

The Mediating Role of Trust in the relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and Silence

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Abstract- The purpose of this study is to assess the mediating effect of trust in the relationship between perceived organizational support and silence. Data from a cross-sectional study of 268 public and private sector academicians serving in ten educational institutions in North India were analysed. Mediation analysis revealed that trust plays a mediating role in the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational silence. This study is cross-sectional in nature. Further research with longitudinal and experimental studies needs to be carried out to support the results. Data has been collected through self-rating questionnaires. 360 degree feedback could be used in future studies. Top management at organizations must inculcate a supportive culture in the work environment by rewarding employees for their achievements and valuing their efforts. Employees must be involved in decision process through a participative leadership style. The performance management system must be transparent and employees must be prepared for promotions through succession planning and employee development programs.

Index Terms- acquiescent silence, defensive silence, organizational trust, perceived organizational support, pro-social silence

I. INTRODUCTION

Previous studies have established the role of trust in the effective functioning of an organization (Cunningham and Gresso, 1993; Darrough, 2006; Fukuyama, 1995; Hartzler, 2003; Hoy, Tarter and Witkoskie, 1992; Kremer and Tyler, 1996; Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, 1998). Trust is one of the most crucial factors determining the long term stability of an organization (Cook and Wall, 1980). It is only when employees have long lasting relationships with the organization, management, supervisor and co-workers that they are able to perform their best. Trust also benefits the organization in terms of enhanced performance (Avram and Cooper, 2007; Chraif and Stefan, 2010; Mishra, 1996; Thoreson, Bono and Patton, 2001), citizenship behaviour (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman and Fetter, 1990; Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff and Blume, 2009; Rubin, Bommer and Bachrach, 2010), identification (Shockey-Zalabak, Ellis and Winograd, 2000) and reduced conflicts (Creed and Miles, 1996). Unfortunately, recent research has indicated that trust in both public and private institutions is on a declining trend (Carnevale, 1995; Coleman, 1990; Kramer, 1999; Nye, Zelikow and King, 1997; PEW 1996, 1998). This could be attributed to the unmet

needs and expectancies of individuals that these institutions can reduce (Nye, 1997).

There is empirical support for the association between trust and Perceived Organizational Support (POS) (Celep and Yilmazturk, 2012; Dirks and Ferrin, 2002; James B. DeConinck, 2010; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002, Toh and Srinivas, 2011). POS is known to enhance commitment, identification, success and citizenship behaviour (Eisenberger, Fasolo and Davis-LaMastro, 1990, Kets de Vrie, 2001, Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002; Riggie, Edmondson and Hansen, 2009); in the organization.

Organizational scholars have indicated that lack of voice could be attributed to the lack of trust in the organization. Organizational silence is considered unhealthy and leads to inefficiency (Dan, Jun, Jiu-Cheng, 2009; Maria, 2006; Nikmaram et al., 2012).

In the present study, it is proposed that POS influences organizational silence. In spite of the attention that POS has gained in the last few years, there is little evidence of its association with organizational silence. Therefore, further research is needed on the variables affected by POS. Because, trust is such an important ingredient in the relationships among the organization, supervisors and employees, a theoretical framework is proposed to discuss the mediating role of trust in the relationship between POS and organizational silence.

An important contribution of the present study is that it is among the first to shed light on the mediating role of trust in the relationship between POS and silence.

Statement of the Problem

The present study focuses on the relationship among POS, organizational silence and trust among academicians in select educational institutions in north India.

Significance of the Research

This study contributes toward the knowledge on POS, organizational silence and organizational trust. The present study also contributes to the knowledge by adding literature on POS and organizational silence and how they correlate with organizational trust. This issue is essential to be studied since it can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of POS and organizational silence, since both are relatively novel fields of study. The study contributes to the knowledge by adding literature on the Indian studies as well as educational institutions.

