as negative influence on employee commitment.

H1c: Prosocial silence has a significant as well as negative influence on employee commitment.

## **3 Research methods**

### **3.1 Population and Sample**

Two hundred fifty employees (250) of communications companies in Qatar were randomly selected as a sample for the current study. A same number of questionnaires were distributed to them to collect data. Two hundred and thirty five (235) questionnaires were returned. A good response rate (94%) was reached.. Table (1) provides an overall view of the sample characteristics:

**Table 1: Sample characteristics**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Gender	Male	182	77.5%
	Female	53	22.5%
Education	Diploma and less	74	31.5%
	Bachelor	129	54.9%
	Postgraduate	32	13.6%
Experience	Less than 5	45	19.1%
	From 5 to 10	87	37.0%
	From 10 to 15	65	27.6%
	More than 15	38	16.3%

### 3.2 Study Instrument

The main source used to collect data that selected in accordance with several studies was employees working at different organization. However, the researcher was uncertain that employees will express their true responses since the questionnaire used to collect that data contains items ask them to report their responses about a negative behavior. Therefore, items adopted from previous studies to measure employee silence were changed to ask employees about their co-workers behavior. An example of items included in the questionnaire was “I know a co-worker who retains useful information that can be used to help solving problems of our department”. The Likert-type scale which is rated between 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree) consists of 15 scale items and three sub dimensions as acquiescent silence, defensive silence, prosocial silence were adopted based on Zehir and Erdogan (2011), Wang and Hsieh (2013), Acaray and Akturanb (2015), Demiralay and Lorcu (2015) and Singh and Malhotra (2015). and ‘organizational commitment scale’ developed by Meyer & Allen (1991) to measure the level of employees commitment was measured using affective commitment, normative commitment and continual commitment consists of 15 scale items .

### 3.3 Operational definitions of the study variables

#### Independent Variable

**Acquiescent Silence:** abstaining from sharing knowledge, feeling and opinion about current status because of dispensation of individuals(Dyne et al. 2003).They accept the prevailing circumstances and they are not inclined to speak, participate or spend effort to change current status. It is the withholding of information, views, opinions and ideas in the face of developments in the Organizations (Nafei, 2016).

**Defensive Silence:** defensive silence as an action to protect themselves from threats associated with expressing their knowledge, opinions and thoughts because of their fears (Van Dyne et al., 2003). It as an action to protect themselves from threats associated with expressing their knowledge, opinions and thoughts because of their fears. Defensive silence as an action to protect themselves from threats associated with expressing their knowledge, opinions and thoughts because of their fears (Nafei, 2016).

**prosocial silence:** is keeping organizational information for caring the others utility in organizations (Nafei, 2016). It is a voluntary and pro-active behaviour showed by the employees who desire to help to others or share their responsibilities (Podkasoff et al., 2000).

#### Dependent Variable

**Affective Commitment:** is the emotional bond of an employee to the organization, the identity of the organization, and the willingness to remain in the organization (Korkmaz, 2018). AC is an emotional

attitude where individuals are in communication with the organization and are happy to be a part of it by identifying themselves with their organization (Meyer and Allen, 1997).

**Continuance Commitment:** It is the employee's continued stay in the organization because of the inability to see the costs incurred when leaving the institution (Korkmaz, 2018). CC is the situation of continuing organization membership with the thought that if they quit, its costs will be too high (Meyer and Allen, 1997).

**Normative Commitment:** employees' feelings of obligation towards organization (Korkmaz, 2018). NC emphasizes employees' tendency of commitment and loyalty to the organization since they are socialized in a culture that promotes self-commitment and loyalty (Meyer and Allen, 1997).

### 3.4 Reliability and Validity

Validity realises as the ability of the study tool to measure what is supposed to be measured for a variable. concurrently, reliability points to the extent of how consistent the study measurement model is evaluating the intended latent variables (Ahmad et al., 2016). The study tool validity is estimated through the convergent validity using the average variance extracted (AVE), while the discriminant validity that was measured through the square root of average variance extracted ( $\sqrt{AVE}$ ) for the variable should be greater than the correlation between the respective variables and higher than 0.60 (Al-Hawary and Alwan, 2016; Goode et al., 2017).

