

**CAPITAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY, ISLAMABAD**



**The Affect of Employee Attitude, Supervisors
Attitude and Communication Opportunities on
Employee Silence, Mediated by Employee
Intentions to Remain Silent. The Theory of
Planned Behavior Perspective**

by

Ahmed Ali Qureshi

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment for the
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and Communication Opportunities on Employee Silence,
Mediated by Employee Intentions to Remain Silent. The
Theory of Planned Behavior Perspective**

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Dedicated to my Father, the respectable

Mr. Aziz Ahmed Qureshi

No words can describe and encompass his love for me



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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the research work presented in the thesis, entitled “**The Affect of Employee Attitude, Supervisor's Attitude and Communication Opportunities on Employee Silence, mediated by Employee Intentions to Remain Silent. The Theory of Planned Behavior Perspective**” was conducted under the supervision of **Dr. S. M. M. Raza Naqvi**. No part of this thesis has been submitted anywhere else for any other degree. This thesis is submitted to the **Department of Management Sciences, Capital University of Science and Technology** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy in the field of **Management Sciences**. The open defence of the thesis was conducted on **August 11, 2022**.

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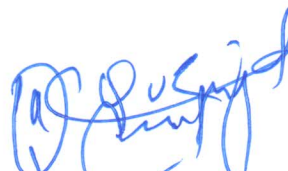
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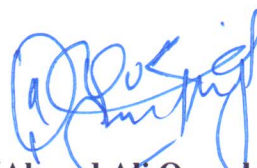
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List of Publications

It is certified that following publication(s) have been made out of the research work that has been carried out for this thesis:-

1. Qureshi, A. A., & Naqvi, S. M. M. R. (2021). Employee Retention: Development and Validation of its Scale. *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews*, 9(2), 453463. <https://doi.org/10.18510/hssr.2021.9244>

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Abstract

Employee silence (ES) is a pervasive yet unexplored construct. It negatively affects individuals, groups, and organizations. It has remained unexplored mainly because it is a covert behavior and is considered the opposite of voice behaviors. Various researchers have called for an in-depth study of the construct. The purpose and aim of the study were to further explore it, with the three main objectives, 1) to develop, introduce and validate the construct of employee reticence (employee-silence attitude) and its scale, 2) to describe the employee silence with the theoretical underpinning, and 3) to develop, introduce and validate the construct of guile silence (a new dimension of ES) and its scale. To develop, introduce and validate the construct of employee reticence (employee-silence attitude) and its scale, multiple studies were conducted. The Mixed-Method Research design was employed using IBM SPSS 25.0 and SmartPLS 3.0 software for data analysis to test and confirm face validity, content validity, reliability, item reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and nomological validity. It was found that employee reticence is a valid employee attitude.

To achieve the second objective of the research, the study was conducted to apply the theory of planned behavior (TPB) to employee silence. Using PLS-SEM, it was found that employee attitude (employee reticence), subjective norms (supervisor's attitude towards silence), and behavioral control (availability of communication opportunities) lead to employees' intentions to remain silent which mediates between them and employee silence. The theoretical and contextual objectives of the research were met successfully.

To achieve the third objective of the research, three independent studies (study I-III) were conducted for scale development, validation, and testing using mixed-methods research. IBM SPSS 25.0 and AMOS software were used for data analysis to test and confirm face validity, content validity, reliability, item reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and nomological validity. It was found that guile silence is a distinct dimension of employee silence, which can broaden our vision and further our research on employee silence.

The research has advanced our understanding of ES, however, it is just the beginning of building the foundations of ES leading to many research and practical implications. For instance, the use of the theory of planned behavior to explain has widened the researchers and practitioners perspectives. They would be able to use individual, group, and organizational level factors contributing to ES in one framework. Further, the developed scales of ES attitude and guile silence would be used for hiring procedures, organizational climate snapshots, behavioral modifications, and interventions leading to individual and organizational level improvements.

The research has added value to the body of knowledge on human behavior, attitudes, and employee silence. The development of two scales coupled with the description of ES with the enactment of individual and organizational level factors has paved way for more original work in the respective fields.

Key words: Attitude, Employee Reticence, Employee Silence, Scale Development, Scale Validation. Dimension of employee silence, theory of planned behavior, Guile Silence.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

In organizations, the employees hold the information and do not share it with others purposely (intentionally). This intentional holding of the information has been the cause of many problems at the individual level e.g. depression, stress, tension, low job satisfaction, turnover intention, gossip, and others ([Cortina and Magley, 2003](#)) as well as problems at the organizational level such as Enron, Columbia disaster and others ([Oppel and Kahn, 2002](#); [Starbuck and Farjoun, 2009](#)), hospitals for patient safety ([Gkorezis et al., 2016](#)). Further, in the context of Pakistan, ES has been found to have negative affects on efficiency and innovation of both service and manufacturing organizations including education sectors and health sectors ([Islam et al., 2022](#); [Khan et al., 2022](#); [Phulpoto et al., 2021](#); [Saeed et al., 2021](#)).

The intentional withholding of the ideas, suggestions and experience concerns of employees from the ones who are perceived to capable of bringing the change, has been termed Employee Silence (ES), which is relatively a new concept. It can be exercised by anyone in the organization including front-line employees, middle managers, and top executives ([Tangirala and Ramanujam, 2008](#)). Its newness can be attributed mainly to the fact that ES has been thought of as the mere absence of employee voice (EV). The factors of increasing employee voice were considered the factors of decreasing ES and vice versa. Similarly, it was assumed in the previous studies that the positive and negative effects of employee voice will not be present

in the presence of ES. Thus, studying ES exclusively was never a prime focus of the researchers. The situation got more difficult mainly because ES was difficult to gauge, and had no measuring tools (Brinsfield, 2009).

It was not until recently that the ES has been recognized as a concept different from the mere absence of voice (Brinsfield, 2013; Dyne et al., 2003; Greenberg et al., 2007; Jain, 2015; Pinder and Harlos, 2001). The researchers have differentiated ES from Employee voice on the basis of underlying motives. Therefore, an employee is considered silent if s/he is silent due to a particular motive, say for example with the motive of avoiding negative consequences. Therefore, an employee who has nothing to say will not be considered as exhibiting employee silence because s/he has nothing to say. Similarly, an employee who is speaking about one matter can be exhibiting employee silence on another matter. The employees who are good at speaking will speak on many things and yet can be silent on many others. Unfortunately, due to reasons such as fear of punishment, adverse organizational actions, and pressure of the working group, ideas, suggestions and experience concerns are withheld by the employees - the information which can be very important for the smooth functioning of the organization. It has caused serious problems for the organizations including bankruptcy (Oppel and Kahn, 2002; Starbuck and Farjoun, 2009). Therefore, it is pertinent to solve this problem by finding the antecedents that contribute to it and planning change interventions.

Multiple studies have been conducted which have elaborated the prevalence of employee silence in organizations. Yet, these studies have always remained suggestive of more in-depth study of the phenomenon such as about: (a) quest for a theory explaining ES behavior, and (b) exploring other dimensions of ES, their measurement, and factor that gives rise to them, among many others. The extant literature on ES is mostly limited to defining ES (for example see, (Dyne et al., 2003; Jain, 2015; Knoll and van Dick, 2013b; Pinder and Harlos, 2001) and lacks theoretical support in explaining ES. However, Brinsfield (2009) also described ES theoretically. However, the theoretical support lacks the variable of intentions, which is the most important determinant of ES (Morrison, 2014; Pinder and Harlos, 2001). Therefore, the present study focuses on the concept of ES through the lens of infamous theory, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1988),

in which intentions has been taken as the determinant of behavior, along with other antecedents of the intentions which are ones attitude towards the behavior, subjective norms and behavioral control.

Using the theory has served important functions such as giving theoretical underpinning to the concept of ES, 2) use of intentions as a separate variable, and 3) combining personal, social, and organizational level factors in one framework to predict ES. In this way, a comprehensive theoretical foundation to the concept of employee silence could be given, which encompasses not only the dispositional factors but also the organizational level factors. The earlier researchers have separately explored the dispositional and organizational level antecedents of ES; yet, they ignored employee attitude towards silence as a contributing factor towards the exhibition of silence behavior. According to TPB, the behavior of an individual is determined by the attitudes of the individual which lead to individuals' willingness or intention to perform a behavior (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1977). The attitude-behavior relationship has been found significant in many studies (see Ajzen (1985); Jungbauer et al. (2018); Monzani et al. (2016); Yan and Cheng (2015)). In applying TPB to ES, the literature lacks the variable representing ones attitude towards silence. Therefore, the need to propose and develop a variable for such an attitude led to the development of a new job attitude variable in this research, which has been termed as Employee Reticence.

In TPB, the second antecedent of intention to perform a given behavior is subjective norms. It has been defined by Fishbein and Ajzen (2011) (p. 131) as, "an individuals perception that most people who are important to her think she should (or should not) perform a particular behavior". In this research, the managers attitude towards silence has been taken as the subjective norm. In an organization, one's manager is one of the most important people (Vakola and Bouradas, 2005). According to them, the liking and disliking of those are considered while performing any behavior in an organizational setting. Managers attitudes towards silence have been studied as the antecedents of employee silence in studies such as Mokhtari (2016) and Vakola and Bouradas (2005).

In TPB, the third antecedent of intention to perform a given behavior is "perceived behavioral control". It has been defined by Fishbein and Ajzen (2011) (p.

154) as “the extent to which people believe that they are capable of performing a given behavior, that they have control over its performance”. They also added that PBC also takes “into account the availability of information, skills, opportunities, and other resources required to perform the behavior as well as possible barriers or obstacles that may have to be overcome”. In this research, the communication opportunities has been taken as the perceived behavioral control towards ES. Thus, the communication opportunities means greater perceived behavioral control and vice versa. [Vakola and Bouradas \(2005\)](#) have found the availability of communication opportunities as an antecedent of employee silence.

Therefore, within the conceptual framework of TPB, employee reticence (attitudes toward performing a behavior); managers attitude towards behavior (subjective norms), and communication opportunities (perceived behavioral control), are determinants of intentions to remain silent (intentions) leading to employee silence (behavior). It is noteworthy here that different dimensions of ES exist in the literature. The dimensions of ES have been proposed and evolved during the evolution of ES itself. These dimensions are Quiescence and Acquiescence ([Pinder and Harlos, 2001](#)), Acquiescent Silence, Defensive Silence and Prosocial Silence ([Dyne et al., 2003](#)), Opportunistic Silence ([Knoll and van Dick, 2013b](#)), Deviant Silence, Relational Silence, Defensive Silence, Diffident Silence, Ineffectual Silence and Disengaged Silence ([Brinsfield, 2013](#)), and finally, silence due to Fear of Retaliation, silence due to Internal Motivation, silence based on self-competence and silence due to Self-Image ([Jain, 2015](#)). Few of these dimensions evolved or were taken care of by dimensions proposed later, while the dimensions proposed by [Jain \(2015\)](#) are based on interpersonal perspective, related to superior-subordinate relationship and are specific to the Indian context. It is noteworthy that the dimensions of ES have been differentiated from each other based on underlying motives ([Morrison, 2014](#)). However, there is still room for further dimensions of employee silence.

Therefore, the present study also focuses on proposing a new dimension of ES which has its support in management sciences literature ([Garfield, 2006](#); [Knoll and van Dick, 2013b](#); [Williamson, 1985](#)), English literature, Punjabi literature, general observation, and experience. The measure of the newly proposed dimension has also been developed and tested. Proposing, developing, validating and

testing the GS is one of the major contributions of the research. Overall, the research contributes to the literature in many ways. First, it provides the theoretical underpinning to the concept of employee silence. Second, it proposes, develops, validates and tests the concept of a new job-attitude, “Employee Reticence”. Finally, it proposes, develops, validates and tests another dimension of employee silence, “Guile Silence”. These were the literature gaps that have been successfully filled by the research.

1.2 Motivation of the Study

The motivation for the study dates back to the time when the researcher started his career. Like any other first-time job holder, the researcher was an enthusiast, had a lot of ideas, and wanted to bring change. On many occasions during meetings and otherwise, he was asked to remain silent by his colleagues, as he might have to face the consequences. His improvement ideas and suggestions were either not accepted, delayed, or returned with humiliation. It finally lead him to remain intentionally silent, which is known as employee silence (Knoll et al., 2021). Further, it was observed that the senior employees and colleagues very rarely presented any idea, and when they did present the idea, they did it very subtly, keeping in view the overall environment and repercussions. It was a serious problem for a young enthusiast employee. The problem faced was discussed with the HR experts and the literature was reviewed to know the individual and organizational level factors that lead to ES. However, it was found that the literature lacked a single framework that had individual and organizational level factors (Brinsfield, 2009) affecting ES and there is a plentiful unexplored situation (Morrison, 2014). Therefore, the research was taken to address these problems and fill not only the research gaps but also quench the thirst to get the answers and reach to a plausible conclusion.

1.3 Rationale of the Study / Research Gaps

Employee silence is pervasive in organizations (Benevene, 2020) and has serious negative consequences (Choi and Hyun, 2022), across organizations and countries

(Knoll et al., 2021). For instance, research suggests that ES leads to burnout and turnover (Knoll et al., 2019), lower levels of commitment and satisfaction (Xu et al., 2015), and even lower annual appraisals (Maqbool et al., 2019). In recent years the research on ES has increased multifold (Hao et al., 2022). However, due to the covert nature of ES, many gaps in the literature need to be filled to have a better understanding of the construct, and design of relevant interventions and improvements; making this study imperative and all the more important.