Research Questions

There are several research questions that were asked in addressing the problem statement:

- Does perceived organizational support correlate with organizational silence?
- Does perceived organizational support correlate with organizational trust?
- Does organizational silence correlate with organizational trust?
- Does organizational trust mediate the relation between perceived organizational support and organizational silence?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Perceived Organizational Support

POS indicates employees' innermost feelings about the organization's care and emphasis. Employees who perceive organizational support feel that the organization is helpful, respectful, caring, co-operative and recognizes employees' contributions.

POS is defined as the belief among the employees that the organization cares for and values their contribution to the success of the organization. POS is also defined as employees' perception concerning the extent to which the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being (Krishnan and Mary, 2012). Wann-Yih and Htaik (2011) and Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa, (1986) defined POS as an employees' formation of global beliefs pertaining to how much the organization cares about their well-being and values their contributions. Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) conceptualize POS as the quality of social exchange between an employee and his/her organization. POS provides employees with information about his/her relationship to the workplace (Shore and Shore, 1995).

As per the Organizational support theory, employees observe the treatment meted out to them by the organization in order to assess the extent to which the organization is supportive; values and appreciates their contribution (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa, 1986). Hence, inclusion, participation, rewards, development, opportunities for growth, promotions relate positively to POS (Allen, Shore and Griffeth, 2003; Hutchison, 1997; Wayne, Shore, Bommer and Tetrick, 2002). Similarly, the way supervisors and leaders treat employees also affects POS (Eisenberger et al., 2002; Levinson, 1965; Rhoades et al., 2001; Wayne, Shore and Liden, 1997). However, it is the treatment offered by the organization that has a stronger impact on POS (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli and Lynch, 1997). Thus, high POS is associated with enhanced commitment (Eisenberger, Fasolo and Davis-LaMastro, 1990; Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa, 1986; Makanjee, Hartzer and Uys, 2006; Muse and Stamper, 2007; Panaccio and Vandenbergh, 2009; Rhoades et al., 2001; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002), organizational identification, organizational success, citizenship behaviour, decreased withdrawal behaviours, work performance (Eisenberger, Fasolo and Davis-LaMastro, 1990, Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002; Riggle, Edmondson and Hansen, 2009), work engagement (Eisenberger and Stinglhamber, 2011; Kinnunen, Feldt and Mäkikangas, 2008; Sulea et al., 2012), career success (Suazo, Turnley and Mai-Dalton, 2005), motivation to adopt new IT (Mitchell, Gagne,

Beaudry and Dyer, 2012), perceived organizational justice, trust (Dirks and Ferrin, 2002; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002), organizational respect, high status (Tyler, 1999), job satisfaction, reduced turnover intention, reduced turnover (Edmondson and Boyer, 2012; Guzzo, Noonan and Elron, 1994; Kim and Barak, 2014; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002; Riggle, Edmondson and Hansen, 2009; Wayne, Shore and Liden, 1997), reduced job strains (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002), reduced psychological stress (Loi, Ao and Xu, 2014) and reduced role stress (Kim and Barak, 2014).

This could be explained due to the fact that employees, who perceive support feel honoured, protected and acknowledged. Thus, in return they exhibit raised assistance, identification, gratitude and persistent work (Chiang and Hsie, 2012). Secondly, POS fulfils socio-emotional needs for positive self-esteem, approval and affiliation (Armeli, Eisenberger, Fasolo and Lynch, 1998). Thirdly, POS generates a feeling of concern among employees for the organization's prosperity and thus employees assist the organization in the attainment of goals and objectives (Chew and Wong, 2008; Dhar, 2012; Eisenberger et al., 2001). Hence, organizations that are supportive of their employees gain a competitive advantage over others (Pfeffer, 2005).

Organizational Silence

Organizational silence is a collective phenomenon (Morrison and Milliken, 2000). When several employees choose to remain silent about organizational issues, the employee silence aggregates to become a collective behaviour called organizational silence (Dan, Jun, Jiu-Cheng, 2009).

