
Employee Silence Behaviour, Predictive Roles Of Supportive Leadership, Affective Commitment And Proactive Personality Among Telecommunication Employees In Anambra State

**Okafor Rachael Amaka¹, Chine Bernard Chukwukeluo²,
&
Oguegbe Matthew Tochukwu³**

^{1,2,3} Department of Psychology, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Corresponding Author: **Okafor Rachael Amaka**

Email: ar.okafor@unizik.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

This study investigated employee silence behaviors: predictive roles of supportive leadership, affective commitment and proactive personality among telecommunication employees in Anambra State. Nowadays, the issues of keeping mute while organizations are retarding or on the verge of closure is on the increase. The analysis found that several factors emanating from individuals, organizations and culture such as fear, intimidation, ethnocentrism etc. The analysis also found that employee silence is extremely detrimental to organizations often causing an “escalating level of dissatisfaction” among employees, “which manifests itself in absenteeism, turnover and perhaps other undesired behaviors”. Communication is the key to an organization’s success. If employee silence does occur, communication suffers and as a result harms the overall functioning of the organization. Three hundred and fifty-seven employees were conveniently drawn from five telecommunication firms in Anambra metropolis. They considered 145 males and 212 females in the study, with ages ranging from 25-56 years with a mean age of 40.5 years. The result of the study showed that Supportive leadership did not significantly predict employee silence behavior ($\beta = .23, \Delta R^2 = .13, p < .451$), Proactive personality did not significantly predict employee silence behavior ($\beta = .16, \Delta R^2 = .02, p < .214$) and affective commitment did not significantly predict employee silence behavior ($\beta = .31, \Delta R^2 = .02, p < .810$). In conclusion, it could be inferred that employees are more willing to talk or contribute important information to the growth of the firm, when managers are supportive, warm and friendly in their disposition, when management show affection and emotional connection with the employees and when the management are proactive in their behavior and actions towards employees.

KEYWORDS: SILENCE BEHAVIOUR, SUPPORTIVE LEADERSHIP, AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT AND PROACTIVE PERSONALITY

Introduction

The reluctance of employees to talk about their jobs is an obstacle before innovation and organizational change, and it exacerbates employees' stress and depressed feelings (Cortina Magley 2003; Argyris, Schön 1978; Morrison Milliken, 2000). With silence turning into an ingrained belief, employees consider themselves worthless, and cognitive contradictions emerge between what they do and what they think; and thus, job satisfaction, fidelity and motivation are affected adversely (Morrison Milliken, 2000). Also, cynicism towards the organization may emerge in such cases (Beer Eisenstat 2000; Nartgün Kartal 2013). Like a vicious circle, the employee who finds himself/herself in cynicism and whose fidelity has weakened grows more indifferent towards his/her organization, and s/he continues to remain silent (Donaghey et al 2011). The research carried out in relevant literature reveals that the foremost reasons for silence behavior are the fear of the following: being labelled and perceived as an agitator, the harming of relationships with other people, retaliation and punishment, conflicting with others and being isolated by others. Also, although the employees do not want to remain silent, they do so because they think that what they say will not mean anything and will not make a difference because of the administrative factors (Milliken et al. 2003, Vakola, Bouradas, 2005; Brinsfield 2013; Gephart et al. 2009). The most basic reason underlying these reasons is regarded as lack of confidence. Research reveals that the employee's lack of confidence in his/her organization, leader and his/her immediate superior lead to organizational silence (Nikolaou et al. 2011; Çakıcı 2008).