Due to such gaps, the problems are being realized at the individual, group, and organizational levels. The case of Enron is a classic example of employee silence (Lalich et al., 2018). Accordingly, in the earlier research, attempts have been made to find the antecedents of employee silence. The earlier researchers have explored the dispositional and organizational level antecedents of employee silence; however, they ignored a very vital aspect at the employee level contributing to the formation of silence behavior. However, the importance of dispositional factors has a vital role in an individual's behavior including ES (Hao et al., 2022; Morrison, 2014). This research has captured this missing link of employee's attitude towards silence behavior, which is a novelty and strong contribution to the existing body of knowledge. One of the reasons why employee silence attitude has not been discussed in the previous literature is due to the lack of such a construct and unavailability of the scale to measure it.

Therefore, this research primarily focuses on filling the first knowledge gap which is divided into 2 related parts: (a) Operationalizing the concept of employee attitude towards silence which will be empirically tested to predict employee silence (b) the literature on the subject issue does not provide an answer regarding the measurement of this concept. Therefore, the empirical testing of the concept is an important contribution of the present study which will be done by developing, validating, and measuring employee silence attitude and its scale. The employee attitude towards silene has been termed as employee reticene in this research. Further, the rationale of addressing this gap derives from the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985) which postulates that attitude formulates intentions that contribute towards behavioral depictions through the relevant intentinons. It has been argued that employees withhold ideas, improvement suggestions, and experience concerns

to achieve advantages for themselves (Knoll and van Dick, 2013b). It will also pave the way in explaining ES with the help of an underpinning theory.

Employee silence is an intentional behavior (Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021). It has been defined as intentional withholding of information (Brinsfield, 2013; Donaghey et al., 2011; Dyne et al., 2003; Pinder and Harlos, 2001; Tangirala and Ramanujam, 2008), in all the definitions that have been presented in the literature so far. Unfortunately, limited attempts have been made to describe ES based on theory (see Brinsfield (2009); Morrison (2014)). Others have explained the phenomenon of ES without any theoretical support (see Dyne et al. (2003); Jain (2015); Knoll and van Dick (2013b); Pinder and Harlos (2001); Tangirala and Ramanujam (2008)). At the same time, it is important to note that:

- The supporting theories do not account for the “intention” of the employee, whereas employee silence is an intentional behavior (Brinsfield, 2013; Dyne et al., 2003; Jain, 2015; Knoll and van Dick, 2013b; Pinder and Harlos, 2001). That is to say, an intentional behavior is explained by using the theories, which do not account for intention at all, either implicitly or explicitly.
- The combination of theories to explain employee silence has not been tested empirically to check their usefulness (if any) in explaining employee silence (see Brinsfield (2009)).
- This has made the explanation of ES inadequate and has possibly put questions on the relevance of the theories being applied in explaining ES.

On the other hand, every human behavior which is of interest to researchers is supposed to be supported by theory (ies) (Bandura, 1974). However, the above discussion reveals that research on employee silence lacks theoretical support for employee silence. Hence, gap two is the lack of theoretical support for employee silence. This gap is filled by the application of the Theory of Planned Behavior. The theory is used to understand the sequential attitudinal-behavioral relationship, social factors, and organizational factors contributing to ES which contribute together to predict employee silence through intentions. ES is an intentional withholding of information (Brinsfield, 2013; Harlos and Knoll, 2021). Limited

attempts have been made to describe ES, 1) based on theory, and 2) research frameworks that also measure intentions (see [Brinsfield \(2009\)](#); [Morrison \(2014\)](#)). Others have explained the phenomenon of ES without any theoretical support (see [Dyne et al. \(2003\)](#); [Jain \(2015\)](#); [Knoll and van Dick \(2013b\)](#); [Pinder and Harlos \(2001\)](#); [Tangirala and Ramanujam \(2008\)](#)). At the same time, it is important to measure intentions as a separate variable ([Ajzen, 1985](#)). Further, the intentions of behavior are recommended to be evaluated separately ([Morwitz and Munz, 2021](#)). In the employee turnover research, the construct of intentions is measured separately (see [Shukla et al. \(2013\)](#)). Finally, ES is a covert behavior and intentions are the ones that separate employee silence from the silence of having nothing to say or contribute. Therefore, it is imperative to measure intentions-of-silence-behavior separately to predict ES. Hence, gap three is a lack of theory in which intentions have been measured independently to measure ES. This gap is filled by the application of the Theory of Planned Behavior. The theory provides the framework through which ES can be predicted by attitudinal-behavioral relationships, social factors, and organizational factors contributing to ES through intentions. In organizations, employees remain silent to avoid additional work. Consequently, the concept of Guile Silence as another dimension of employee silence has been introduced. In defining it, lead is drawn from the literature; 1) opportunistic silence ([Knoll and van Dick, 2013b](#)), 2) 10 reasons why people dont share their knowledge ([Garfield, 2006](#)), 3) Indian-Punjabi Literature proverb “Jaira Bolay oi Kunda kho-lay”, 4) English literature proverb “One who touches the rope will have to ring the bell”, and 5) the anecdotal evidence.

[Knoll and van Dick \(2013b\)](#) developed the measures of opportunistic silence which included an item stating, “I remained silent at work because that would mean having to do avoidable additional work” on the Likert scale. Meaning thereby, a respondent agreeing to the statement is remaining silent to avoid additional work. Similarly, an employee disagreeing to the statement agree to have avoidable additional work. The scale of opportunistic silence was tested and it was found that the item loaded significantly on a variable named opportunistic silence. The empirical testing of opportunistic silence suggest that the scale was valid and reliable and can be used in different organizational settings. Second, in Indian-Punjabi

literature a proverb, “Jaira Bolay oi Kunda kholay” means “anyone who will ask, who is there at the door? will have to open the door”. In other words, anyone who will speak will have to do the avoidable additional work of opening the door. Third, guile silence has its support in English literature as a proverb, “One who touches the rope will have to ring the bell”. In other words, one who touches the rope of the bell will have to ring the bell, h/she who speaks will have to do the avoidable additional work. Fourth, [Garfield \(2006\)](#) attributed employee silence as means to avoid additional work. According to him, the employees prefer to remain silent and do not share the knowledge, thinking they would be given the additional work of improvement as proposed by them. Thus supporting strong support in the literature on one hand, and have attracted little attention as a separate variable of interest on the other. This research is the first attempt to recognize this dimension of employee silence. Finally, it needs to be defined. A quality definition of any construct is always discriminating and general ([Albarracin et al., 2014](#)). Guile silence, thus is defined as, “withholding work-related ideas, information, or opinions to avoid additional work”. Measures of the dimension will also be developed and tested as per the earlier literature on ES, motive-based. As discussed earlier, it has the philosophical support from the philosophy of fear as well, that is to say, that the employee remains silent due to the fear of getting extra work.

Therefore, the current study addresses the under-researched area of employee silence as a gap four by proposing another dimension of employee silence, guile silence. Thus, the second knowledge gap is divided into 2 related parts: (a) Operationalizing the concept of guile silence which will be empirically tested (b) the literature on the subject issue does not provide an answer regarding the measurement of this concept. Therefore, the empirical testing of the concept is an important contribution of the present study which will be done by developing, validating, and measuring guile silence.

In conclusion, this research has a strong rationale to be conducted as it fills many research gaps in the literature. First, it has proposed a new job attitude that is employee reticence (employee attitude towards silence).

Secondly, the employee silence had lacked the support of the underpinning theory. It had always been described in the form of antecedents followed by the motives

without the support of underpinning theory. In this research, the theory of planned behavior has been used to describe the same. The use of TPB also helps in filling the fourth gap, in which intentions have been measured independently for the intentional behavior (employee silence). Thirdly, in this research guile silence has been proposed to be another dimension of employee silence. The discovery is of high importance since it has broadened our understanding of employee silence, its antecedents, and dimensions. At the same time, it is believed that the research would open venues for further inquiry into employee silence.

1.4 Problem Statement

The behavior of ES transcends across all different countries and organizations (Knoll et al., 2021) including Pakistan (Saeed et al., 2021). It is considered a counterwork behavior and severely affects employees and organizations (Lalich et al., 2018).

The evidence from Pakistan also suggests that ES is a real-life problem as it affects employees and organizations alike (Qureshi and Naqvi, 2022; Islam et al., 2022). Making it imperative to explore individual and organizational level factors contributing to ES. Individual and organizational factors contribute to employee silence (Morrison and Milliken, 2000) by fostering the employee attitude towards silence (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen et al., 2018), among other things. However, the literature lacks such an attitude, despite the fact that the constructs related to job attitudes are in abundance in the literature.

In this research, this problem is addressed by developing and validating such an attitude along with the development of its questionnaire. Every human behavior is supported by an underlying theory.

The problem of the lack of a theoretical support has persisted with Employee silence behavior throughout the literature except for one attempt by Brinsfield (2009). It was the amalgamation of two theories, which, however, was never tested. In this research, this problem has been addressed by theoretically supporting ES by the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1985). ES is intentional

behavior, however, the variable of intentions has not been used as a separate variable in explaining ES (Brinsfield, 2013; Dyne et al., 2003; Jain, 2015; Knoll and van Dick, 2013b; Pinder and Harlos, 2001). That is to say, an intentional behavior is explained by research models, which do not account for intention at all, either implicitly or explicitly.

This problem is addressed by taking intention as a separate variable using the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1985). The construct of ES is still at the evolutionary stage and there exist many unexplored situations where employees have remained silent (Morrison, 2014). This problem is addressed in this research, by exploring one of such situations and developing and validating another dimension of employee silence along with the development of its questionnaire.

The researchers are convinced that addressing these problems would solve multiple employee and organizational-related problems not only in the context of Pakistan but also internationally. Further, framing employee and organizational related factors contributing to ES in one framework would open multiple avenues for further research and practice.

1.5 Research Questions

The current research answers the following questions

1. Does the concept of employee reticence need to be operationalized, measured, developed and validated as an important predictor of employee intention of exhibiting employee silence?
2. Does one's attitude towards silence significantly affect employee intentions to exhibit employee silence?
3. Do subjective norms significantly affect the employee intention to exhibit employee silence?
4. Does perceived behavioral control significantly affect the employee's intention to exhibit employee silence?

5. Does employee intention to exhibit employee silence effects employee silence?
6. Does employee intention to exhibit employee silence mediate the relationship between attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and employee silence?
7. Does the concept of guile silence need to be defined, operationalized, measured, developed and validated?

1.6 Research Objectives

The objectives of the research are given below

1. To operationalize, measure, develop, and validate the concept of employee reticence as an important predictor of employee intention of exhibiting employee silence that is to operationalize, validate and measure the concept of employee reticence.
2. To find if one's attitude towards silence (employee reticence) affects employee intention to exhibit employee silence.
3. To find if subjective norms affect employee intention to exhibit employee silence.
4. To find if perceived behavioral control affects employee intention to exhibit employee silence.
5. To find if the employee's intention to exhibit employee silence affects employee silence.
6. To find if employee intention to exhibit employee silence mediates the relationship between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control and employee silence.
7. To define, operationalize, measure, develop and validate the concept of Guile Silence.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The literature is replete with literature emphasizing the negative outcomes of ES at the individual, team, and organizational levels. Thus, if ES can be mitigated it can lead to positive outcomes at the individual, team, and organizational levels. The thesis examines this proposition by examining the literature and proposing a framework for investigating antecedents of ES that will help organizations devise strategies to mitigate or harness ES in their favor.

The significance of the research is presented below in terms of (1) theoretical significance and practical significance and (2) methodological significance.

1.7.1 Theoretical and Practical Significance

The theoretical and practical significance and novelty of the research lie in the three main objectives of the research work, 1) to develop, introduce and validate the construct of employee reticence (employee-silence attitude) and its scale, 2) to describe the employee silence with the theoretical underpinning, and 3) to develop, introduce and validate the construct of guile silence (a new dimension of ES) and its scale. This study operationalizes, develops, and validates two new constructs and a complete framework to predict ES. Thus, this study is significant for the researchers and practitioners. For researchers it adds to the body of knowledge, by operationalizing, developing, and validating two new constructs, 1) One's attitude towards silence" referred to as Employee Reticence, and 2) Another dimension of ES referred to as Guile Silence. First, employee reticence and guile silence which are new constructs will open new avenues for research. It will open venues for organizational behaviorists and change interventionists for behavior modifications and learning programs (Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021).

Secondly, the complete framework of TPB has been used to predict ES. The use of the Theory of Planned Behavior has brought with it multifold advantages for researchers and practitioners. Explaining ES with the help of underpinning theory will pave way for a better understanding of the behavior and exploration of more of its antecedents (Brinsfield, 2009). It is helpful to both, as it can be used

to test a handful of possible antecedents not only proposed in this research but available otherwise in published research. In this way, ES can be addressed by the practitioners, thus boosting their level, team level, and organizational outcomes.

Further, ES is intentional behavior. Unlike earlier research on ES, the intention of an individual has been used in this research as another variable. This provides us the opportunity to understand ES better. The above insights represent just a few of the issues that have been addressed in this research. However, they represent a good beginning to what researchers should examine to better understand this area.