Organizational silence refers to employees' choice to withhold their opinions and concerns about organizational problems (Morrison and Milliken, 2000). It involves withholding genuine expressions about organizational circumstances by certain organizational members from those who are in a position to change those circumstances (Fletcher and Watson, 2007). Organizational silence is defined as intentionally withholding work-related ideas, information and opinions (Brinsfield, 2009; Tangirala and Ramanujam, 2005; Vakola and Dimitris, 2005). Alparslan (2010) defined it as a behavioural issue where individuals do not express their thoughts, opinions and suggestions that will help reveal disruptions, improve organizational activities and create new process/product/service. Employee silence occurs when employees do not share or discuss important information such as recommendations, fears, doubts and concerns with others in the organization (Dyne, Ang and Botero, 2003). Morrison and Milliken (2000) noted that instances where employees unintentionally keep information to themselves due to their lack of opinion or absent-mindedness cannot be categorized as employee silence.

Samarin (1965) and Scott (1993) noted that silence is not merely the absence of speech or voice but is meaningful. It is indicative of one's attitude or state and is a form of communication (Samovar et al., 1981). Silence is negatively associated with voice and both can be viewed as opposites (Milliken and Lam, 2009; Milliken, Morrison and Hewlin, 2003; Morrison, Wheeler-Smith and Kamdar, 2011, Tangirala and Ramanujam, 2008). However, even though both are opposites, they are separate constructs (Brinsfield, Edwards and Greenberg, 2009; Dyne, Ang and Botero, 2003; Kish-Gephart, Detert,

Trevino and Edmondson, 2009); they can co-exist and are rarely absolute (Morisson, 2011). Therefore, a high level of voice may imply a low level of silence and vice-versa.

Employee Silence is of four types (Alparslan, 2010; Brinsfield, 2009; Cakici, 2010; Dyne, Ang and Botero, 2003, Perlow and Repening, 2009; Pinder and Harlos, 2001), (1) acquiescent silence occurs when employees are unaware of the existence of alternative options to remaining silent (Vakola and Dimitrias, 2005). It is a type of passive behaviour and is a result of disengagement. Pinder and Harlos (2001) suggest that apathy and hopelessness may be the reasons for acquiescent silence. (2) Defensive silence occurs when employee remains quiet due to the fear of negative consequences (Pinder and Harlos, 2001). Dyne, Ang and Botero (2003) suggest that defensive silence is the result of an employee's efforts to shelter himself/herself from adverse consequences. Defensive silence is a well-planned approach to protect oneself and involves intricate thought processes (Milliken and Morrison, 2003). (3) Pro-social silence occurs when an employee intentionally withholds job-related information, feelings and thoughts for the larger good of the organization as a whole (Pinder and Harlos, 2001). Pro-social silence is a result of one's goodwill for others whereas defensive silence is an outcome of one's efforts to protect himself/herself (Zheng, Ke, Shi and Zheng, 2008). (4) Protective silence occurs when employees remain silent in order to maintain good relations with the organization and other employees (Alparslan, 2010; Perlow and Repening, 2009). It is regarded as one of the most important causes of silence.

Organizational Trust

Since the last few decades, trust has attracted considerable attention due to its influence on the overall functioning and health of an organization. Organizational trust is one of the most important factors determining the long term stability of a firm (Cook and Wall, 1980). Harmony is crucial to organizational efficiency and it can be maintained only when employees have long-lasting positive relationships with each other as well as with the organization. Hence, trust has been regarded as a base for firm performance (Avram and Cooper, 2007) as the effective functioning of organization depends on the trust that people place on them (Cunningham and Gresso, 1993; Darrough, 2006; Fukuyama, 1995; Hartzler, 2003; Hoy, Tarter and Witkoskie, 1992; Kremer and Tyler, 1996; Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, 1998).

Organizational trust is an atmosphere in which people have reciprocal feelings of confidence, warmth and acceptance (Gibbs, 1972). Mayer, Davis and Schoorman (1995) defined organizational trust as the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (1999) defined trust as an individual's or group's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest and open.

- Benevolence is the confidence that one's well-being will be protected by trusted party.
- Reliability is the extent to which one can count on another person or group.