In addition to the researches mentioned above, there are studies that put forward that there may be reasons for remaining silent that are peculiar to the Nigerian society. For instance, in our country many people may prefer to remain silent because they give importance to being accepted and appreciated by society. In favor of this view, the African idiom "speak out of both sides of your mouth", which means to talk out of both sides of your mouth to satisfy people may be put forward as a cultural support to reach such a conclusion. Moreover, in Turkish society, which has a communitarian culture where the gap between people and the dominant power is wide, the view that "The people in charge know it all, they are absolutely right." is the dominant view among people (Çakıcı 2007). Such Turkish proverbs that literally mean "The early cock gets his head cut off", "Alas, my tongue, into pieces I'll chop

you, for the troubles that afflict me are all because of you”, “The tongue says and hides, the mind suffers and fights” are manifestations which reveal that silence may be suggested as a cultural norm (Eroğlu et al. 2011). Therefore, the Turkish idiom “keep one's nose clean”, which roughly means to keep your nose clean, can be seen as an idiom related to the reason for remaining silent. As far as the research found in the African literature is considered, in one research conducted among academicians, the reasons for remaining silent are explained as follows: maintaining the status quo, the reluctance to risk the academic expectations, supporting the administration and fidelity to the organization (Demir, Demir, 2012). In the study conducted by Arlı (2003), the reasons for silence are explained as being related to personal factors, the characteristics of the managers, the organizational climate and environmental factors. In research carried out by Bildik (2009), the reasons for silence are listed as follows: lack of confidence in managers, lack of experience, considering that speaking out is risky, fear of isolation and fear of harming relationships. It is highly probable that there are reasons for remaining silent that are peculiar to every occupation. Thus, this study hereby identified particularly the nurses who serve in state hospitals as samples. It is the purpose of this study to discover the reasons for silence behavior in this occupation and to develop a scale that aims at measuring these reasons. Providing the literature -which lacks a specific scale in the recently studied case of silence behavior particularly within the context of nurses- with a measuring tool whose validity and reliability have been verified statistically, will serve as a valuable contribution.

Today many researchers assert that the information and different viewpoints that come from the bottom of an organization in a hierarchical structure are quite important for the sustainability of the organization (Morrison, Milliken 2000). The voice of the employee may lead to contributive changes in the decisions and the output of the organization. This contribution has an effect on the motivation of the employee, as well (Mcfarlin, Sweeney 1996). This initiative should be regarded as important building blocks of change as long as it does not include a critical and destructive intention against change in an atmosphere of inertia (Brinsfield 2009). Particularly, both the appliers and researchers have stated that the contributions that are expressed “voluntarily” have great importance for practices in the workplace (Van Dyne et al. 1995). Organizational silence -which is defined as employees’ deliberate withholding of their ideas, information and opinions about the improvement of

their jobs and the organization which they work for- is regarded as a collective phenomenon in literature. Employees' withholding their ideas and opinions regarding the organizational problems and organizational improvements, and the fact that this happens collectively are major obstacles before organizational change and improvement (Morrison, Milliken 2000; Dyne et al. 2003). The silence of the employee - which is a reflection of this collective phenomenon on individuals- means that people who have the capacity to change a negative situation hide and withhold their behaviorally, cognitively and emotionally truthful and genuine utterances regarding the improvements of the conditions of the organization (Pinder, Harlos 2001). Like a vicious circle, the organizational silence climate may contribute to the emergence and growing of silence behavior, and in turn, the increase in the silence behavior may lead to the strengthening of this climate and its evolution into a culture (Noelle-Neumann 1991; Bowen, Blackmon 2003). At this point, another fact that should be highlighted is that - as many researchers who study the silence of employees have particularly stressed- the preference to remain silent is a proactive behavior rather than lack of communication (Van Dyne et al. 2003; Gephart et al. 2009; Pinder, Harlos 2001; Moll et al. 2013). Silence behaviours have been studied in different dimensions. These dimensionalizations particularly stress the basic reasons for silence. First, Van Dyne et al (2003) have classified the silence behaviours as such: acquiescent silence (in this type of silence the employee accepts to remain passive), defensive silence (in this type, the employee wants to protect himself because he fears) and prosocial silence (collaborationist) (this type of silence is organization-oriented or "others-oriented") in the context of organizational citizenship behaviour. In his doctoral thesis research, Brinsfield (2013) puts forward a wider dimensionalization of silence behaviour as follows: deviant silence (silence as a deviant behaviour), 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).