1.7.2 Methodological Significance

The methodological significance lies in the fact that triangulation has been used to confirm the data. In Study-I the mixed method research has been used to define, operationalize, develop, test, and validate the new variable of employee attitude (employee reticence). Following this, the new variable has been used in Study-II using the research paradigm of positivism by using employee reticence in another research frame, supported by a theory. Thus, confirming the results of the pragmatism research paradigm through the positivism research paradigm. Therefore, the research is unique in terms of its methodology adding value and significance through its methodology.

1.8 Supportive Theory

1.8.1 Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

TPB was presented by [Ajzen \(1988\)](#) and was an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action by [Fishbein \(1979\)](#). TPB is based on the assumption that human beings perform a behavior while taking into account the results/consequences of the behavior. They take into account these consequences either implicitly or explicitly to decide about performing the behavior ([Ajzen, 2005](#)). TPB has three conceptually independent antecedent variables which lead to behavioral intentions.

In other words, intentions are the functions of three basic determinants ([Ajzen, 2005](#)). One of the three antecedents is the attitude towards the behavior (personal), the second one is subjective norms (reflecting social influence) and the third one is perceived behavioral control (dealing with issues of control).

Attitude towards the behavior in question is the measure of the degree to which a person has a negative/positive evaluation of the behavior. Therefore, if the person/actor has a positive evaluation of the behavior, s/he is likely to engage in the behavior and vice versa.

The subjective norms refer to what the actor thinks about other people, who are important to the actor, about performing the behavior. Thus, if the person/actor thinks that the important others believe that h/she should perform the behavior, the h/she is likely to perform it.

Perceived Behavior Control, however, is the actors perception of whether h/she has the required resources, opportunity, and support available to perform the behavior. So if a person/actor has the (perceived) behavioral control, h/she is likely to engage in the behavior. TPB predicts conscious/intentional behavior ([Ajzen, 1991](#)). TPB, however, considers having volitional control of the one performing the behavior. Volitional control can be defined as having the opportunity, required resources, and support available to perform the behavior ([Ajzen, 1991](#)). Behavioral control was the variable that was added in TRA which led TPB to better predict the intentional behavior. The theory assumes perceived behavioral control to be the antecedent of intentions along with attitudes and subjective norms will better be able to predict the intentions and consequently the behavior. The conceptual framework as proposed by [Ajzen \(1988\)](#) is given in Figure 1.1. The relationship between attitudes and intentions is supported by empirical evidence. In literature, one's intentions have been found to mediate the relationship between job attitudes and organizational behaviors e.g. see ([Ajzen, 1985](#); [Chen et al., 2011](#); [Fishbein and Ajzen, 2011](#); [Shukla et al., 2013](#); [Valentine et al., 2011](#)). In the current research, the construct, Employee Reticence (ER) represents the "attitude towards the behavior" variable of TPB. It has been developed and operationalized as ones attitude towards the silence behavior. Therefore, it is one of the antecedents of intentions to ES, as described in the

TPB. The stronger the employee reticence, the stronger would be the intention to remain silent leading to ES. According to TPB, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control play a vital role in predicting intentions to perform the behavior along with the attitude variable.

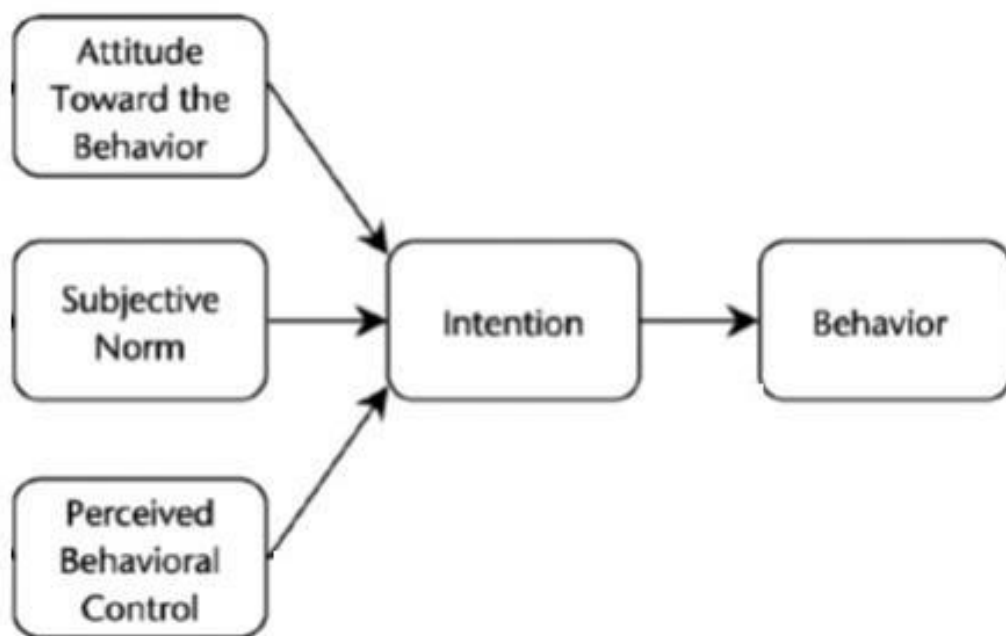


FIGURE 1.1: Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1988)

Empirical evidence also suggests subjective norms as the predictor of behavioral intentions along with other TPB constructs to explain a variety of behaviors, for example, subjective norms and practices of principals regarding inclusive education (Yan and Sin, 2015), subjective norms, and Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Consumption (Zoellner et al., 2012), and effect of subjective norms on communicating about drinking Neuwirth and Frederick (2004) among many others. In the context of this research, the Managers Attitude Towards Silence (MATS) has been substituted for the subjective norms that lead to the formation of the intentions to remain silent consequently leading to ES. The empirical evidence also suggests that subjective norms play vital role in making an individual perform as certain behavior when he or she is even not willing to exhibit. According to TPB, the third variable that affects intentions to perform the relevant behavior is Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC). PBC is determined by the total sets of available resources that can be utilized for behavior and perception of humans of their ability to perform a

given behavior (Ajzen, 2005). In the context of the current research communication opportunities have been taken as perceived behavioral control of ES. Therefore, communication opportunities (CO) are the set of available resources for communication in an organization. Empirical evidence suggests that the availability of communication opportunities fosters communications and lack thereof hampers it (Adenfelt, 2010). Communication opportunities must exist for better coordination (Bygballe et al., 2016). Communication opportunities are vital for the organization's success (Henderson et al., 2016; Lindner and Wald, 2011; Verburg et al., 2013).

According to the theory of planned behavior, the intentions to perform a behavior mediates between the antecedents of intentions and the behavior (Ajzen, 2015), that is, the intentions of performing the behavior 1) mediates between attitudes towards the behavior and exhibition of the behavior, 2) mediates between subjective norms towards the behavior and exhibition of the behavior and 3) mediates between perceived behavioral control of the behavior and exhibition of the behavior. In the perspective of the current research, the intentions to remain silent mediates between 1) ER and ES, 2) SETS and ES, and 3) CO and ES.

1.9 Scope of the Study

Individual and organizational factors foster employee silence (Morrison and Milliken, 2000). For instance, one's attitude towards a particular behavior is a fostering factor towards the exhibition of behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen et al., 2018). However, the literature lacks such an attitude. Therefore, as part of the scope of the research, the variable of employee attitude towards employee silence is defined, developed, and validated along with the development of its questionnaire. Secondly, every human behavior is supported by a theory. However, the ES behavior lacks theoretical support, except for one attempt by Brinsfield (2009). The untested attempt by Brinsfield (2009) is the amalgamation of two theories. The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1985) is tested for theoretically supporting the ES behavior as part of the scope of the study. Thirdly, ES is intentional behavior, however, the variable of intentions has not been used as a separate variable

in explaining ES (Brinsfield, 2013; Dyne et al., 2003; Jain, 2015; Knoll and van Dick, 2013a,b; Pinder and Harlos, 2001). Therefore, as part of the scope of the study, the intention variable is used and tested as a separate variable by using the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1985).

Finally, there exist many unexplored situations where employees have remained silent (Morrison, 2014). Thus, as part of the scope of the study, one of such situations is explored, developed, and validated as the dimension of ES. The questionnaire of the new dimension of the ES is also developed.

1.9.1 Definitions of Variables (Key Terms)

It is imperative to provide the operational definitions of all the constructs or variables to facilitate the reader to better understand the research.

Accordingly, the definitions of variables of this research are provided below.

1.9.1.1 Employee Silence

According to Brinsfield (2009), employee silence is the intentional withholding of information, related to the job or organization, which must be in response to some important situation issue, or event relating to the job or organization which is directed at a supervisor, upper management, team member, co-worker, or even a subordinate if that person is perceived as important relative to the issue at hand".

It can also be defined as employee withholding of ideas, suggestions, improvement ideas and experience concerns from the people who are perceived to be capable of bringing in the desired change.

It is worth noting that an important distinction between an employee who is not saying anything or is silent just because he or she has nothing to say must be made. In such a case, it will not be considered as exhibiting ES, when he or she has nothing say. On the other hand an employee, who has something to contribute in the form of a suggestion, ideas, or experience concerns, but refrain from speaking up and remain silent, would actually be exhibiting the behavior of employee silence.

1.9.1.2 Employee Reticence

Employee reticence is the employee's attitude towards employee silence and has been defined as favorable feelings of an employee towards employee silence" (Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021).

It is an employees disposition towards the behavior of employee silence. The positive these feeling are towards the behavior of employee silence, the greater would be the employee reticence and vice versa.

1.9.1.3 Subjective Norms and Manager's Attitude Towards Silence

The subjective norms are the social pressure to perform (or not to perform) a given behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen, 2011). On the other hand, the Managers Attitude Towards Silence (MATS) has been substituted for the subjective norms which exist in the environment that forms a pressure on employees to perform a behavior in line with that of the attitude of the manager.

1.9.1.4 Communication Opportunities

Communication opportunities here are related to openness and trust in communication, information sharing, perceived feelings of having a voice, and being taken seriously (Vakola and Bouradas, 2005).

1.9.1.5 Guile Silence

In this research, the Guile silence has been operationalized as the withholding of the work-related ideas, information, or opinions to avoid additional work". The additional work may or may not be the part of ones job description.

1.10 Organization of Thesis

The thesis entails objectives and research questions, which required a good number of studies to be conducted. Therefore, it is imperative to describe the organization of thesis which is as follows in Table 1.1. It has three columns with relevant details.

TABLE 1.1: Organization of Thesis

RO No.	Research Objectives (RO) Statements	Study	Research Model
1	1. To operationalize, validate and measure the concept of ER <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Literature Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pp. 18 - 37 ● Research Methodology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pp. 59 - 77 ● Data Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pp. 111 - 116 ● Discussion, Conclusion, Future Recommendation and Limitations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pp. 128 - 131, 135 - 136, 140 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I-A I-B 	Fig. 2.3
2 - 6	2. To explore the effect of ER on employee intention to exhibit ES. 3. To explore the effect of subjective norms on employee intention to exhibit ES. 4. To explore the effect of PBC on employee intention to exhibit ES? 5. To explore the effect of employee intention to exhibit employee silence on ES? 6. To find out if employee intention to exhibit ES mediates the relationship between attitude, subjective norms, & PBC and ES? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Literature Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pp. 18 -31, 37 - 48 ● Research Methodology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pp. 77 - 82 ● Data Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pp. 116 - 125 ● Discussion, Conclusion, Future Recommendation and Limitations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pp. 131-133, 137-138, 140-141 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● II 	Fig. 2.4
7	7. To operationalize, validate and measure the concept of Guile Silence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Literature Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pp. 18 -31, 48 - 57 ● Research Methodology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pp. 83 - 110 ● Data Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pp. 125 - 127, 137-138 ● Discussion, Conclusion, Future Recommendation and Limitations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pp. 133-135, 138-139, 141-142 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● III <ul style="list-style-type: none"> III-A III-B III-C 	Fig. 2.5

1.11 Summary

Employee silence is pervasive in organizations (Benevene, 2020). Many organizations have incurred a great loss due to employees exhibiting the employee silence behavior. Despite being pervasive and the reason for many problems, ES warrants further research based on numerous gaps. For instance, ES literature lacks an attitude variable that fosters ES. Similarly, ES behavior lacks theoretical support despite being in the literature for about two decades. Interestingly, there are still unexplored situations where employees have preferred to exhibit employee silence. Such situations require exploration. In this research, these gaps and problems have been identified. Accordingly, the research questions and the research objectives have been formulated to address them. Finally, the significance and novelty of the research lie in the three main objectives of the research work, 1) to develop, introduce and validate the construct of employee reticence (employee-silence attitude) and its scale, 2) to describe the employee silence with the theoretical underpinning, and 3) to develop, introduce and validate the construct of guile silence (a new dimension of ES) and its scale.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Chapter 2 is distributed into three studies. Study I & Study III are dedicated to the need to Operationalizing, validating and measuring the concept of employee reticence and guile silence respectively. Study II discusses the existing literature explaining the relationship of antecedents of employee silence in the light of the underpinning theory. After the theoretical background, the researchers have explained the conceptual framework followed by hypotheses.

2.1 The Historical Perspective of Employee Silence (ES)

Before employee silence is discussed at length, it is pertinent to discuss silence as it appeared in a variety of nomenclature in literature as it has been studied from different angles, in different varieties, and has been said to be a function of different reasons. It is worth noting here that due to these reasons, the concept of employee silence could not evolve and remained dormant as a negative proxy of either employee voice or other variables such as the following.