- Competency is the extent to which the trusted party has knowledge and skill.
- Honesty is the character, integrity and authenticity of the trusted party and openness is the extent to which there is no withholding of information from others.

Trust is positively associated with job performance (Chraif and Stefan, 2010; Mishra, 1996; Thoreson, Bono and Patton, 2001), success (Kets de Vrie, 2001), identification (Shockey-Zalabak, Ellis and Winograd, 2000), mental and physical health (S. Tanase et al., 2012) and employee citizenship (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman and Fetter, 1990; Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff and Blume, 2009; Rubin, Bommer and Bachrach, 2010).

High level of trust in the supervisor significantly contributes to psychological safety (Edmondson, 1999) and loyalty among employees (Davis, Schoorman, Mayer and Tan, 2000). Trust has gained widespread attention in the domain of human resource management and organizational behaviour; however, further research is needed on its relationship with organizational silence.

Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Silence

There have been few empirical studies conducted on the relationship of POS with silence. Most of the findings relate POS with a high level of voice and subsequently a low level of silence in the organization. A study by Li Rui and Ling Wen Quan (2010) on perceived supervisor support found that it is positively associated with job attitude and enthusiasm thereby motivating employees to speak up and break their silence. Thus, POS could eliminate silence.

Another study by Şahin Çetin (2013) among 223 teachers serving in primary schools in Ankara, Turkey found a positive relationship between voice and POS. This finding was in line with studies by Ashford, Rothbard, Piderit and Dutton (1998), Erenler (2002), Milliken, Morrison and Hewlin (2003) and Tucker et al. (2008) that related high level of voice with POS.

Yau-De Wang and Hui-Hsien Hsieh (2013) conducted a study among 408 employees serving in high-technology firms in Taiwan. Results indicated that the association of instrumental climate, caring climate and independence climate with acquiescent silence and defensive silence was mediated by perceived organizational support. Thus, it can be concluded that POS is a significant predictor of employee silence.

Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Trust

Very few empirical studies have explored the relationship between support and trust in organizational settings. Previous research has established a positive association between support and trust (Dirks and Ferrin, 2002; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). James B. DeConinck (2010) conducted a study among 234 advertising managers in United States of America. Results revealed that POS, trust and Perceived Organizational Justice are correlated and that POS mediates the relationship between POJ and trust. Similar results were obtained by Soo Min Toh and Ekkirala S. Srinivas (2011) who conducted a study among 174 local Omani nationals enrolled in an executive management program. It was found that task cohesiveness is significantly related to trust and information sharing. Also, it was found that task cohesiveness was associated with higher levels of trust when POS was also high. Another study by Cevat Celep and Ozge Eler

Yilmazturk (2012) among 315 teachers serving in 18 public primary schools in Golcuk, Turkey revealed that organizational trust, trust to management, trust to work setting and trust to work team had a significant impact on POS. Majority of the studies on POS and trust have revealed a positive association between the variables.

Organizational Silence and Organizational Trust

There is a dearth of studies on the relationship between organizational silence and trust. A study by Ioannis Nikolaou, Maria Vakola and Dimitris Bourantas (2011) among employees serving in Information Technology companies in Greece found that organizational silence and trust are negatively correlated. Another study by Tijen Tulubas and Cevat Celep (2012) conducted a study among 459 faculty members serving in Universities in Turkey. It was found that faculty members' silence was significantly affected by trust in supervisor. Hence,

organizational silence and organizational trust are negatively correlated.

Conceptual Framework

Literature review has found relationship between POS and organizational silence (Li Rui and Ling Wen Quan, 2010, Yau-De Wang and Hui-Hsien Hsieh, 2013), POS and organizational trust (Celep and Yilmazturk, 2012; Dirks and Ferrin, 2002; James B. DeConinck, 2010; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002; Toh and Srinivas, 2011), and organizational silence and trust (Nikolaou, Vakola and Bourantas, 2011, Tulubas and Celep, 2012). This study proposes a conceptual framework which examines the relationship between POS, organizational silence and organizational trust. This study employs trust as the mediating variable between the relationship of POS and organizational silence. The conceptual framework is shown in figure 1.