More so, there are many reasons for remaining silent in organizations that emerge from individual, organizational and cultural factors. When the research previously done on the reasons for silence related to individual factors is scrutinized, first it can be observed that self-esteem of a person has a rather important and positive effect on the formation of his/her individual behaviors at the workplace (Le Pine, Dyne 1998). Individuals whose self-

esteem is high make more effort to bring about a change. Individuals whose self-esteem is low have a self protective tendency, and they abstain from behaviors that may cause them to find themselves in a defenceless state. They avoid presenting themselves and their ideas due to the risk that they perceive (Premeaux, Bedeian, 2003). The following has an influence on the employee's decision to remain or not to remain silent in the organization: the low self-esteem of the employee, his/her perceived communication fear and the negative situations that s/he thinks s/he may experience in case of establishing communication, and his/her perceived status in terms of authority and control (Brinsfield 2009). Undoubtedly, the employee's lack of experience and his/her low status are factors that hamper speaking out (Milliken et al. 2003). In addition, neurotic personality traits increase silence whereas being extroverted decreases silence (Brinsfield 2013). Besides these, emotional breakdown or psychological lethargy that a person may experience leads to indifference to the organization (Whiteside, Barclay 2013). Employees who work at an environment where a culture of fear and intimidation prevails are forced to remain silent, and they seem reluctant to intervene in organizational policies and administrative powers. Employees –as an important group of stakeholders- know that their ideas will not be transmitted to the senior management. Particularly in public institutions the practices in the workplace are limited to the management of the senior management (Calpham, Cooper 2005). Some managers want to avoid negative feedback because they fear to be harmed or perceived as unsatisfactory. Thus, they may make an effort to create a climate that inhibits negative feedback that comes from their subordinates (Slade 2008). In that case, managers find a way to imply that they are uneasy when faced with people who have different opinions coming from their subordinates. These implications give rise to the fear of confrontation between the superior and the subordinate, and the subordinate prefers to remain silent and to express opinions parallel to those of his/her superior (Perlow, Williams 2003). The senior management of an organization cannot benefit from this diversity of its employees if it is not aware of the employees' different values, abilities, beliefs, characteristics and experience and if it evaluates things from only its own point of view and keeps its employees at bay (Morrison, Milliken 2000; Tangirala, Ramanujam 2008). Decisions made without negotiations and discussions are not transparent whatsoever (Calpham, Cooper 2005). Also, supportive

leadership, affective commitment and proactive personality have been thought to have significant influence on employee silence behavior.

Supportive leadership is one of the four types of leadership that House (1971) identified in his path-goal theory and is defined as a leadership style that focuses on concerns for the needs and well-being of followers and the facilitation of a desirable climate for interaction. Supportive leadership is regarded as a key aspect of effective leadership in path-goal theory (House, 1971). Supportive leadership is similar to individualized consideration, a sub-dimension of transformational leadership, in that both types of leadership encompass expressing interest in individual followers and attending and responding to their personal needs (Rafferty & Griffin, 2004). However, in addition to such individualized attention to followers, individualized consideration includes developmental aspects, such as advising followers on their careers, carefully observing and monitoring their progress, and recommending necessary training (Bass, 1985). In contrast, supportive leadership focuses more on social and emotional support, which is manifested in behaviors such as sympathizing, caring, and listening (House, 1981). While transformational leadership involves extensive concern for the organization as a whole, supportive leadership emphasizes individualized, emotional support for subordinates, which is considered a critical element of effective leadership (Rafferty & Griffin, 2004).