2.1.1 Silence as Pluralistic Ignorance

The concept of pluralistic ignorance is not exactly related to employee silence but pluralistic ignorance is one of the things that can very well be related to employee

silence. The term Pluralistic ignorance was coined by Allport(1924) and it is privately rejecting the group norms by almost all the members of the group while thinking/believing that they are accepted by the group members. Pluralistic Ignorance explains the reasons of acceptance of widespread social norms without private support by the members of the society. It happens when people/employees hide their true beliefs and feelings due to the fear of social embarrassment(Brinsfield, 2009).

2.1.2 Silence as Hirschmans Loyalty and Farrells Neglect

Hirschmans seminal work on exit, voice, and loyalty as responses of dissatisfied employees, has framed silence under loyalty. It is because, according to the book by Hirschman (1970), the loyal employees suffer in silence while waiting for things to get better. Hirschman had inadvertently equated silence with loyalty. Further to research by Hirschman (1970), neglect was another response of dissatisfied employees as identified by Farrell (1983). Thereby, the later literature regarded silence as loyalty and/or neglect.

2.1.3 Silence and the MUM Effect

MUM stands for keeping Mum about Undesirable Messages. It was the term coined by Rosen and Tesser(1970) to conceptualize the reluctance and describe the discomfort associated to communicate the bad news/undesirable message to the recipient. This also describes the behavior of employees for remaining silent and not communicating the bad news to the concerned such as managers, supervisors, colleagues, subordinates and others.

There can be many reasons why would a person remain MUM. The reasons include giving the undesirable message to superiors at the workplace can be detrimental to ones career i.e. the employees do not want to look bad in the eyes of the superiors. Yet another reason can be the guilt of sharing the message of bad luck of the recipient, or the reason be avoiding the message of poor performance reviews to poor performing employees i.e. self-serving bias and fear of harming ones relationship with others.

2.1.4 Silence as Diffusion of Responsibility

The diffusion of responsibility is a social phenomenon. It has been studied mostly in emergencies where a group of people is present who would be the potential helpers. The research and debate by a social psychologist on the silence of bystanders in an emergency started with the murder of Ms. Genovese (Gansberg, 1964). Diffusion of responsibility had been described as one of the explanations for such silence by Darley and Latane(1968). Although this is not precisely the employee silence the same phenomenon may interplay as one of the reasons for silence by employees in the workplace setting.

2.1.5 Silence and Groupthink

Groupthink has been defined as a psychological drive for consensus at any cost that suppresses dissent and appraisal of alternatives in a cohesive decision-making group (Janis, 1972).

This is very much similar to employee silence because the phenomenon of groupthink prevails in groups and teams working closely with each other in organizations. Employee silence, however, is an individual-level phenomenon and groupthink has been explored and explained using the group dynamics approach.

2.1.6 Silence as Spiral of Silence

Spiral of silence is a phenomenon to explain why a person may remain silent or speak if h/she believes that h/she has weak public support and otherwise (Noelle-Neumann, 1974). Spiral of Silence explains the manifestation of silence under public opinion. People fall victim to such kind of silence mainly due to fear of possible isolation.

Sometimes, they also remain silent due to self-doubt. Conversely, if there is strong support from the public, the people are likely to speak up. Therefore, the silence can get deeper and deeper in the form of a spiral in the absence of public support and vice versa.

2.1.7 Silence and Abilene Paradox

Abilene paradox is the phenomenon described by Harvey (1988). According to Harvey, the group members decide on a particular plan or course of action whereby everyone involved is privately not willing to follow that plan or course of action. This is somewhat similar to groupthink (Janis, 1972) in the sense that the group agrees to whatever is presented. At the same time, it is different from groupthink in the sense that in the Abilene Paradox the group members mistakenly think and believe that their preferences are not the same as that of the group and therefore remain silent in raising their preferences. As far as employee silence is concerned, it can be researched if Abilene Paradox has a role to play within organizational settings.

2.1.8 Silence and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

In the taxonomy of organizational citizenship behavior by Organ (1988), were included sportsmanship, courtesy, civic virtue, altruism, and others. To measure the sportsmanship, there were items which regarded speaking/voice as something bad for the organization or silence as being good for the organization e.g reverse coded item: consumes a lot of time complaining about trivial matters. Not as a dimension but from the items it is clear that silence had been treated as something good for the organization and as part of organizational citizenship behavior.

2.1.9 Silence and Deaf Ear Syndrome

Deaf Ear Syndrome is the term coined by Perice, Smolinski & Rosen (1998) which is a phenomenon that functions as part of organizational culture/norm that discourages rather than encourages the employees to directly and openly express/present their harassment-related complaints. When an employee feels harassed, h/she expresses the harassment felt to the ones who are responsible for stopping this. They give deaf ears to the complaints. Thus creating the norm and culture of not listening to the complaints, signaling that such complaints will be of no use. Thus other employees facing the same dilemma will be inexpressive of the same.

2.1.10 Social Ostracism

Social Ostracism (SO) is also known as the silent treatment. This can be treated as an organizational phenomenon and/or a social phenomenon (Williams, 2002). In SO the employee/subject's silent treatment can be subjected to SO for many reasons such as for group cohesiveness so that the unwanted employees/group members leave the group. It has also been used as retaliatory behavior against unwanted conduct such as whistle-blowing. SO is different from employee silence based on the fact that employee silence is the phenomena of the employee/subject while SO is the phenomena of the persons around the employee/subject.

2.1.11 Silence as Job Withdrawal

Job Withdrawal (JW) is an employee-level phenomenon in which the employee withdraws from the organization by exhibiting behaviors such as lateness, absence, neglect, turnover, silence, etc. Job withdrawal is just one form/type of employee silence and there are many other types of employee silence based on their motives (Brinsfield, 2013; Dyne et al., 2003; Jain, 2015; Knoll & van Dick, 2013).

2.1.12 Silence and Organizational Silence

The focal study which gave way to the phenomenon of employee silence was the seminal work on organizational silence (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). The researchers defined it as the withholding of information, opinions, or concerns regarding work-related problems or issues described as a collective-level phenomenon. The main difference between employee silence and organizational silence is the level of analysis. Employee silence is an individual-level phenomenon while organizational silence is an organizational-level phenomenon.

2.2 Employee Silence

ES is defined as the intentional withholding of ideas, suggestions, or experience concerns (Hao et al., 2022; Qureshi and Naqvi, 2022). It is worth noting that

ES was not considered a distinct concept till the start of the 21st century. However, the term organizational silence was defined by [Morrison and Milliken \(2000\)](#) as a collective and organization-wide silence of employees, caused by powerful contextual factors, about potential problems and issues of the organization. Organizational silence is an organizational-level phenomenon while employee silence is an individual-level phenomenon.

Later, [Pinder and Harlos \(2001\)](#) defined employee silence as the withholding of any form of genuine expression about the individual's behavioral, cognitive and/or affective evaluations of his or her organizational circumstance to persons who are perceived to be capable of affecting change or redress".

The definition by [Pinder and Harlos \(2001\)](#), turned out to be phenomenal and converged most of the later research on organizational silence to employee silence. In 2003 the horizontal spiral of silence ([Noelle-Neumann, 1974](#)) was complemented by a vertical spiral of silence by [Bowen and Blackmon \(2003\)](#). They defined employee silence as the opposite of employee voice and kept their research on the silence of private diversity (sexual orientation of employees) and its effects.

[van Dyne et al. \(2003\)](#) defined ES by combining it with the underlying motives of silence. They came up with different definitions each based on different motive, for example, one of their definitions was

"we define Defensive Silence as withholding relevant ideas, information, or opinions as a form of self-protection, based on fear." (p. 1367).

On the other hand, in an exploratory study by [Morrison and Milliken \(2003\)](#), the action of not speaking up in the organization was considered to be employee silence. ES has also been defined as a form of workplace deviance ([Greenberg et al., 2007](#)), as

"Withholding of questions, ideas, information by employees in a manner that causes harm to its organization and/or members".

In a broader sense, the ES has been defined by [Tangirala and Ramanujam \(2008\)](#) as,

"the intentional withholding of critical work-related information by employees from their workgroup members." (p. 37)

Definition of Employee silence by [Brinsfield \(2009\)](#), is quite relevant to the current work. It has been defined as the “intentional withholding of information, related to the job or organization, which must be in response to some important situation issue, or event relating to the job or organization which is directed at a supervisor, upper management, team member, co-worker, or even a subordinate if that person is perceived as important relative to the issue at hand”.

Employee silence has also been defined by [Detert and Edmondson \(2011\)](#) as “the withholding of ideas, suggestions, or concerns about people, products, or processes that might have been communicated verbally to someone inside the organization with the perceived authority to act” (p. 462)

It is worth considering here that the essence of definitions of ES has not changed over time. In the recent literature also, it has been defined similarly. For instance, recently, ES has been defined as the intentional withholding of suggestions for improvement, experience concerns, ideas, and thoughts ([Hamza et al., 2022](#); [Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021](#)) to the ones who are perceived to be capable of bringing in the improvement or change.

The recent influx of research and literature on employee silence, (for example see ([Hamstra et al., 2021](#); [Hao et al., 2022](#); [Wang et al., 2020](#)) clearly shows that the variable of ES is very significant in the management literature. Its importance can be attributed to the fact that the exhibition of ES by the employees has proved itself to be disastrous ([Jain, 2015](#); [Lalich et al., 2018](#)) and the employee potential cannot be harnessed and utilized with ES ([Beheshtifar et al., 2012](#)). Therefore, there is a strong need to mitigate the behavior of employee silence in the organization.

2.2.1 Definitions of Employee Silence and Boundary Conditions

There exist multiple definitions of employee silence but all the researchers and their definitions are coherent on the fact that employee silence is about intentional withholding of ideas, information, questions, opinions, etc by employees concerning

their job and the organization. According to Ajzen (2006), the behavior of interest should be defined in terms of Target, Action, Context, and Time (TACT).

The definition of Employee silence by Brinsfield (2009), has been found to be comprehensive, which has defined the behavior of interest (silence) in terms of its Target, Action, Context, and Time (TACT) for mapping it to TPB as prescribed by Ajzen (2006). Therefore, it will be used in this research.

In this definition the target of silence can be any person who is working in the organization; be it the sub-ordinate, a co-worker, team member, supervisor, or management. The action in this definition is the act of remaining silent or being silent means the behavior that inhibits ideas-for-improvement, harmful information, to not get the extra work, for something a coworker needs to know to perform the job effectively, experience concerns for improvement. The Context to be used is the context of the job/organization. Therefore, if an employee is silent about something which is not related to the job or organization, it will not be taken employee silence. Finally, the fourth part, is Time. It is imperative to define time when the construct would be considered as of interest. For instance, job variables would not have much affect after the office time and vice versa. In the current research the time is not bound to the office timings only. An employee can be silent (Action) about a job or organizational related thing (Context), in front of an organizational member (Target), even while h/she is not in the organization (Time), that is to say, the act of silence, is not constrained to office timings only. So if an employee is intentionally silent towards another employee, on a matter related to his/her office, irrespective of time and location, is the actor of silence.

2.3 Employee Silence is a Behavior

The construct of employee silence is the action of withholding genuine expressions, ideas, improvement suggestions, experience concerns to the ones perceived to be capable of bringing in the change. Pinder and Harlos (2001) defined employee silence as “the withholding of any form of genuine expression about the individuals behavioral, cognitive and/or affective evaluations of his or her organizational

circumstance to persons who are perceived to be capable of effecting change or redress”.

According to the definition, employee silence is a behavior describing an action of withholding genuine expression. Thus, if an employee is withholding a genuine expression, then s/he is performing an act. Performance of action on the other hand is a behavior. Therefore, we conclude that employee silence is a behavior. Other researchers have also defined employee silence as a behavior.

van Dyne et al. (2003) defined ES by combining it with the underlying motives of silence. They came up with different definitions each based on different motive, for example, one of their definitions is

“. we define Defensive Silence as withholding relevant ideas, information, or opinions as a form of self-protection, based on fear.” (p. 1367).

The definition by van Dyne et al., clearly states employee silence is an action, depicting a behavior. However, it is pertinent to note that usually behaviors are observable but in the case of employee silence, the behavior is not observable. Since one cannot observe the employee silence, it is important to explicitly state that employee silence as a behavior. van Dyne et al. also described the different dimensions of employee silence based on different underlying motives. It is clear from the definition that employee silence is an action of withholding relevant ideas, etc. Similarly, in an exploratory study by Morrison and Milliken (2003), the behavior/action of not speaking up in the organization was defined as employee silence. Later researchers also defined employee silence as a behavior. Greenberg et al. (2007), as

“ Withholding of questions, ideas, information by employees in a manner that causes harm to its organization and/or members”.

From the definition, it is evident that employee silence is a behavior, an action of withholding questions, ideas, etc. Tangirala and Ramanujam (2008) also defined employee silence as,

“the intentional withholding of critical work-related information by employees from their workgroup members.”(p. 37)Brinsfield (2009) defined it as the “intentional withholding of information, related to the job or organization, which must be

in response to some important situation issue, or event relating to the job or organization which is directed at a supervisor, upper management, team member, co-worker, or even a subordinate if that person is perceived as important relative to the issue at hand”.

Similarly, [Morrison \(2014\)](#) also described employee silence as a behavior of intentional withholding of information. Therefore, it is concluded that employee silence is a behavior.