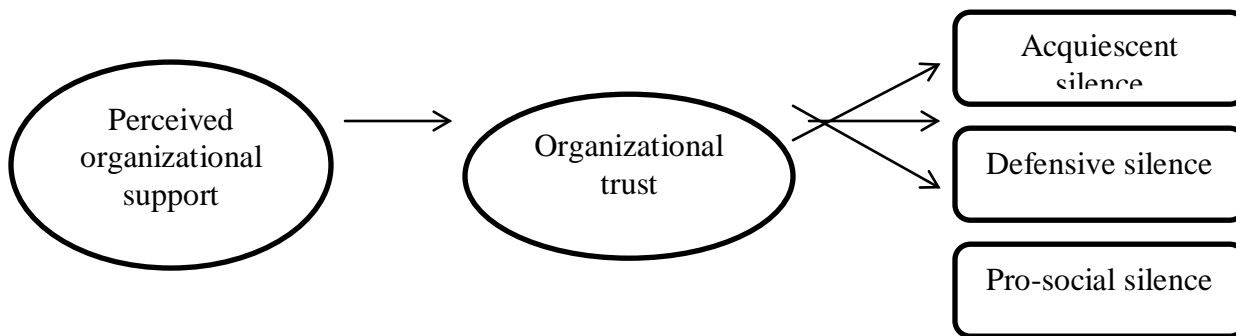


Figure 1. Research Model for this study

Hypotheses

Based on the literature review, the present research investigates the relationship among POS, organizational silence and organizational trust. The following are the main hypotheses of the present study.

1. Perceived organizational support significantly correlates with acquiescent silence (1.1), defensive silence (1.2) and pro-social silence (1.3).
2. Perceived organizational support positively correlates with organizational trust.
3. Organizational trust positively correlates with acquiescent silence (3.1), defensive silence (3.2) and pro-social silence (3.3).
4. Organizational trust mediates the correlation between perceived organizational support and acquiescent silence (4.1), defensive silence (4.2) and pro-social silence (4.3).

Mohali, Panchkula and Delhi. The rest of the responses were collected from academicians serving in institutes at Jalandhar and Rupnagar in Punjab and Kurukshetra and Gurgaon in Haryana.

Perceived Organizational Support

The Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS; Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa, 1986) was used to measure POS. SPOS measures the employees' perception of the organizations' willingness to change as it is related to employee participation in all stages of the innovation-decision process. This study employs the shorter version of the scale comprising 8 items of which four are reverse scored. Respondents indicate the extent of agreement with each statement on a five point likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Its reliability is high with 0.95 cronbach alpha.

Organizational Silence

Organizational silence is measured using the Organizational Silence scale developed by Dyne, Ang and Botero (2003) comprising 15 items and three sub-scales that measure acquiescent (5 items), defensive (5 items) and pro-social silence (5 items). Its reliability is high with 0.853 cronbach alpha for acquiescent silence, 0.897 for defensive silence and 0.823 for pro-social silence. Respondents answered on a 5-point likert (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

III. METHOD

Sample

A cross-sectional survey design was used to test the proposed hypotheses. The respondents for this study comprised academicians serving in 10 educational institutions in various places in north India and were selected using snowball sampling method. Majority of the respondents were serving in Chandigarh,

Organizational Trust

Organizational Trust was measured using the Organizational Trust scale (OT) developed by Paliszkievicz (2010). The OT scale comprises 12 items in five-point likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The scale is highly reliable with 0.87 cronbach alpha.

Procedure

The questionnaire was administered to respondents at their workplace. The duration for questionnaire completion is 8 to 10 minutes. 300 questionnaires were distributed of which 275 were returned. 7 questionnaires were rejected as they were partially filled. 268 questionnaires were finally selected for the analysis.