Empirical findings have generally shown the positive ramifications of supportive leadership in organizations (e.g., Euwema, Wendt, & Van Emmerik, 2007; Porras & Anderson, 1981; Wikoff, Anderson, & Crowell, 1983). For instance, Rafferty and Griffin (2006) reported positive relationships between supportive leadership and follower satisfaction, commitment, and career certainty. In a similar vein, Cohen and Wills (1985) reported that supervisor social support exerted a buffering effect on subordinates' occupational stress. Janssen's (2005) findings indicated a positive link between supervisor social support and employees' innovative behaviors. Compared to the strong association between supportive leadership and employee work attitudes, the relationship between supportive leadership and performance has been quite equivocal. While early studies on supportive leadership generally demonstrated a weak relationship between supportive leadership and employee performance (Yukl, 2006), a growing body of research has shown that supportive leadership

has a positive impact on followers' extra-role performance (Euwema et al., 2007) and innovative behavior (Janssen, 2005).

Moreover, **affective commitment** is an employee's emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in the organisation (Meyer and Allen, 1997). It involves cohesion or attachment to social relationships which absorb the individual's fund of affectivity and communion or becoming part of a whole through the mingling of the self with a group (Kanter, 1968). It is an attitude towards an organization which links or attaches the identity of the employee to the organisation (Sheldon, 1971). Affective Commitment manifests as a psychological bond to the organisation (Buchanan, 1974) as well as positive feelings for and social attachment to the organisation (Still, 1983). It is an attitudinal type of commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1991), which involves "identification" or the alignment of individual values with values of the organisation, "involvement" or feelings of care for the organisation, devotion and dedication to the organisation, pride in the organisation, willingness to put forth extra effort into the organisation, making sacrifices for the good of the organisation, and loyalty or a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization (Gbadamosi et al., 2007; Liou, 2008; Mowday et al., 1979).

The desire of the individual to remain in the organisation is the basis for Attitudinal Commitment Theory (Mercurio, 2015). Following an integrative literature review of high impact journal articles, Mercurio (2015) noted that although many conceptualizations since the 1960 and 1970s have depicted commitment as equally weighted components (affective, normative, continuance), the affective construct of commitment has remained central and constant through a wide diversity of the theorizing and multidimensional conceptualizations of organizational commitment. Affective, or emotional and attitudinal attachment to the organization was demonstrably an important core essence of the organizational commitment construct. It was the most influential, enduring, indispensable, and central characteristic of organisational commitment that seems to serve as an historical and theoretical base for organisational commitment theories (Mercurio, 2015). It is the centre core that most strongly affects work behaviours and feelings and shapes individual perceptions than other components or proposed forms of commitment. An affective bond with an organization represents an emotional involvement, identification, and value congruence with the organization. It contributes to a mind-set that involves a cognitive

recognition that there is an important purpose in what one is doing in an organization characterised by desire to follow a course of action and exert effort to achieve organizational goals (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001).

Then, Stephen Covey (2011) defined proactive personality as accepting responsibility for your own behavior (past, present and future) and taking the initiative to make things happen and believing that you have the power to make positive choices that can change the negative. Self-awareness is the key to being proactive because if you're not aware of your negative reactions around you it will impossible for you to change them into positive actions. Self-aware doesn't always lead to being proactive and this is why Will power is needed and having an attitude of responsibility for your own life, also means having control over your actions and never blaming someone else for your mistakes or negative circumstances. Being proactive starts with self-awareness and grows over time with will-power and taking responsibility for your action. It is the key to creating personal happiness and the kind of life you desire. It is better to be proactive than to be reactive because reactive people are often affected by their environment. it affects their attitude and their performance. Proactive people can carry their own attitude and feelings with them. So if it rains or the sun shines it makes no difference to them. Proactive people are still influenced by a value-based choice or response. Bateman and Grant (1993) discussed the proactive component of organizational behavior and introduced a measure of the "proactive personality." This measure of a personal disposition toward proactive behavior is intended to identify differences among people in the extent to which they take action to influence their environments. Bateman and Grant defined the prototypic "proactive personality" as one who is relatively unconstrained by situational forces and who effects environmental change. Proactive personalities identify opportunities and act on them; they show initiative, take action, and persevere until they bring about meaningful change. In contrast, people who are not proactive exhibit the opposite patterns: they fail to identify, let alone seize, opportunities to change things.