Besides, the study tool reliability is evaluated through the Internal reliability using the loadings of the items on their variables that should be higher than 0.5, as well as the composite reliability that measured by MacDonald's omega coefficient where it should be higher than 0.70 based on studies of (Sung et al., 2019). Table (2) presents the results which attained through validity and reliability tests of the study tool

**Table 2: Reliability and validity results**

Constructs	Items	Loadings	AVE	$\sqrt{AVE}$	C.R
<b>Acquiescent Silence</b>	AS1	0.624	0.506	0.711	0.836
	AS2	0.715			
	AS3	0.681			
	AS4	0.754			
	AS5	0.773			
<b>Defensive Silence</b>	DS1	0.588	0.518	0.720	0.842
	DS2	0.762			
	DS3	0.741			
	DS4	0.733			
	DS5	0.761			
<b>Prosocial Silence</b>	PS1	0.716	0.506	0.711	0.836
	PS2	0.672			

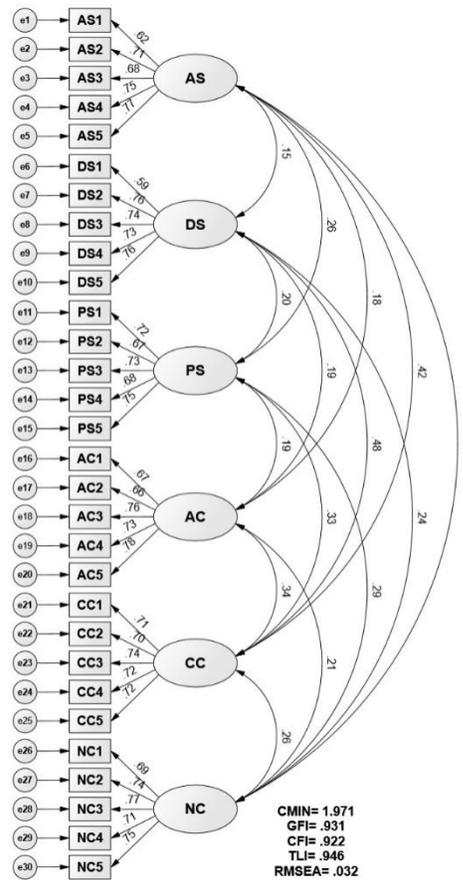
	PS3	0.734			
	PS4	0.683			
	PS5	0.748			
<b>Affective Commitment</b>	AC1	0.672	0.522	0.722	0.845
	AC2	0.663			
	AC3	0.758			
	AC4	0.730			
	AC5	0.781			
<b>Continuance Commitment</b>	CC1	0.713	0.518	0.720	0.843
	CC2	0.704			
	CC3	0.743			
	CC4	0.722			
	CC5	0.716			
<b>Normative Commitment</b>	NC1	0.689	0.537	0.733	0.853
	NC2	0.736			
	NC3	0.772			
	NC4	0.714			
	NC5	0.751			

The results listed in the table (2) indicated that all items have internal reliability due to loading values on their variables which were higher than 0.50 (Al-Hawary and Al-Hamwan, 2017; Taherdoost, 2016), as well as composite reliability according to the values of MacDonald's omega coefficients that were ranged between 0.836 and 0.853 which were higher than the lowest threshold. In the same time, the validity results indicated that convergent validity is achieved due to the values of AVE which were higher than 0.50, and the discriminant validity is also accepted because of the values of the square root of average variance extracted were greater than the correlation between the other variables and these values were higher than 0.70 (Heale and Twycross, 2015).

#### 4. Goodness of Model Indices

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is appropriately used when the author has knowledge about the underlying latent variable structure based on theoretical knowledge or empirical research, or both (Byrne, 2010). Confirmatory Factor Analysis is providing indicators to judge how the model is appropriate, these indicators include Chi-square ratio (CMIN/DF), the goodness of fit index (GFI), the comparative fit index

(CFI), the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). Figure (1) illustrates confirmatory factor analysis results



**Figure 1:Confirmatory factor analysis– standardized coefficients results**

The figure (1) presents the results of confirmatory factor analysis which were indicated that the value of Chi-square ratio 1.971 were less than the highest threshold which is 3, as well as all values of GFI, CFI, and TLI were greater than 0.90 which is the lowest limit to accept and the value of RMSEA was 0.032, where it was less than 0.05 which is the higher value for acceptance (Al-Hawary and Mohammed, 2017; Mueser et al., 2017).