Data Analysis

Simple regression analysis was used to test the significance of the relationship and impact of POS on organizational silence and organizational trust. Mediation analysis was used to test the

mediating effect of trust on the relationship between POS and organizational silence.

IV. RESULTS

This various analyses used in the study include descriptive analyses, regression analyses and mediation analyses.

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

The target respondents in this study are academicians serving in educational institutions in north India. Total sample size is 268.

Table 1 below shows the characteristics of the respondents in the study. Within the sample, 47.4% were academicians serving in public institutions. 44.4% were males. 38.1% of the respondents were in the age group of 31 to 40 years. 68.3% of respondents were married. 61.2% of the respondents were postgraduates. 36.9% of the respondents had a work experience of 8 years and above.

Table 1 Respondents' Characteristics (N=268)

| | Variable | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Ownership | Public | 127 | 47.4% |
| | Private | 141 | 52.6% |
| Gender | Male | 119 | 44.4% |
| | Female | 149 | 55.6% |
| Age | 21 to 30 years | 66 | 24.6% |
| | 31 to 40 years | 102 | 38.1% |
| | 41 to 50 years | 73 | 27.2% |
| | 50 + years | 27 | 10.1% |
| Marital Status | Married | 183 | 68.3% |
| | Unmarried | 85 | 31.7% |
| Education | Bachelors | 27 | 10.1% |
| | Masters | 164 | 61.2% |
| | Ph.Ds | 77 | 28.7% |
| Years of work experience | Less than 2 years | 45 | 16.8% |
| | 3 to 5 years | 39 | 14.6% |
| | 6 to 8 years | 85 | 31.7% |
| | More than 8 years | 99 | 36.9% |

Descriptive Analyses

Table 2 below shows the means and standard deviations of the variables under study. The mean score for POS as measured by the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS) scale is 30.05 (S.D. = 5.07). This score indicates that most of the academicians perceive their organization as being supportive.

Respectively, the analysis of the Organizational Silence responses for all respondents indicates that the mean score of

acquiescent silence is 10.38 (S.D. = 2.91), defensive silence is 11.51 (S.D. = 3.23) and pro-social silence is 13.57 (S.D. = 3.57). This indicates the level of organizational silence in select educational institutions is low.

The mean score of Organizational Trust as measured by the 15 items of the Organizational trust scale is 35.72 (S.D. = 9.90). This indicates that trust placed by respondents on their organization, co-workers and supervisors is moderately high.

Table 2 Mean and Standard Deviation among the variables

| Variable | Mean | SD |
|----------------------------------|-------|------|
| Perceived Organizational Support | 30.05 | 5.07 |
| Acquiescent Silence | 10.38 | 2.91 |
| Defensive Silence | 11.51 | 3.23 |
| Pro-social Silence | 13.57 | 3.57 |
| Organizational Trust | 35.72 | 9.90 |

Regression Analyses

This study presents the simple regression analysis to indicate that POS is a significant predictor of organizational silence and trust.

Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Silence

The first hypothesis in this study is that there is significant relationship between POS and acquiescent silence (1.1),

defensive silence (1.2) and pro-social silence (1.3). Results as shown in table 3 indicated that POS predicts acquiescent silence, $\beta = -0.513$, $S_{\beta} = .030$, $t = -9.757$, $p < 0.01$, defensive silence, $\beta = -0.233$, $S_{\beta} = .038$, $t = -3.915$, $p < 0.01$ and pro-social silence, $\beta = -0.289$, $S_{\beta} = .041$, $t = -4.916$, $p < 0.01$. It was found that POS and organizational silence are negatively correlated.