Proactivity differs fundamentally from affective traits like well-being and from cognitive traits like locus of control. The proactive disposition is a tendency to initiate and maintain actions that directly alter the surrounding environment (Bateman and Grant 1993). Using the language of Buss and Finn (1987), proactivity is an instrumental trait because it is part

of a class of behaviors that impact the environment. Rooted in the interactionist perspective (Bandura 1977; Schneider 1983), the proactive approach considers the possibility that individuals create their environments. In the psychology and organizational behavior literatures, the theme of interactionism holds that behavior is both internally and externally controlled, and that situations are as much a function of persons as vice versa (Schneider 1983). Reciprocal causal links exist between person, environment, and behavior (Bandura 1977). Accordingly, individuals can intentionally and directly change their current circumstances, such as by choosing vocations for which they are best suited. Thus, based on interactionist theory, and the behaviors associated with the proactive personality, it seems reasonable that proactive personalities may be drawn to entrepreneurial careers, but not employee silence behaviour.

Therefore, this seminar paper examines employee silence behavior; the predictive study of supportive leadership, affective commitment and proactive personality.

Statement Of The Problem

Employees who work at an environment where a culture of fear and intimidation prevails are forced to remain silent, and they seem reluctant to intervene in organizational policies and administrative powers. Employees –as an important group of stakeholders- know that their ideas will not be transmitted to the senior management. Particularly in public institutions the practices in the workplace are limited to the management of the senior management (Calpham, Cooper 2005). Some managers want to avoid negative feedback because they fear to be harmed or perceived as unsatisfactory. Thus, they may make an effort to create a climate that inhibits negative feedback that comes from their subordinates (Slade 2008). In that case, managers find a way to imply that they are uneasy when faced with people who have different opinions coming from their subordinates. These implications give rise to the fear of confrontation between the superior and the subordinate, and the subordinate prefers to remain silent and to express opinions parallel to those of his/her superior (Perlow, Williams 2003). While individual studies have explored these factors in isolation, there is a dearth of research that comprehensively examines Employee Silence Behaviour, Predictive Roles of Supportive Leadership, Affective Commitment and Proactive Personality among Telecommunication Employees. This gap is significant because

employee silence behaviour can lead to numerous detrimental outcomes if not properly addressed.

Theoretical Insights

Active/Passive and Constructive/Destructive model by Gorden (2006)

This model states that there are four quadrants in which employee voice can land. Active constructive is characterized by making suggestions, union bargaining, and principled dissent. It is also ordered by increasing intensity. Passive constructive is ordered by decreasing intensity and it involves attentive listening, quiet non-verbal support, and unobtrusive cooperation. Active destructive is also ordered by increasing intensity and consists of verbal complaining to coworkers, verbal aggression, and antagonistic exit. Passive destructive, like passive constructive, is ordered by decreasing intensity and entails murmurings, apathy, silence, and withdrawal. Thus, this explains why employees develop and exhibit silence behavior in the workplace.

Interactionist Theory (Bandura, 1964)

The proactive approach considers the possibility that individuals create their environments. In the psychology and organizational behavior literatures, the theme of interactionism holds that behavior is both internally and externally controlled, and that situations are as much a function of persons as vice versa (Schneider 1983). Reciprocal causal links exist between person, environment, and behavior (Bandura 1977). Accordingly, individuals can intentionally and directly change their current circumstances, such as by choosing vocations for which they are best suited. Thus, based on interactionist theory, and the behaviors associated with the proactive personality, it seems reasonable that proactive personalities may be drawn to entrepreneurial careers, but not leads to employee silence behaviour.