[Morrison \(2014\)](#) also described employee silence as a behavior of intentional withholding of information. Similarly, in the recent literature, ES has been defined in a similar manner having the following common attributes, 1) it is intentional, 2) withholding of suggestions/ideas, 3) targeted towards someone who is in the position of bringing in the desired change, and 4) it is a behavior ([Knoll et al., 2021](#); [Yao et al., 2022](#)).

Therefore, it is concluded that employee silence is a behavior.

2.4 Employee Silence and Knowledge Hiding

ES is defined as the intentional withholding of seemingly meaningful information, including questions, concerns, and suggestions ([Tangirala and Ramanujam, 2008](#)).

On the other hand, Knowledge Hiding (KH) is defined as an intentional attempt by an individual to withhold or conceal knowledge that has been requested by another person” ([Connelly et al., 2012](#)).

Interestingly, both behaviors entail intentionally remaining silent, an easily misunderstood ([Chen et al., 2022](#); [Zembylas and Vrasidas, 2007](#)) covert behavior. Accordingly, ES and KH are confused with each other ([Xiao and Cooke, 2019](#)) as both have behavioral and conceptual relevance. It is argued that ES is a unique concept that helps in understanding why employees intentionally remain silent.

Therefore, there is a need to compare ES and KH to better understand the concept as it has implications for individual employees, groups, and organizations.

In the following section, the relevance and the uniqueness of ES with KH are discussed.

2.4.1 Relevance and Differences of ES with KH

ES and KH are used interchangeably, as both are behaviorally and conceptually overlapping concepts (Figure 2.1). Both are intentional covert behaviors (Boadi et al., 2020), which belong to a repertoire of similar behaviors classified as either ES or KH (Xiao and Cooke, 2019). For instance, in a meeting, an employee, Ms. Jonia, may refrain from sharing a piece of information on one of the agenda points. Since there is a behavioral relevance, her refraining behavior to share information about the agenda point can either be categorized as ES or KH. On the other hand, it will not be considered as employee silence, if Ms. Jonia has nothing to say at all and she remains silent.

Similarly, the ES and KH are also relevant from the conceptual standpoint as both are pivoted on intentionally remaining silent (Connelly et al., 2012; Morrison, 2014; Qi and Ramayah, 2022). In the case of Ms. Jonia, she remained silent on the agenda item intentionally. Therefore, her remaining silent behavior can be categorized as either ES or KH (Figure 2.1).

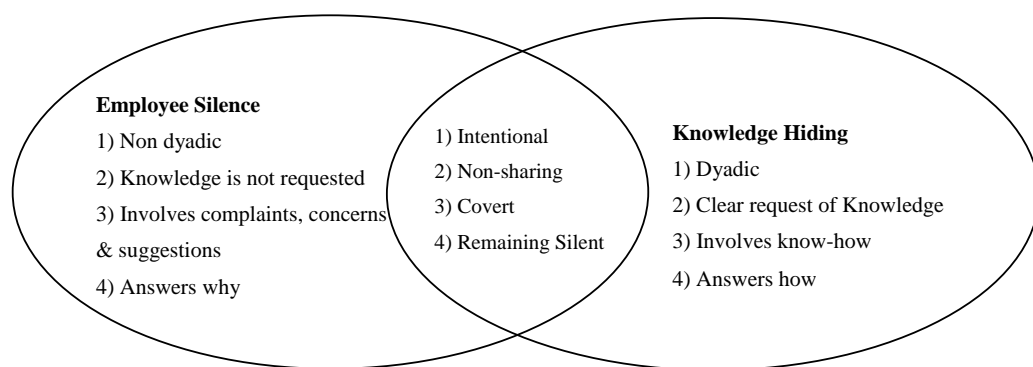


FIGURE 2.1: Employee Silence and Knowledge Hiding, Relevance and Differences

Thus, ES and KH are confused with each other, mainly because both the constructs are relevant and overlapping, behaviorally and conceptually. However, it is argued that ES is a unique and distinct concept. ES is a non-dyadic behavior, and it does not require another employee's request (Figure 2.1).

On the other hand, KH is a dyadic behavior, and it requires an explicit request for knowledge is necessary (Garg et al., 2022). In the case of Ms. Jonia, her silent

behavior will be considered KH only if a clear request” of knowledge is presented; otherwise, it will be considered ES.

Thirdly, KH is about hiding” the knowledge, while ES is more comprehensive and contains scenarios in which an employee stays quiet about complaints, concerns, experience concerns, improvement ideas, and suggestions. Finally, ES helps to understand why employees remain silent while KH only spheres around non-transferring knowledge (Figure 2.1). For instance, if the behavior of Ms. Jonia is seen from the lens of KH, will it only be pertinent to know if the knowledge was not shared? On the other hand, if her behavior is seen from the lens of ES, it will be pertinent to know why” the knowledge was not shared.

In other words, KH answers the how” part of staying silent (evasive, playing dumb, rationalized hiding (Garg et al., 2022)). On the other hand, ES answers the why” part of staying silent (Brinsfield, 2013; Qureshi and Naqvi, 2022; Xiao and Cooke, 2019).

Therefore, though related, these concepts are distinct and must not be confused and must not be used interchangeably to understand employees’ silence. Further, the KH is discussed alongside knowledge hoarding and comes under the Knowledge management domain (Connelly et al., 2012; Islam et al., 2022; Qureshi and Naqvi, 2022; Xiao and Cooke, 2019). On the other hand, ES is independent and discussed alongside employee voice (Knoll et al., 2021). Thus, it is concluded that employee silence and knowledge hiding are two different constructs and must be used independently, however, the research is important on both the constructs to better reap the benefits of each construct in academia, research and practise alike.

2.5 Critique on Existing Theoretical Support of Behavior of Employee Silence

ES is a pervasive behavior, in which the intentions are an integral and important part (Harlos and Knoll, 2021). It has been defined as the intentional withholding of information (Knoll et al., 2019; Phulpoto et al., 2021; Yao et al., 2022).

Unfortunately, only one attempt has been made to describe ES based on theory (see (Brinsfield, 2009)). Others have explained the phenomenon of ES without any theoretical support (see (Knoll et al., 2019; Jain, 2015; Yao et al., 2022)). On the other hand, every human behavior which is of interest to researchers is supposed to be supported by theory (ies) (Bandura, 1974). However, the above discussion reveals that research on employee silence lacks poor/No theoretical support for employee silence.

The only attempt of explaining the behavior by Brinsfield (2009) by combining

- Control Theory (Carver and Scheier, 1982)
- Psychological Field Theory (Lewin, 1943)

The following critique is provided on combining and use of above-mentioned theories in explaining ES

1. Both of the theories do not account for the "intention" of the employee as a separate variable, whereas employee silence is an intentional behavior (Brinsfield, 2013; Dyne et al., 2003; Jain, 2015; Knoll and van Dick, 2013b; Pinder and Harlos, 2001).

That is to say, an intentional behavior is explained by using the theories (Control Theory and Psychological Field Theory), which do not account for intention as separate variable, either implicitly or explicitly.

2. Two theories have been combined to explain one behavior, when it could easily be explained using one theory i.e. the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 2015).
3. The combination of theories to explain employee silence has not been tested empirically to check their usefulness (if any) in explaining employee silence (see (Brinsfield, 2009)).
4. While the theories have been used to present a model about employee silence, the output can be the voice (see (Brinsfield, 2009)). That is to say, a model which is modeling employee silence can result in employee voice.

5. In explaining the ES, (Brinsfield, 2009) has amalgamated the theories in a way that seems not so appropriate to explain a phenomenon. For example, he writes in his study, “Elements of control theory and field theory are adapted to provide an overarching framework, which includes an input stimulus (control theory), feedback loop (control theory), competing forces for silence and voice (field theory), comparator/discrepancy mechanism (control theory), and an output influencing a new iteration of the process (control theory)” (p. 57).

Given the critique provided, the proposed theories to explain ES provide a weak/No-support to employee silence. To address the critique, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1985) has been proposed here as the theoretical foundation of the behavior of ES.

2.6 Theoretical Foundation

2.6.1 Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

TPB was presented by Ajzen (1988) and was an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein, 1979). Behavioral control was the variable that was added in TPB with which the intentional behavior could be predicted better (Ajzen, 1991). The theory assumed perceived behavioral control to be the antecedent of intentions along with attitudes and subjective norms. TPB is based on the assumption that human beings perform a behavior while taking into account the results/consequences of the behavior. They take into account these consequences either implicitly or explicitly to decide about performing the behavior (Ajzen, 2005). The empirical evidence supports the fact that the construct of volitional control in performing the behavior better predicts the behavior. Volitional control can be defined as having the opportunity, required resources, and support available to perform the behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

According to the theory, the intentions to perform the behavior are the functions of three basic determinants (Ajzen, 2005). One of the three antecedents is the

attitude towards the behavior (personal), the second one is subjective norms (reflecting social influence) and the third one is perceived behavioral control (dealing with issues of control). Attitude towards the behavior in question is the measure of the degree to which a person has a negative/positive evaluation of the behavior (Ajzen, 2005).

Therefore, if the person/actor has a positive evaluation of the behavior, h/she is likely to engage in the behavior and vice versa. Perceived Behavior Control, however, is the actors perception of whether h/she has the required resources, opportunity, and support available to perform the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). So, if a person/actor has the (perceived) behavioral control, h/she is likely to engage in the behavior. Finally, the subjective norms refer to what the actor thinks about other people, who are important to the actor, about performing the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Thus, if the person/actor thinks that the important others believe that h/she should perform the behavior, the h/she is likely to perform it. The conceptual framework of TPB (Ajzen, 1991) as given in Figure 1.1.

The TPB assumes that intentions to perform a behavior are determined by the relative importance of attitude towards the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. So for an intention, the attitude towards the behavior might have more relative importance than subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. Similarly, yet intentions for another behavior, the same can be true for subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. According to Ajzen (2005), "In some instances, only one or two of the factors are needed to explain the intention, while in others, all three are important determinants" (p. 118).

Finally, the relative weight of any of the determinants of intentions, also varies from person to person, situation to situation, and from one population to another population. It is evident from Figure 2.2 that behavioral control affects intentions through attitudes and subjective norms. Human beings who believe that they do not have behavioral control although they have a positive attitude and have the approval of important others (subjective norms) they will not have behavioral intentions to perform the behavior. Various empirical pieces of evidence suggest the efficacy of the TPB (see Han et al. (2010); Yan and Sin (2015); Zoellner et al. (2012)).

2.6.2 Mapping of Theory of Planned Behavior on Current Research

TPB has three conceptually independent antecedent variables of behavioral intentions. According to [Ajzen \(1985\)](#), one of the three antecedents is the attitude towards the behavior (personal), the second one is subjective norms (reflecting social influence) and the third one is perceived behavioral control (dealing with issues of control).

In the current research, the construct, Employee Reticence (ER) represents the “attitude towards the behavior” variable of TPB. It has been developed and operationalized in this research. It has been defined as ones attitude towards the behavior of employee silence.

Therefore, it is one of the antecedents of intentions to ES mediated by intentions, as described in the TPB. The stronger the employee reticence, the stronger would be the intention to remain silent leading to ES. Since such a job attitude does not exist which captures ones attitude towards employee silence, thus employee reticence construct has been operationalized, developed, validated, and tested in Study-I of this research.

According to TPB, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control play a vital role in predicting intentions to perform the behavior along with the attitude variable. In the context of this research, the Manager’s Attitude Towards Silence (MATS) has been substituted for the subjective norms that lead to the formation of the intentions to remain silent consequently leading to ES. According to TPB, the third variable that affects intentions to perform the relevant behavior is Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC). In the context of the current research communication opportunities have been taken as perceived behavioral control of ES. Therefore, communication opportunities (CO) are the set of available resources for communication in an organization.

According to the theory of planned behavior, the intentions to perform a behavior mediates between the antecedents of intentions and the behavior ([Ajzen, 2005, 1985, 2015](#)). In the perspective of the current research, the intentions to remain

silent mediates between 1) Employee Reticence and ES, 2) Managers Attitude towards Silence and ES and 3) Communication Opportunities and ES.

In the current research, the construct, Employee Reticence (ER) represents the “attitude towards the behavior” variable of TPB. In literature, there does not exist a variable that comprehensively represents the “attitude towards the employee silence”, thus the employee reticence construct and its scale has been operationalized, developed, validated, and tested. Therefore, ER is one of the antecedents of intentions to ES, as described in the TPB. The stronger the employee reticence, the stronger would be the intention to remain silent leading to ES. The procedure adopted to operationalize, developed, validate and test ER is described below.

2.7 Study-I

2.7.1 Defining and Operationalizing Employee Reticence

Employee Attitude towards Silence referred to here, as Employee Reticence (ER), is being proposed as a new job attitude in this research. It has been defined as “favorable feelings and beliefs of an employee towards employee silence” (Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021). Extant literature exists on describing and understanding attitudes. The researchers have described bi-polar evaluative-ness as an essential characteristic of attitude (Eagly and Chaiken, 2005; Fazio, 1990), however, a few researchers have defined attitude as the evaluative response itself (Kruglanski and Stroebe, 2005), while most contemporary researchers equate attitude with the hypothetical disposition (Eagly and Chaiken, 2005) and have concluded that attitudes can be inferred from evaluative responses towards the subject (object or behavior). Such evaluative responses towards job-related objects and behaviors can be used to infer job attitudes.