Table 3 Correlation coefficient, R square, Standardized Beta Coefficients, Standard Error and t for Paths from Perceived organizational support to Organizational silence

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| Dependent variable | Predictor variable | B | Std. Error | β | | |
| Acquiescent silence | POS | -0.294 | 0.030 | -0.513 | -9.757 | .000 |
| F = 95.194 | | R = 0.513 | | R ² = 0.264 | | |
| Defensive silence | POS | -0.148 | 0.038 | -0.233 | -3.915 | .000 |
| F = 15.326 | | R = 0.233 | | R ² = 0.054 | | |
| Pro-social silence | POS | -0.203 | 0.041 | -0.289 | -4.916 | .000 |
| F = 24.169 | | R = 0.289 | | R ² = 0.083 | | |

Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Trust

As shown in table 4 below, the regression analysis indicated that organizational trust is significantly predicted by POS, $\beta = 0.326$, $S_{\beta} = 0.113$, $t = 5.621$, $p < 0.01$. The data indicates that

academicians who perceive their organization as being supportive are more likely to trust the organization more. So, this finding supports the second hypothesis that there is a significant positive relationship between POS and organizational trust.

Table 4 Correlation coefficient, R square, Standardized Beta Coefficients, Standard Error and t for Paths from Perceived organizational support to Organizational trust

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| Dependent variable | Predictor variable | B | Std. Error | β | | |
| Organizational Trust | POS | 0.636 | 0.113 | 0.326 | 5.621 | .000 |
| F = 31.600 | | R = 0.326 | | R ² = 0.106 | | |

Organizational Silence and Organizational Trust

The third hypothesis in this study is that there is significant relationship between organizational silence and organizational trust. This hypothesis is supported by the finding in which organizational trust is significantly predicted by acquiescent silence, $\beta = -0.353$, $S_{\beta} = .017$, $t = -6.163$, $p < 0.01$, defensive

silence, $\beta = -0.228$, $S_{\beta} = .019$, $t = -3.811$, $p < 0.01$ and pro-social silence, $\beta = -0.211$, $S_{\beta} = .022$, $t = -3.512$, $p < 0.01$. Results found that acquiescent (3.1), defensive (3.2) and pro-social silence (3.3) and trust are negatively correlated as shown in table 5 below.

Table 5 Correlation coefficient, R square, Standardized Beta Coefficients, Standard Error and t for Paths from Organizational silence to Organizational trust

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| Dependent variable | Predictor variable | B | Std. Error | β | | |
| Acquiescent silence | Organizational trust | -0.104 | 0.017 | -0.353 | -6.163 | .000 |
| F = 37.984 | | R = 0.353 | | R ² = 0.125 | | |
| Defensive silence | Organizational trust | -0.074 | 0.019 | -0.228 | -3.811 | .000 |
| F = 14.523 | | R = 0.228 | | R ² = 0.052 | | |
| Pro-social silence | Organizational trust | -0.076 | 0.022 | -0.211 | -3.512 | .001 |
| F = 12.335 | | R = 0.211 | | R ² = 0.044 | | |

Mediation Analysis

To test hypothesis that trust mediates the relationship between POS and organizational silence, mediation analysis was

performed following procedures suggested by Andrew F. Hayes (2012) using PROCESS V. 14, a modelling tool designed for SPSS. For mediation to be established, there are four conditions,

(1) the mediator must be significantly related to the independent variable (2) the mediator must be significantly related to the outcome variable, (3) the independent variable must be significantly related to the outcome variable and (4) the independent variable must indirectly affect the outcome variable through its effect on the mediator. As per the test for mediation in PROCESS, the mediating effect is established when there is no absolute zero in the range from the boot lower limit confidence interval to the boot upper limit confidence interval in the indirect effect.

Trust mediates the Relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Silence

Table 6 below shows the indirect effect of POS on organizational silence through its effect on organizational trust. It was found that trust mediated the relationship of POS with acquiescent silence (boot LLCI = -0.0689, boot ULCI = -0.0171), defensive silence (boot LLCI = -0.0667, boot ULCI = -0.0101) and pro-social silence (boot LLCI = -0.0715, boot ULCI = -0.0043). Thus, it is concluded that organizational trust mediates the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational silence.