Choice-Process Theory (Lawler, 1992)

States that employees develop separate commitments to the “distal” organization and to the more “proximate” work group because they attribute to these foci a different ability to generate positive emotions. Third, because the formal status of the work group (co-workers) and of the supervisor is likely to be different (Eisenberger, Stinglhamber,

Vandenberghe, Sucharski, & Rhoades, 2002), commitments to these foci should differ as well. Finally, on empirical grounds, there is some evidence that measures of affective commitment to the organization, the supervisor, and the work group are distinguishable (Becker, 1992; Clugston et al., 2000).

Path-Goal Leadership Theory (House and Mitchell, 1974)

House and Mitchell (1974) stated that leader behavior refers to the expected code of conduct exhibited by people in power. The leaders provide the expected performance levels, and acceptable means through which those following the leader should use to attain the specified goals. There are four varieties of leadership behaviour and styles postulated: Directive, Supportive, Participative, and Achievement-oriented. Gustafsson and Hornay (2014) state that path-goal leadership styles are the leadership styles pathways model provides. A leader characterized as directive will give his followers detailed instructions on the tasks, the anticipated level of performance, time frames and stringent rules and regulations to observe. A supportive leader is presented as warm, friendly, and available to his subordinates. He provides a work environment that facilitates the best out of the other employees, shows clear concern for the well-being of the subordinates, and is highly respectful to them. The leader seeks the opinions of the followers and puts them into consideration while making key decisions (Famakin & Abisuga, 2016).

Method

Participants

A total of three hundred and fifty-seven (357) telecommunication employees were used for the study. The respondents were randomly drawn at their convenience from six telecommunication firms located in Enugu metropolis. These firms include; Airtel (58), MTN (124), Globacom (52), Etisalat (64), Airtel (48), NITEL (11). Among the participants, 45.2% (165) of them were male, while 54.8% (192) of them were female; 38.7% (138) of the participants were single, while 56.9% (203) of them were married; 88.8% (317) of the participants were Christians while 10.6% (38) of the participants were Muslims. Also,

majority of the participants fall within the age range 41-56 years contributing 54.1% of the total age of the participants. Likewise, most of the participants were OND/HND holders which account 42% of the total educational qualifications of the participants. (103) 28.9% of the participants were contract workers, while (238) 66.7% of them were permanent workers. Finally, 30.8% (110) of the participants were junior staff, while 67.8% (242) of them were senior staff.

Instruments

The instruments used for the research were mainly questionnaire which contains the scales measuring the predictors and the dependent variable, the questionnaire is divided into two, the first part is made up of the demographic variables; gender, marital status, religion, age, highest educational qualification, employment status, job position and job duration. And the other part is made up of scale measuring the variables of interest as listed below.

Employee silence behavior Scale

This is a 15 – item instruments that was designed to measure Employee silence behavior among health workers. It is a Likert-type scale with responses ranging from;1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – sometimes, 4 – agree, 5 – strongly agree. The scale was originally developed and validated by Elsa Pena-Suarez, Jose Muniz, Angela Campillo-Alvarez, Eduardo Fon Seca-Pedrero and Eduardo Garcio-Cueto (2013) at the Universidad de Oviedo and Universidad de La Rioja in Spain respectively. 3,163 health service workers were employed for the validation of the scale. 0.94 alpha coefficient was obtained from the result analysis, thus proving the scale to be reliable.

Supportive leadership Scale

This is a 15-item instrument that was designed to measure supportive leadership among workers. It is a Likert-typed scale with response ranging from; 1 – Very Dissatisfied, 2 – Dissatisfied, 3 – Neither, 4 – Satisfied, 5 – Very Satisfied.

The scale was developed by Warr et. al (1979). The coefficient alpha was between the range 0.85 – 0.88 and test retest correlation coefficient was 0.63 for about six months period as of the time they developed the scale. The Cronbach alpha of 0.89 was obtained in the study

conducted by Hong Lu, Alison E., Wihile, k., Louis Barriball (2006) among hospital nurses in Mainland China.