### 5. Data analysis and results

Correlation is a statistical method used to identify a potential linear association between continuous variables, also it used to confirm that the independent variable dimensions are free of multicollinearity problem (Jiang, 2018). Table (3) is shown the correlation coefficient, descriptive analysis, and multicollinearity tests

**Table 3: The results of correlation, descriptive analysis, and multicollinearity**

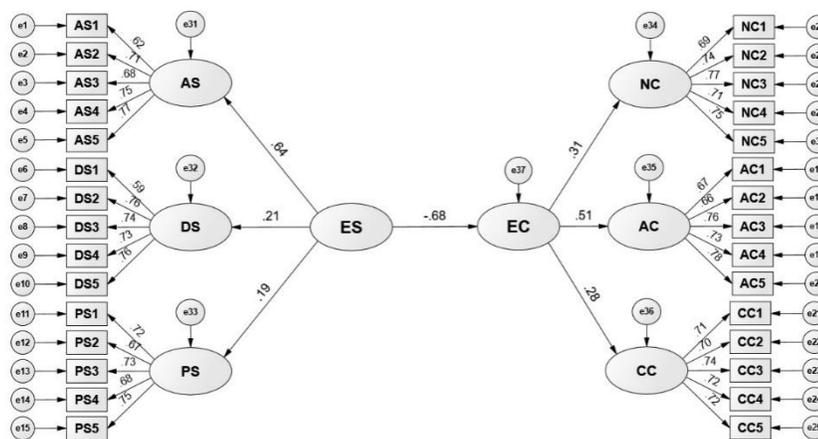
Constructs	Mean	SD	VIF	Tol.	1	2	3	4
1. Acquiescent Silence	3.54	0.91	1.82	0.55	---			

2. Defensive Silence	3.61	0.87	1.66	0.60	0.62*	---		
3. Prosocial Silence	3.26	0.93	1.95	0.51	0.41**	0.50**	---	
4. Employee Commitment	3.44	0.96	---	---	0.37**	0.71*	0.67*	---

*Note: \* refers to significant level less than 0.05, \*\* refers to significant level less than 0.001, VIF: variance inflation factor, Tol.: tolerance.*

The result is shown in the table (3) listed that there is a correlation between the study variables, where the values were ranged between  $r = 0.37$  and  $r = 0.71$  with the significance level less than 0.05 (Sedgwick, 2012). Moreover, the values of variance inflation factor (VIF) less than 5, as well as all values of tolerance were higher than 0.1, and the correlation between the dimensions of independent variable less than 0.80, which confirm that the study data free of a multicollinearity problem (Hair, 2010). Besides, the results in the table (3) referred that all dimensions of employee silence were at a moderate level, where the mean was 3.26, 3.54, and 3.61 and the standard divisions were respectively 0.93, 0.91, and 0.87. Furthermore, the level of employee commitment was also at a moderate level, where the mean equals 3.44 and the standard division was 0.96.

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used to test the study main hypothesis that was indicated that there is a significant impact of employee silence on employee commitment, where the structural model of this hypothesis illustrated in Figure (2)



**Figure 2: Structural model of main hypothesis test**

The result of the testing the study main hypothesis listed in Table (4), which confirm that there is a significant negative impact of employee silence on employee commitment, where the standardised beta was -0.68 with significance level less than 0.001.

**Table 4: Results of testing main hypothesis**

Construct*	Unstandardized coefficient		standardized coefficient	CR	P
	B	S.E.			
Employee Silence	- 1.25	0.41	- 0.68	- 3.05	***

Note: \* Dependent variable is Employee Commitment, \*\*\* Significance level less than 0.001

Moreover, the results of testing the study sub hypotheses which were indicated that there is a significant impact of the dimensions of employee silence on employee commitment, which illustrated in Figure (3).