Table 6 Indirect Effect of Trust on paths from POS to Organizational silence

| Mediator | Effect | Boot Standard Error | Boot Lower Limit Confidence Interval | Upper Limit Confidence Interval |
|----------------------------|---------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Acquiescent silence</i> | | | | |
| Organizational Trust | -0.0389 | 0.0131 | -0.0689 | -0.0171 |
| <i>Defensive silence</i> | | | | |
| Organizational Trust | -0.0351 | 0.0143 | -0.0667 | -0.0101 |
| <i>Pro-social silence</i> | | | | |
| Organizational Trust | -0.0298 | 0.0168 | -0.0715 | -0.0043 |

was mediating effect of trust in the relation of POS with acquiescent (4.1), defensive (4.2) and pro-social silence (4.3).

V. DISCUSSION

The purposes of the present research were to explore the relationships among POS, organizational silence and organizational trust.

Hypothesis 1 in this study was supported, as there was a significant impact of POS on organizational silence. The results indicated that there was a significant negative relation of POS with acquiescent (1.1), defensive (1.2) and pro-social silence (1.3). This finding is in agreement with the results obtained by Li Rui and Ling Wen Quan, (2010) and Yau-De Wang and Hui-Hsien Hsieh (2013). Thus, academicians who perceive support, have a low level of silence.

Hypothesis 2 stating that POS would positively correlate with organizational trust was supported by the findings. The results indicated that academicians with high POS were reported to have higher organizational trust. This finding is in line with previous studies done by Celep and Yilmazturk (2012), Dirks and Ferrin (2002), James B. DeConinck (2010), Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) and Toh and Srinivas (2011). This finding supported the argument that academicians who feel supported are likely to have more trust in their organizations.

Consistent with hypothesis 3, acquiescent (3.1), defensive (3.2) and pro-social silence (3.3) were found to negatively correlate with organizational trust. This indicated that academicians who placed more trust on their organization were more vocal about their opinions, views and experiences regarding organizational matters. This finding was in line with the studies by Nikolaou, Vakola and Bourantas (2011) and Tulubas and Celep (2012) in which a moderate negative relation was found between silence and trust.

Mediation analysis established the mediating role of trust in the relationship between POS and organizational silence as the indirect effect measured through PROCESS (Andrew F. Hayes, 2012) was significant. Thus, Hypothesis 4 was supported as there

VI. IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

This study presents empirical findings on negative relationship of POS and organizational trust with organizational silence and positive relationship between POS and organizational trust. There are several implications for this study. Since POS and high level of organizational trust eliminate organizational silence, the management must do more activities to enhance these two variables. Firstly, the top management must inculcate a culture where multilateral communications and dialogue among employees is encouraged. Secondly, the employees' sense of fairness must be addressed through strong company values by rewarding individual as well as team efforts. There must be competitive pay systems that are transparent; inclusive of monetary rewards and salary increases. Thirdly, the workload must be made manageable. Fourthly, employees must be involved in the developmental and decision process of the organization. This could be done through a participative leadership style where employees' views are solicited as and when necessary. Fifthly, the employees must be prepared for promotion through succession planning and employee development programs so that they can realize their potential. This would also enhance their engagement and loyalty. Lastly, employees must be valued and their efforts appreciated. The value of their work must be communicated to them from time to time.

VII. LIMITATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

There are several limitations as well as recommendations to this study. Firstly, the sample size is small. It is therefore suggested for future research to increase the number of respondents. Secondly, the sample of the present study includes

only academicians in north India, so the findings of the present study cannot be generalized to other geographical regions. For further study, it is recommended that the relationship of the variables in the current study with a host of other variables such as workplace spirituality be studied. Also, it is recommended to include employees from various sectors for future studies. Thirdly, the measurement technique in the present study was through self-rating questionnaires. Since, there is a great tendency among individuals to give responses that are socially acceptable, the genuine responses may not have been captured by these questionnaires. Thus, methods like 360 degree feedback would help to make the studies more realistic and practical. Fourthly, this study is cross-sectional in nature; thus further research through longitudinal studies needs to be conducted to confirm the results.

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