Proactive personality Scale

This is a 12 – item scale that was designed to measure Proactive personality Scale. It is a Likert-typed scale with responses ranging from; 1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – sometimes, 4 – agree, 5 – strongly agree. Two of the items in the scale, which are numbers 2 and 10 are scored reversely. The scale was developed by Dipaola and Hoy (2005) with the Cronbach alpha of .86,

Affective commitment Scale

This is a 15-item instrument that was designed to measure affective commitment among workers. It is a Likert-typed scale with response ranging from; 1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – sometimes, 4 – agree, 5 – strongly agree. The scale was developed by Morris (1980). The coefficient alpha was between the range 0.78 – 0.83 and test retest correlation coefficient was 0.87 for about six months period as of the time they developed the scale.

Design/Statistics

Cross sectional design was employed in this study. Hierarchical Multiple Regression was the analytical tool adopted for the result analysis because it checks for the contribution of the controlled variable and that of predictors variable of interest individually and collectively.

Result

The data obtained from the participants in the present study was subjected to statistical analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 20.0. The means, standard deviations, and correlations among the study variables were computed first. Then, hierarchical multiple regression was used to test the hypotheses of the study in which Entrepreneurial Intention was the dependent variable. The variables were entered into the equation in three steps. In the first step of the equation, demographic variables (gender,

marital status, religion, age, highest educational qualification, employment status, job position and job duration), were entered in order to control for any probable impact they may have on Employee silence behavior. In the second step, Supportive leadership was entered into the equation while Proactive personality and Affective commitment were included in the third step and fourth equation to test whether they could predict Employee silence behavior.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations among the variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Gen.	1.53	.51	—										
Ms.	1.64	.57	-.09	—									
Rel.	1.12	.34	.03	-.03	—								
Age	1.89	.75	-.12*	.41**	.07	—							
Heq.	3.41	1.31	.01	.08	.16**	.13*	—						
Es.	1.63	.57	-.08	.16**	.01	.15**	.08	—					
Jp.	1.67	.50	-.07	.15**	.10	.16**	.18**	.45**	—				
Jd.	12.5	6.38	-.09	.15	.14**	.27**	.18**	.33**	.61**	—			
S.L	56.52	8.97	-.14**	.06	.11*	.11*	.02	.15**	.27**	.24**	—		
P.P	52.25	6.83	-.11	.02	.06	.02	.01	.14*	.21*	.14		—	
A.C	53.18	12.02	-.13*	-.04	.03	.05	.03	-.02	.17**	.09	-.02		—
ESB	43.37	6.75	-.08	.10	-.07	.23	.08	.22	.14**	.10*	.10	.16	—

Note: N = 357 * = P<.05, ** = P<.01

Gen = Gender: coded as, Male=1 Female=2; **Ms**= Marital status: coded as Single=1 Married=2 Separated=3; **Rel**= Religion: coded as Christianity=1 Islam=2 Others=3; **Age**: coded as, less than 25 years=1, 25-40 years=2, 41-56 years=3, more than 56 years=4; **Heq** = Highest educational qualification: coded as FSLC=1, O’level=2, OND/HND=3, B.Sc.=4, PGD=5, Msc.=6 Ph.D=7; **Es** = Employment status: coded as, Contract=1, Permanent=2; **Jp** = Job Position: coded as, Junior Staff=1, Senior Staff=2; **Jd** = Job duration; **S.L**= Supportive leadership; **P.P** = Proactive personality; **A.C**= Affective commitment; **ESB** = Employee silence behavior

The result in Table 1 above evinced that the demographic variables; Employment status ($r = .22, p < .01$), Job position ($r = .14, p < .01$), and Job duration ($r = .10, p < .05$) significantly correlate with Employee Silence Behaviour. Also, the predictors variables; supportive leadership ($r = .14, p < .65$), proactive personality ($r = -.02, p < .38$) and affective commitment ($r = .16, p < .61$) did not significantly correlated with employee silence behaviour.