In this research, the contemporary definition of attitude has been used to define and operationalize employee reticence. It is to say that favorable or unfavorable feelings and beliefs towards silence behavior hypothetically dispositions a person. Thus, an employee with higher employee reticence will have favorable feelings and

beliefs towards silence behavior in organization. On the other hand, an employee with lower employee reticence will have unfavorable feelings and beliefs towards silence behavior. In this research, reticence has been used to describe an attitude showing the favorable feelings and beliefs of an employee towards the silence behavior. In wholesome employee reticence has been operationalized as favorable feelings and beliefs of an employee towards employee silence. An employee, who evaluates employee silence as positive behavior, will score high on the employee reticence scale. Similarly, an employee, who evaluates employee silence as a negative behavior, will score less on the employee reticence scale.

Such employees not only prefer to remain silent but also advocate and encourage other colleagues to do the same. Imagine a situation where a senior manager enquires about the goodness of a process improvement initiative. Few employees will appreciate the initiative. Few others will not have anything to say about the initiative. There will still be employees who have suggestions about the improvement initiative but will prefer to remain silent. They will intentionally remain silent and will likely appreciate other employees who also remained silent. Such employees evaluate employee silence behavior as positive and good. These employees will have a high score on the employee reticence scale. Moreover, such employees will be encouraged to perform the same behavior in future interactions.

Further, the employees can form employee reticence about remaining silent by observing what happened to the employees who remained silent/spoke up or what had happened to them when they remained silent/spoke up. So, for example, if an employee is punished in the form of being humiliated in a meeting for speaking up, the others will become dispositioned towards employee reticence that remaining silent is good i.e. remaining silence has good consequences. Thus, they will form favorable feelings and beliefs towards employee silence, which would be reinforced by repetitive similar experiences and observations. Keeping in view the consequences and resultantly remaining silent has been studied and supported by many, (for example see ([Brinsfield, 2013](#); [Dyne et al., 2003](#); [Jain, 2015](#); [Knoll and van Dick, 2013b](#); [Pinder and Harlos, 2001](#))).

It is pertinent to say that people remain silent because they keep in view the outcomes of not remaining silent and they develop consistent attitudes. Thus,

they will develop high ER (favorable feelings and beliefs about remaining silent) towards employee silence.

Job attitudes as defined by [Judge and Kammeyer-Mueller \(2012\)](#) are . . . evaluations of one's job that express one's feelings toward, beliefs about, and attachment to one's job, which are either high/low or positive/negative. They are formed based on the evaluation of job-related objects and related artifacts such as behaviors related to one's organization, recognition, salary, environment, seating space, etc. ([Woznyj et al., 2022](#)). Employee Reticence is a job attitude as it is the evaluation of a job-related behavior (employee silence) and is formed based on employee's feelings and beliefs based on evaluation of his/her job" ([Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021](#)).

While employee reticence has not been explored by the researchers, extant literature exists on job attitudes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, etc., and resultant behaviors. For instance, job satisfaction is found to be correlated with intentional organizational behaviors such as organizational citizenship behavior ([Nguni et al., 2006](#)), and better employee performance ([Cabrera and Estacio, 2022](#); [Vandenabeele, 2009](#)). Similarly, organizational commitment is found to be correlated with intentional-organizational-behavior such as job performance, career management behavior, voluntary turnover behavior ([Sturges et al., 2005](#)), job desirable behaviors ([Wasti, 2005](#)), and customer service quality ([Dhar, 2015](#)) and other multitudes of behaviors ([Woznyj et al., 2022](#)).

In the management literature, the importance of job attitudes cannot be overstated. For instance, the recent meta-analysis of job attitudes shows that job attitudes have been discussed in the majority of the research endeavors conducted in the social and management sciences ([Woznyj et al., 2022](#)). It is mainly because the job attitudes present the evaluative feelings of the employees towards their job and it is considered one of the characteristics of employee performance ([Cabrera and Estacio, 2022](#)). Like any other job attitude, employee reticence would hold great value in the management literature mainly because it is an attitude about remaining silent at work place and remaining silent can be disastrous for the organization ([Jain, 2015](#); [Lalich et al., 2018](#)), and the employee potential cannot be harnessed and utilized with ES ([Beheshtifar et al., 2012](#)). Therefore, it is imperative to propose, operationalize, validate and test employee reticence. Once these

objectives would be achieved it would be very easy to gauge one's attitude with the help of a scale, which would be usable in organizations, laboratory settings, etc.

In understanding describing and naming ER, extant literature was evaluated. For Instance, the word reticence has its footings in literature. According to the Oxford Dictionary, the word reticence" has its origin in the mid-19th-century Latin language word, Reticent which meant remaining silent". In English, it means not revealing one's thoughts or feelings readily". In the social science research literature, in the development of the Social Reticence Scale (SRS), [Jones and Russell \(1982\)](#) have quoted reticence as an attitude in social settings. One of the components of SRS, difficulties in communicating", depicts one's behavior of not feeling comfortable in communicating is similar to the concept of employee reticence proposed in this research. Thus, for such an attitude of an employee, the choice of the word Reticence" in the variable titled Employee Reticence is the correct choice, encompassing favorable feelings and beliefs of an employee towards silence behavior" ([Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021](#)). Therefore, an employee who scores high on the employee reticence scale will be considered to have positive feelings and beliefs about remaining silent at work place. On the other hand, an employee who scores low on the employee reticence scale will be considered to have negative feelings and beliefs about remaining silent at work place.

2.7.2 Hypotheses Development

Theory of Planned Behavior has three conceptually independent antecedent variables which lead to behavioral intentions leading to the exhibition of the behavior. The antecedent variables are, 1) employee attitude towards the behavior, 2) subjective norms, and 3) perceived behavioral control. Thus, intentions are the functions of these three basic determinants ([Ajzen, 2005](#)). In the current research the antecedent variables are 1) employee attitude towards silence, 2) subjective norms fostering employees silence, 3) perceived behavioral control as communication opportunities, and 4) employee intentions to remain silent. In the purview of the current research, the construct encompassing employee attitude towards silence

has yet to be conceptualized, operationalized, validated and tested. Therefore, as a first attempt to do so, employee attitude towards silence is being conceptualized, operationalized, validated and tested. In this regard the relevant hypotheses as per nomological network are presented in the following.

2.7.2.1 Employee Reticence and Application of Theory of Planned Behavior

The construct, Employee Reticence (ER) represents the attitude-towards-the-behavior variable of the theory of planned behavior. In the purview of the current research ER represents attitude towards employee silence. The stronger the employee reticence, the stronger would be the intention of the employee to remain silent leading to ES. The relationship between employee reticence (attitude) and Employee Silence (behavior) mediated by intentions and its related hypotheses are discussed below.

2.7.2.1.1 Employee Reticence and Intentions to Remain Silent

Intentions to exhibit a behavior is an important variable in the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen et al., 2018) and is used as the mediating variable between the antecedents and the behavior. Further, it is important to note that the intentions fully mediate between the antecedent variables and the dependent variable. In this study, the Intentions to remain silent has been used to as intentions to remain silent. It has been defined as the intention of employees to withhold information related to job or organization, in response to some important situation issue, or event relating to the job organization which is directed at a supervisor, upper management, team member, co-worker, or even a subordinate if that person is perceived as important relative to the issue at hand” (Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021).

According to the theory of planned behavior, one of the three antecedents of intentions is the attitude towards the behavior. In the current research Employee reticence is the attitude variable in the TPB and by its operational definition, it is favorable feelings and beliefs towards employee silence. Therefore, it has been used as one of the antecedents of intentions to the relevant behavior.

The relationship between employee reticence and the behavior of employee silence is proportionate (Fishbein and Ajzen, 2011). However, this relationship is mediated by relevant intentions. The theory of planned behavior suggests that attitude contributes toward intentions which will lead to the exhibition of the behavior. Therefore, the stronger the employee reticence, the stronger would be the intentions to remain silent manifesting in employee silence (Alexandre and Aguiar-Conraria, 2021).

The relationship between attitudes and intentions is also supported by empirical evidence. In literature, one's intentions have been found to mediate the relationship between job attitudes and organizational behaviors e.g. see (Ajzen, 2015; Jia et al., 2021; Li et al., 2022; Tang et al., 2020), as supported by Theory of Planned Behavior. Thus, the individual level organizational behaviors are exhibited by employees having the behavior-related job attitude and intentions. In the case of employee reticence, if employee reticence is high the employee will likely have to remain silent and is likely to exhibit employee silence. Furthermore, other job attitudes have also been studied as antecedents of intentions to perform the behavior (Fischer and Karl, 2022).

According to the literature, the relationship between job attitudes and intentions has remained a topic of interest for researchers for a long. The results of such research have supported their hypotheses (e.g. see (Fischer and Karl, 2022; Jia et al., 2021)). Similarly, the relationship of behavioral attitudes with intentions has also been studied, where the results were found to support the hypotheses e.g. see (Alexandre and Aguiar-Conraria, 2021; Fischer and Karl, 2022; Maheshwari, 2021), that is to say, attitude leads to attitude-related intentions. Further, the result of meta-analytic studies reveals a high intention-behavior correlation, ranging from .45 to .62 (Fishbein and Ajzen, 2011). Therefore, it is concluded that attitudes affect intentions to perform the respective behavior. It is in accordance with the theory of planned behavior in which one's positive attitude towards a behavior affects one's intentions to perform the behavior as shown in Fig. 1.1. According to TPB, one's positive attitude towards a behavior affects the Intentions to perform the behavior which leads to the exhibition of the behavior (Ajzen, 2015; Choe et al., 2021; Fischer and Karl, 2022). Thus, if an employee is high in ER, s/he will

likely have positive intentions to exhibit ES. Therefore, getting support from the extant literature and theory of planned behavior it has been hypothesized that employee reticence has a positive effect on intentions to remain silent. It leads to the formulation of the first hypothesis of the study as follows

H₁: *Employee Reticence has a positive significant effect on Intention to Remain Silent.*

2.7.2.1.2 Employee Intentions to Remain Silent and Employee Silence

Employee silence is an intentional behavior, it is not just a mere absence of voice (Harlos and Knoll, 2021). It does not occur when an employee has nothing to say or is mindless (Dyne et al., 2003; Hao et al., 2022).

ES is exhibited when an employee intentionally withholds suggestion-for-improvement, experience concerns, and ideas from persons perceived to be capable of implementing the improvement suggestion.

It is the withholding of ideas, suggestions, and experience concerns intentionally due to specific reasons (Harlos and Knoll, 2021; Qureshi and Naqvi, 2022).

Earlier researchers have studied intentions as predictors of a wide array of behaviors and found a significant relationship between intentions and the exhibition of the behaviors (Howard et al., 2017).

Supported by the extant literature and the theory of planned behavior, the intentions have been found to mediate the relationship between relevant attitude and the concerning behavior (e.g. see (Ajzen, 2015; Choe et al., 2021; Fischer and Karl, 2022)). Further, the empirical evidence in the form of individual and meta analysis also support the affect of intentions on respective behavior.

Therefore, based on the theory of planned behavior and the findings of the empirical research, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H₂: *Intentions to Remain Silent is positively related to Employee Silence.*

H₃: *Intentions to Remain Silent fully mediates the relationship between Employee Reticence and Employee Silence.*

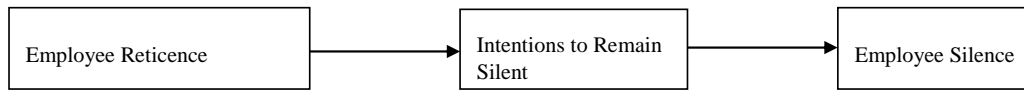


FIGURE 2.2: Theoretical framework adapted from Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1985)

2.8 Study II

In Study II, the behavior of ES has been evaluated using the theory of planned behavior with the complete set of variables according to Fig. 1.1. The antecedent variables of ES mediated by intentions to remain silent are employee reticence, managers attitude towards silence, and communication opportunities. The hypothesized relationship in line with Fig 1.1 is developed below.

2.8.1 Hypotheses Development

2.8.1.1 Employee Reticence and Intentions to Remain Silent

In the current research Employee reticence is the attitude variable in the TPB which has been proposed, developed, and validated as the result of Study I of this research. By its operational definition, it is favorable feelings and beliefs towards employee silence” (Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021). Therefore, it is used as one of the antecedents of intentions to remain silent, as described in the TPB.

According to Ajzen et al. (2018), the relationship between employee reticence and the behavior of employee silence is proportional. That is, an employee’s positive attitude towards a behavior affects the intentions to perform the behavior leading to the exhibition of the behavior (Ajzen, 2015; Hao et al., 2022; Woznyj et al., 2022). However, this relationship is mediated by relevant intentions as proposed by the theory of planned behavior. Therefore, the stronger the employee reticence, the stronger would be the intentions to remain silent manifesting into employee silence (Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021). Thus, if an employee has a positive ER, s/he will likely have positive intentions to exhibit ES.