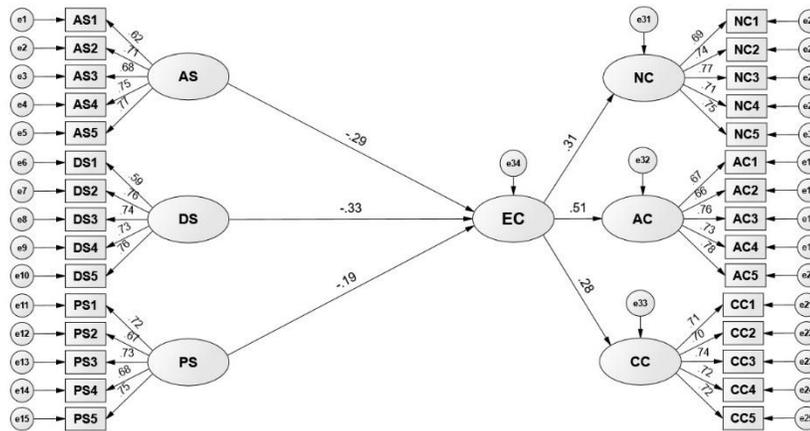


Figure 3: Structural model of sub hypothesis test

Table (5) indicated that the result of sub hypotheses, where the highest impact was for the dimension of defensive silence (B= -0.33, p= \*\*\*), followed by the dimension of acquiescent silence (B= -0.29, P= \*\*\*), and finally the dimension of prosocial silence (B= -0.19, P= \*\*\*).

Table 5: Results of testing main hypothesis

Construct*	Unstandardized coefficient		standardized coefficient	CR	P
	B	S.E.			
Acquiescent Silence	- 0.87	0.62	- 0.29	- 1.40	***
Defensive Silence	- 0.92	0.41	- 0.33	- 2.24	***
Prosocial Silence	- 0.65	0.57	- 0.19	- 1.14	***

Note: \* Dependent variable is Employee Commitment, \*\*\* Significance level less than 0.001

### 6. Discussion and conclusion

This study aimed at exploring the influence of employee silence on employee commitment. Asking employees about their co-workers' silence behavior in the same organization, one hypotheses with three sub hypotheses is formalized. That is to say, employee silence has a significant influence on employee commitment. Some results revealed by the current study supported findings of previous studies, and some were done not. OS not only slows down organizational development but also cause several consequences such as decreasing in employees' commitment levels (Nafei, 2016 ). Moreover, employee silence reduces organizational commitment (Vakola and Bouradas, 2005). Seymen & Korkmaz (2017) found that there is positive relationship between organizational commitment and organizational silence in their study on public health employees.

In accordance with determinants of employee commitment identified by Cotton and Tuttle (1986) cited in Jang and George (2012), which were work determinates such as job satisfaction and commitment. In relation to the influence of employee silence on their commitment, the findings in agreement with previous research, there is a negative influence of employee silence on employee commitment. This result indicated that employee

silence affected employee feelings towards their jobs in terms of their attachment to jobs, their willingness to stay with the organization and their perceptions of the opportunity cost available in case of turnover (Joo and Park, 2010). Employees studied in this study showed a high degree of commitment. However, their perceptions outlined that employee silence has a negative influence on their commitment. In their actual practice, they are aware of the negative role of silence within their organization, pay no attention to the negative outcomes of silence and go on doing their tasks. Another explanation can be found in the fact that employees perceived no real opportunities available outside the organization and decided to stay. Hence, they were regarded as committed employees, since a committed employee is the one who is unwilling to leave the organization (Baba and Ghazali, 2017). Studies such as Wang and Hsieh (2013) and Deniz et al. (2013) found a negative impact of employee silence of attitudes like employee commitment.

Based on these results, it was concluded that employee voice is one of the most important factors that derive employee-related outcomes such as employee commitment. Organization should consider employee commitment because it costs the organization high (van der Heijden et al., 2009). Satisfied and committed employees help their organization to achieve higher levels of organizational performance. Employee performance also contributes to the overall performance of the organization. Furthermore, employee voice should be considered as a major component of any job rather than voluntary behavior. The results of this study can be regarded as partial answers on Elizabeth W. Morrison about the effects of silence at the individual level. Employee silence resulted in decreased employee commitment.

## 7. Limitations and future research

There are three main limitations of this study. First, employee silence was measured using cross-sectional survey based on employee perceptions about their co-workers within the same organization. Future research should use managers' perceptions to investigate the impact of silence at the organizational level and the individual level on employee commitment. Second, employee silence was explored as construct of three dimensions; further studies are needed to identify the effect a whole construct of silence on employee commitment. Third, the result of this study was based on a survey conducted on communication companies in Qatar. Future research can use different organizations from different industries to identify the influence of employee silence.

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