Table 2*Hierarchical multiple regression of predictors of ESB*

Variable	1	2	3	4
	β	B	β	β
<i>Controls</i>				
Gender	-0.04	-0.001	.01	.01
Marital status	-0.03	-0.02	-0.01	-0.01
Religion	-0.09	-0.13	-0.12	-0.12
Age	.21	.20	.19**	.15
Edu. Qualification	.05	.07	.06	.03
Employment status	.17	.16	.18**	.12**
Job position	.06	-0.01	-0.03	-0.03
Job duration	-0.04	-0.07	-0.06	-0.06
<i>Main predictors</i>				
Supportive leadership		.23	.23	.24
Proactive personality			.16	.16
Affective commitment				.31
Adjusted R^2	.080	.205	.219	.306

ΔR^2	.100	.125	.016	.019
ΔF	4.86	55.77**	7.14**	6.12

Note. ** = $p < .01$

The results of the hierarchical multiple regression in Table 2 indicate that the demographic variables (gender, marital status, religion, age, highest educational qualification, employment status, job position and job duration) entered in step 1 of the equation as control variables were able to collectively and individually account for significant 10% variance in ESB ($\Delta R^2 = .10, p < .001$). The inclusion of supportive leadership in step 2 of the equation did not contribute any significant variance to the prediction of ESB ($\beta = .23, \Delta R^2 = .13, p < .451$). However, when proactive personality was introduced in step 3 of the equation, it did not contribute any significant variance to the prediction of ESB ($\beta = .16, \Delta R^2 = .02, p < .214$), when affective commitment was introduced in step 4 of the equation, it did not contribute any significant variance to the prediction of ESB ($\beta = .31, \Delta R^2 = .02, p < .810$). Thus, the first hypothesis that stated that supportive leadership will not significantly predict ESB was confirmed. Also, the second and third hypotheses that stated that proactive personality will not significantly predict ESB and affective commitment will not significantly predict ESB were also confirmed.

Discussion

This study investigated Supportive leadership, Proactive personality and affective commitment as predictors of employee silence behavior among telecommunication

employees in Enugu metropolis. Three hundred and fifty-seven employees were conveniently drawn from five telecommunication firms in Enugu metropolis. They considered 145 males and 212 females participated in the study, with ages ranging from 25-56 years with a mean age of 40.5 years. The result of the study showed that Supportive leadership did not significantly predicted employee silence behavior, Proactive personality did not significantly predicted employee silence behavior and affective commitment did not significantly predicted employee silence behavior.

Implications of the Study

Result showed that employee silence is extremely detrimental to organizations often causing an "escalating level of dissatisfaction" among employees, "which itself in absenteeism, turnover and perhaps other undesired behaviors".

Communication is the key to an organization's success. If employee silence does occur, communication suffers and as a result harms the overall functioning of the organization. This indicates how much an organization can suffer just because of lack of proper communication. Over time silence within organizations causes some employees to be extremely indifferent. Indifferent employees are those who are "indifferent to their jobs, employers and quality of work.

Indifferent employees cause the organization to lose money and function poorly. Unfortunately when major monetary losses are detected in organizations, managers tend to react by trying to recover the loss, overlooking the fact employees have become indifferent as a result of unaddressed employee silence. More often than not employees who are not doing their share of the work are also not speaking up with the problems they see, leading to a perpetual cycle of employee silence.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it could be inferred that employees are more willing to talk or contribute important information to the growth of the firm, when managers are supportive, warm and friendly in their disposition, when management show affection and emotional connection with the employees and when the management are proactive in their behavior and actions

towards employees. Absence of these factors can contribute significantly to employee silence behavior.

Recommendations

Nigerian organizations need to develop an ideology that will help to determine employee's silence and voices in order to transform our organizations into a model to be reckoned with. If silence are broken and voices of employee heard, individual freedom, self-esteem, and Justice will play their role of improving the economy and in a larger extent evolves quality organizations. Employee's Silence and voices if properly managed by managements of Nigerian organizations, our potentials in diversity could be harnessed in re-positioning Nigerian organizations among the world greatest especially in the areas of organizational growth and development.

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