The relationship between attitudes and intentions is also supported by empirical evidence e.g. see (Ajzen, 2015; Hao et al., 2022; Woznyj et al., 2022). In the case

of employee reticence, if employee reticence is high the employee will likely have intentions to perform the behavior and is likely to exhibit employee silence. Therefore, getting support from the extant literature and theory of planned behavior it has been hypothesized that employee reticence has a positive effect on intentions to remain silent. It leads to the formulation of the first hypothesis of the study as follows

H₁: *Employee Reticence has a positive significant effect on Intentions to Remain Silent.*

2.8.1.2 Perceived Climate of Silence (Subjective Norms) and Intentions to Remain Silent

The second predictor of intentions in TPB is subjective norms (SN). SN is defined as the social pressure from the important others which is perceived by the actor of the behavior, to perform or not to perform the behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991). Similarly, it has been defined by Ajzen (2005) as, “an individuals perception that most people who are important to her think she should (or should not) perform a particular behavior” (p.133). Keeping the attitude and PBC constant, the positive the subjective norms are about a behavior, the positive the intentions to perform the behavior would be, and vice versa (Ajzen, 1991).

Based on TPB (Ajzen, 1985) and the definition by Fishbein and Ajzen (2011), the term organizational subjective norms refers to what is acceptable or approved behaviors, by important others such as boss, managers, colleagues, etc., in an organization. This is similar to the factors in the environment such as intense command and control, conflict/disagreement suppression, more task orientation than relationship orientation, and emphasis on production through a competition based on individual performance (Harlos, 1999) leading to ES (Harlos and Knoll, 2021). The attitude of supervisors/managers is accordingly developed and updated which plays a seminal role in how employees behave (Morrison, 2014; Morrison and Milliken, 2000). Therefore, it can be concluded that the attitude of managers plays a critical role in how employees should behave (Vakola and Bouradas, 2005). The importance of subjective norms in management literature cannot be overstated

because, in today's organizational environment, organizational subjective norms affect every aspect of organizational activity, e.g. it interplays among job roles and thus affects employee behavior (van Marrewijk, 2007), it plays its role in joint ventures (Chen and Chen, 2007), use of *riba* free banking (Aji et al., 2020), knowledge sharing (Lindner and Wald, 2011), organizational outcomes (Ahadzie et al., 2008), adoption of technology (He et al., 2017), use of AR technology (Zhuang et al., 2021), adoption of best practices (Papke-Shields et al., 2010), performance (Meng and Boyd, 2017), governance (Muller et al., 2014), efficiency (Frinsdorf et al., 2014), being vaccinated (Winter et al., 2022), finally, it has even been found to be a critical success factor (Ika et al., 2012). Thus, empirical evidence suggests that subjective norms do affect the respective consequent behavior.

In the scenario of the current research, the important others are from within the organization which includes managers, colleagues, and subordinates. Given the nature of the behavior (silence) in question, the most important among them are the managers, or supervisors, however. 1) Supervisor or managers are often used interchangeably for the sake of brevity, the word "manager" will be used instead of Supervisor in this research.

According to Ajzen (2005), the attitude of managers affect both types of subjective norms, that is 1) Injunctive Norms and 2) Descriptive Norms. According to him, "Injunctive norms refer to perceptions concerning what should or ought to be done concerning performing a given behavior, whereas descriptive norms refer to perceptions that others are or are not performing the behavior in question". Both injunctive norms and descriptive norms constitute the total social pressure or the total subjective norms for a given behavior. In the case of the current research, the managers attitude towards silence has been taken as the subjective norms which fit the definition of subjective norms as recommended by Ajzen. Earlier researchers have found subjective norms as the predictor of behavioral intentions along with other TPB constructs to explain a variety of behaviors, for example, subjective norms and help-seeking behavior of urinary incontinent women (Wu et al., 2015), subjective norms and practices of principals regarding inclusive education (Yan and Sin, 2015), subjective norms and Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Consumption (Zoellner et al., 2012), subjective norms and the vaccination behavior (Winter

[et al., 2022](#)) and even effects of subjective norms on the use of augmented reality related technology ([Aji et al., 2020](#)) among many others.

Organizational subjective norms affect the way employees think ([Phua, 2007](#)), intend to exhibit a behavior ([Howard et al., 2017](#)), and then finally exhibit the behavior ([Wei and Miraglia, 2017](#); [Winter et al., 2022](#)). The important others and the employees exhibiting employee silence would have similar attitudes about the silence behavior of employees ([Vakola and Bouradas, 2005](#)) due to 1) working in the same organization with the same organizational factors ([Morrison and Milliken, 2000](#)), 2) support towards silence from important others ([Aji et al., 2020](#)), 3) pressure to remain silent from the working group ([Tangirala and Ramanujam, 2008](#)), and 4) manager's positive attitude towards silence ([Mokhtari, 2016](#); [Vakola and Bouradas, 2005](#)). That is to say, if an employee chooses to remain silent in an organization, it is more likely because the subjective norms for silence prevail in the organization. It is also likely because all the employees are working in the same organization with the same climate, rules, and regulations. It is the climate of fear of negative feedback ([Morrison and Milliken, 2000](#)), fear of an unjust environment ([Pinder and Harlos, 2001](#)), and the fear of getting extra work ([Knoll and van Dick, 2013b](#)) among other factors which make the subjective norms of remaining silence pertinent. The important others, in this case, will be prone and compelling towards remaining silent. The motivation to comply with the subjective norms will depend and differ from person to person, however. The greater the subjective norms about a given behavior the greater will be the intentions to exhibit the behavior and vice versa by an employee ([Hassan et al., 2021](#); [Syed et al., 2021](#); [Yuriev et al., 2020](#)).

As subjective norms are the social pressure to perform (or not to perform) a given behavior ([Fishbein and Ajzen, 2011](#)). In the context of this research, the Managers Attitude Towards Silence has been substituted for the subjective norms which exist in the environment that forms a pressure on employees, in forming the ITRS followed by an exhibition of ES. Subjective norms maneuver the intentions and the consequent behaviors of employees ([Fishbein and Ajzen, 2011](#); [Yuriev et al., 2020](#); [Zhuang et al., 2021](#)) which are emphasized, practiced, and liked by the manager; mainly because the manager has power as defined by [French and](#)

Raven (1959). For instance, the case of a manager who has a positive attitude towards silence creates organizational norms favoring ES. Such norms and routines in organizations compel employees to exhibit employee silence about what they feel or know (Argyris, 1977). As a result of the manager's beliefs and attitudes the employees do not speak (the truth) (Morrison and Milliken, 2000). That is to say, if a manager emphasizes and practices employee silence, the employees will also intend to remain silent and are likely to exhibit employee silence (Aji et al., 2020; Hassan et al., 2021; Vakola and Bouradas, 2005; Yuriev et al., 2020). As suggested by TPB, the subjective norms about behavior affect the intentions about the respective behavior, and the above discussion following hypothesis is proposed.

H₂: Perceived Climate of Silence (Subjective norms), has a significant positive effect on employee intentions to remain silent.

2.8.1.3 Communication Opportunities as Perceived Behavioral Control of Employee Silence Behavior

Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) is the third antecedent of Intentions (Ajzen, 1985). In the context of the current research communication opportunities have been taken as perceived behavioral control variables of remaining silent. According to TPB the PBC is determined by the total sets of available resources that can be utilized for behavior and perception of humans of their ability to perform a given behavior (Ajzen, 2005). Thus, in the current research, the PBC are sets of available/unavailable resources for communication. The importance of actual control over the behavior is off-course required to perform the behavior. However, for greater psychological reasons the perception of control and its resultant impact on behavior and intentions is important to consider (Ajzen, 1991). It is this inclusion of PBC that differentiates TPB from TRA. According to Ajzen, PBC is different from the concept of locus of control by Rotter (1966). They are different in the sense that the locus of control remains consistent across situations and different actions/behavior.

However, the PBC can vary across situations and different actions/behavior. In this case, the communication opportunities are different in different situations and

organizations. It is to say that locus of control is more of a stable predisposition irrespective of the situation or behavior in question, while PBC is situational and behavior dependent. Similarly, the expectancy of success (EoS), which is one of the factors in the theory of achievement motivation by [Atkinson \(1964\)](#) is similar to PBC. EoS is similar to PBC in the sense that EoS is context-dependent and is not a predisposition like locus of control, as discussed earlier. However, EoS is coupled with the motive to success, which makes it different from PBC. The motive to success makes EoS different since motive to success has been defined as a general disposition that is carried along from one situation to another. It was assumed that the general achievement motivation combines with situational expectancy as well as with incentive value of success in a multiplicative fashion.

According to [Ajzen \(1991\)](#), the concept of self-efficacy ([Bandura, 1986, 1982](#)) is the one that is most near to the concept of PBC. According to Bandura, self-efficacy “is concerned with judgments of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with the prospective situation”. The TPB places the PBC or the self-efficacy belief in a general framework of “relations among beliefs, attitudes, intentions, and behavior” ([Ajzen, 1991](#)), p. 184).

According to TPB, the PBC can be used to predict behavior through the mediation of intentions. At the same time, PBC can also be used to predict the behavior directly without taking intentions as a mediator. It can be explained by the fact that the “perceived behavioral control can often be used as a substitute for a measure of actual control” ([Ajzen, 1991](#)). How much PBC explains the actual controls depends on how realistic the perceptions are about the behavior. The more realistic the perceptions are the greater the PBC is close to actual control. At the same time, in the circumstances in which little information is available of the behavior, when requirements/available resources get changed, and/or new elements enter into the situation, the PBC will not truly reflect the actual control. However, the PBC will predict the behavior to the extent it is compatible with the actual control ([Ajzen, 1991](#)). In terms of communication opportunities an employee will perceive to have high PBC and another employee having lesser communication opportunities will perceive to have lower PBC. The importance of communication and related opportunities in social and management literature

cannot be overemphasized as it plays a vital role in all aspects of an organization such as trust among employees (Men et al., 2022), team cohesiveness (Ochieng and Price, 2010), innovation (Jarmooka et al., 2020), knowledge management (Lindner and Wald, 2011), entrepreneurship (Skare et al., 2022), role clarity (Henderson et al., 2016), coordination (Loufrani-Fedida and Missonier, 2015), the social capital of teams, level of social ties and shared vision (Lee et al., 2015), efficiency (Frinsdorf et al., 2014), performance (Henderson et al., 2016) and organizational success (Liu et al., 2016). That is to say, communication affects all aspects of an organization.

Communication, however, depends on many things. For instance, Vakola and Bouradas (2005) have found that communication depends on communication opportunities. According to them, communication opportunities are related to the systematic exchange of information. The availability of communication opportunities fosters communication and lack thereof hampers it (Adenfelt, 2010). Communication opportunities must exist for better coordination (Bygballe et al., 2016) and it reduces confusion (Butt et al., 2016), are vital for success (Henderson et al., 2016) and unavailability of proper communication opportunities even breakage of the communication opportunities/channels can lead to failures (Daim et al., 2012; Hsu et al., 2012) and workplace bullying (Harlos and Knoll, 2021). The employees actively participate in discussions, meetings, and decision-making processes when they perceive they have communication opportunities which increases trust in management (Smidts et al., 2001). Greater communication opportunities and openness with the higher-ups, supervisors, and coworkers affect organizational identification and belongingness positively (Lawler and Mohrman, 1989). Similarly, the (un)availability of Communication Opportunities influences employee silence (Dedahanov et al., 2016); the lesser the communication opportunities available to the employees, the greater will be the employee silence and vice versa (Chou and Chang, 2020). The absence of communication opportunities facilitates employee intentions to remain silent (Howard et al., 2017), as proposed by the theory of planned behavior (Aghenta, 2014).

According to TPB, perceived behavioral control is about the presence of factors that facilitate or impede the performance of the behavior (Ajzen et al., 2018). CO is the factors such as systematic exchange of information, openness and trust

in communication, information sharing, and perceived feelings of having a voice and being taken seriously (Vakola and Bouradas, 2005) which either facilitate or impede the exhibition of ES. Thus, CO in this study has been substituted for the perceived behavioral control variable of TPB, as the availability of communication opportunities fosters communications and lack thereof hampers it (Adenfelt, 2010). In the case of employee silence, the employee silence is negatively affected by the availability of communication opportunities and vice versa (Vakola and Bouradas, 2005). In similar research, consistent findings were achieved when it was analyzed on service sector (library) staff (Mokhtari, 2016). PBC leads to the intentions (Fischer and Karl, 2022), therefore, keeping in view the discussion above the following hypothesis is proposed.

H₃: *The communication opportunities (perceived behavioral control) has a significant negative effect on employee intentions to remain silent.*

2.8.1.4 Employee Intentions to Remain Silent and Employee Silence

Employee silence is intentional behavior that is exhibited when an employee intentionally withholds information from a person in authority. It is a conscious and calculative behavior based on cost-benefit analysis (Morrison, 2014). If an employee finds being silent is more beneficial s/he will form intentions to remain silent consequently leading to employee silence. Employee silence is not just an absence of voice and cannot be related to having anything to say or mindlessness. It is withholding ideas/suggestions intentionally due to specific reasons (Dyne et al., 2003). This perspective gets reinforcement from the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein, 1979, 2008), the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991; Fishbein and Ajzen, 2011), and the Technology Acceptance Model (Mathieson, 1991).

According to TPB, Behavioral Intention (BI) is the predecessor of behavior. Similarly, the action of remaining silent by the employees is preceded by the employee intentions of remaining silent (Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021). Behavioral Intentions can be defined as an indication of readiness to action or to perform a behavior. BI, on the other hand, is dependent on attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived

behavioral control (Choe et al., 2021). In the current research, the employee intentions of remaining silent is preceded by employee reticence (employee attitude towards ES), managers attitude towards silence (subjective norms of remaining silent), and availability of communication opportunities (PBC).

Generally, BI has been studied to predict behavior by using TPB in many studies for multiple types of intentions and behaviors such as entrepreneurial intentions and entrepreneurial actions (Kautonen et al., 2015), intentions and practices of principals regarding inclusive education (Yan and Sin, 2015), intentions of use of social networking websites and actual use of social networking websites (Pelling and White, 2009) and intentions of using condoms and using them (Pavlou and Fygenson, 2006). From the literature, it is obvious that behavioral intentions for a variety of actions do lead to the intended behavior. Therefore, it is likely that intentions for remaining silent are likely to lead to the behavior of silence. Keeping in view the discussion and support from TPB above it is proposed, in the form of the following hypothesis, that the intention of remaining silent is likely to have a significant positive effect on exhibiting the behavior of silence. In the perspective of the current research, the employees with the intentions to remain silent are expected to remain silent whenever the relevant person(s) asks for a suggestion or improvement or whenever the employee thinks his/her suggestion can make a difference towards improvement, etc and s/he chooses to remain silent by exhibiting the silence behavior. In light of the discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H₄: *The intention to remain silent has a positive significant effect on employee silence.*

2.8.1.5 Mediation Hypotheses

According to the three infamous theories, 1) Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein, 1979), 2) Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1975), and 3) Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Mathieson, 1991), the intention-to-perform-any-behavior mediates between the antecedents of intentions and the behavior. For instance, according to TPB (Ajzen, 2005), the intention of

performing a behavior mediates between the behavior and three variables, which are 1) attitudes towards the behavior, 2) subjective norms towards the behavior, and 3) perceived behavioral control of the behavior. Therefore, in the context of the current research the intentions to remain silent mediates would mediate between employee silence and three variables, which are 1) employee reticence, 2) managers attitude towards silence, and 3) communication opportunities.

The empirical evidence also suggests that the intentions mediate the relationship between employee reticence and employee silence behavior (Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021). Similarly, ample empirical also exist which suggests that intentions to remain silent mediates between 1) subjective norms and 2) perceived behavioral control e.g. see (Aldammagh et al., 2021; Fischer and Karl, 2022; Jia et al., 2021). Therefore, in light of the TPB and the empirical evidence, it is hypothesized that the intention to remain silent, would mediate between 1) employee reticence, 2) managers attitude towards silent, and 3) communication opportunities.

Consequently, the following mediation hypotheses are proposed

H₅: *The intention to remain silent mediates the relationship between employee attitude towards silence and ES.*

H₆: *The intention to remain silent mediates the relationship between Perceived Climate of Silence (Subjective norms) and ES.*

H₇: *The intention to remain silent mediates the relationship between communication opportunities (behavioral control) and ES.*

2.8.2 Hypotheses

Following hypotheses are generated as the result of the literature review

H₁: *Employee Reticence has a positive significant effect on Intention to Remain Silent.*

H₂: *Perceived Climate of Silence (Subjective norms), has a significant positive effect on employee intentions to remain silent.*

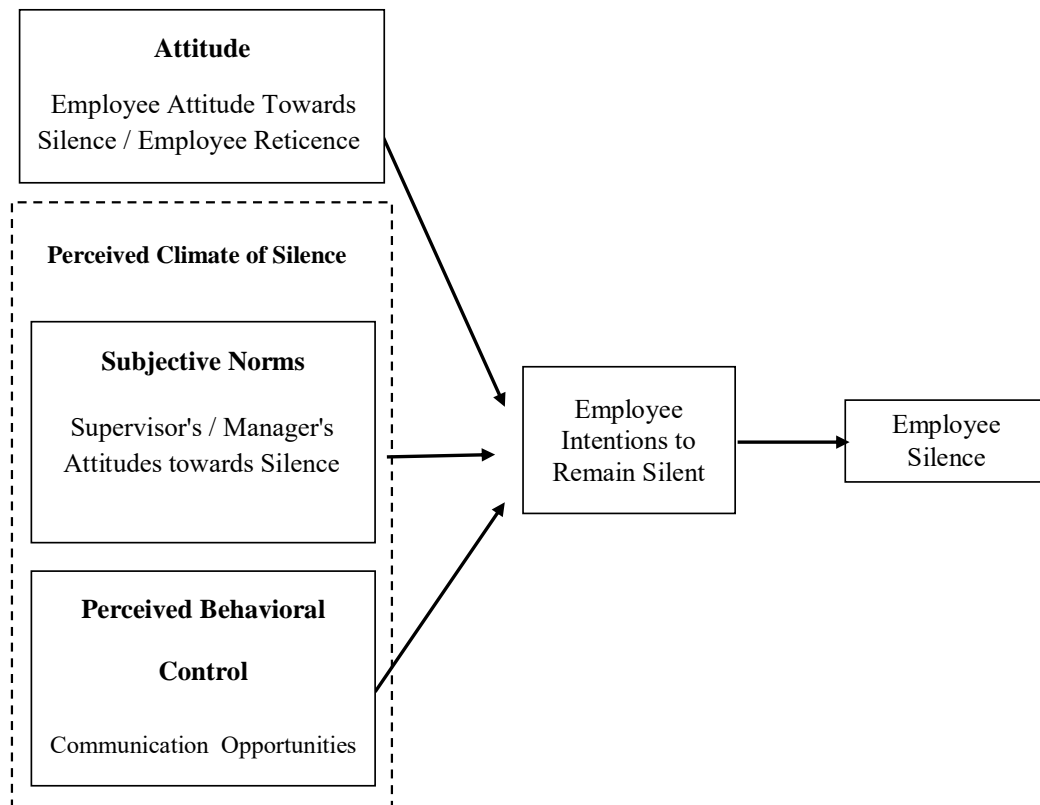


FIGURE 2.3: Conceptual Framework based on the Theory of Planned Behavior Ajzen (1985)

H₃: *The communication opportunities (perceived behavioral control) has a significant negative affect on employee intentions to remain silent.*

H₄: *The intention to remain silent mediates the relationship between ER, MATS, CO and ES.*

2.9 Study III

2.9.1 Operationalizing and Measuring Guile Silence

Proposing a new dimension of employee silence warrants discussion on the earlier dimensions of employee silence from the historical and differentiating factors perspective in an holistic manner. All the dimensions of employee silence are based on respective underlying motives, and thus are differentiated from each other on the basis of underlying motives. A brief account of the dimension of employee silence based on underlying motives is presented in Table 2.1.

TABLE 2.1: A brief account of Dimension of ES

The motive of resignation; Useless to raise break the silence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiescence Silence (Pinder and Harlos, 2001) • Acquiescence Silence (Pinder and Harlos, 2001) • Acquiescent Silence (Dyne et al., 2003) • Ineffectual Silence, Disengaged Silence (Brinsfield, 2013)
Motive of self-protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defensive Silence (Dyne et al., 2003) • Defensive Silence (Brinsfield, 2013) • Fear of Retaliation (Jain, 2015)
The motive of altruism and/or cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ProSocial silence (Dyne et al., 2003) • Relational Silence (Brinsfield, 2013)
Motives of benefiting themselves and not the other employees and/or organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunistic Silence (Knoll and van Dick, 2013b)
The motive of harming others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deviant Silence (Brinsfield, 2013)
The motive of saving oneself from embarrassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diffident Silence (Brinsfield, 2013) • Internal Motivation, Self-competence, Self-Image (Jain, 2015)

Table shows the dimensions of employee silence as they appeared in the literature. Each column represents the work of authors in chronological order; however, the rows have been arranged based on the similarity among the dimensions of employee silence.

ES is an invisible behavior, and its dimensions are based on motives ([Brinsfield, 2013](#); [Dyne et al., 2003](#); [Greenberg et al., 2007](#); [Jain, 2015](#); [Knoll and van Dick, 2013b](#); [Morrison, 2014](#); [Pinder and Harlos, 2001](#); [Prouska and Psychogios, 2016](#)). Motives are the “energetic forces that provide the impetus for intentional silence” ([Brinsfield, 2013](#)) and are based on expected utility calculus and non-calculative

automatic processes (Morrison, 2014). The dimensions of ES are differentiated from each other based on underlying motives. Therefore in the following review the dimensions of ES are grouped based on the same underlying motives instead of chronological order.

In (2001), Pinder and Harlos proposed “Acquiescence silence” as an ES-based dimension based on the motive of resignation from circumstances. It is represented by deeply felt acceptance of organizational circumstances, ignoring existing alternatives, and lacking a desire to seek any. Based on the same motives, van Dyne et al. (2003) proposed the dimension of “Acquiescent silence” and developed its scale consisting of 3 items ($\alpha = 0.88$), while Brinsfield (2013) proposed ineffectual silence and developed its scale consisting of 5 items ($\alpha = 0.90$). The three dimensions appeared in literature at different times.

Pinder and Harlos also proposed “Quiescence silence” (2001) as a dimension of ES based on the motive of self-protection. Similarly, Dyne et al. (2003) and Brinsfield (2013) proposed defensive silence with the same underlying motive. The scales were developed by them with 3 items ($\alpha = 0.89$) and 6 items ($\alpha = 0.92$) respectively. Similarly, “Fear of Retaliation” was proposed by Jain (2015) with the same motive, whose scale consisted of 4 items ($\alpha = 0.84$).

“ProSocial silence” by Dyne et al. (2003) and “Relational Silence” by Brinsfield (2013) were proposed as dimensions of employee silence based on underlying motives of altruism and cooperation. The respective scales consisted of 3 items ($\alpha = 0.82$) and 5 items ($\alpha = 0.92$). ProSocial silence was defined as the withholding of work-related ideas, information, or opinions to benefit other people or the organization. Similarly, relational silence has been defined as remaining silent so as “not want to harm a relationship or general relational concerns”. Brinsfield (2013) proposed Disengaged silence and developed its scale of 3 items ($\alpha = 0.83$). According to him, disengaged silence is about decoupling oneself from the work circumstances with the underlying motive of disengaging and resigning from the circumstance. “Deviant silence” was proposed by Brinsfield (2013) as ES’s dimension having the underlying motives of harming others. Its scale consisted of 5 items ($\alpha = 0.95$). As the name depicts, deviant silence is a workplace deviant behavior that has the motives of harming others.

“Internal motivation,” “Self-competence,” and “Self-image” are the dimensions of employee silence, which were proposed by Jain (2015) based on underlying motives of the knowledge gap, lack of self-competence, and maintaining better self-image. Their scale consisted of 4 items ($\alpha = 0.78$), 5 items ($\alpha = 0.79$) and 2 items ($\alpha = 0.74$) respectively. It is important to note that these dimensions were based on India’s patriarchal high power distance culture.

“Diffident silence” was proposed by Brinsfield (2013) as ES’s dimension with underlying motives of saving oneself from embarrassment. Its scale consisted of 5 items ($\alpha = 0.89$).

Social empathy silence was proposed by Prouska and Psychogios (2016) based on the motives of social empathy in long-term economic crises. Later, they also proposed Cynical Silence (2018), which is based on self-catharsis motive. However, no measures of these dimensions were developed by them.

”Opportunistic silence” was proposed by Knoll and van Dick (2013b) based on the motives of benefiting themselves while accepting harm for others, whose scale consisted of 3 items ($\alpha = 0.80$). In the review, it is clear that all dimensions are based on different underlying motives; however, there are a few ES dimensions that have the same underlying motives. Future researchers are also encouraged to focus on elaborating similarities empirically and help reduce redundancy in ES dimensions.

The dimension of opportunistic silence has been critically reviewed and essential improvement considerations have been pointed out. The details are provided in the following section.

2.9.2 Critical Review of Opportunistic Silence

The dimension of opportunistic silence, along with the existing dispersed literature, paved the way to review it critically. According to Knoll and van Dick (2013b), opportunistic silence is “Strategically withholding work-related ideas, information, or opinions to achieve an advantage for oneself while accepting harm of others” (p. 342). To measure opportunistic silence, they developed the scale which contained three items which are Root item: I remained silent at work

- to not give away my knowledge advantage
- because of concerns that others could take an advantage of my ideas
- because that would mean having to do avoidable additional work

In the scale, the first two items are about “remaining silent so that the others cannot take advantage of the knowledge and ideas.” On the other hand, the third item is about “remaining silent to avoid additional work.” The first two items are primarily encompassing the same phenomenon. However, the third item is not related to the phenomenon encompassed by the first two items. The first two items are others-focused, while the third item is self-focused. Though all the items are central to the idea of self-advantage (Knoll and van Dick, 2013b), the first two items are based on not sharing the knowledge advantage with others, while the third item is based on the avoidance of additional work.

On the other hand, the phenomenon of remaining silent to avoid additional work does exist, and literature exists, which supports it, which warrants the study and exploration of this phenomenon independently; as a separate construct. Therefore, based on the review of the scale of opportunistic silence and the related literature, Guile Silence is proposed as another dimension of ES, which encompasses the phenomenon in which the employees remain silent with the motive of “avoiding additional work.” In line with the earlier research on dimensions of silence, guile silence is differentiated from other dimensions of silence based on the underlying motive of avoiding additional work. Using motives as a way of differentiating phenomenologically, also helps in quantifying guile silence.

2.9.3 Guile Silence

In organizations, employees remain silent, to avoid extra work during meetings and other interactions with the ones who have something to do with the work under consideration. Mainly because most of the time that work is assigned to the ones who speak about it. This behavior of remaining silent with the motive avoiding extra work is encompassed by the construct of guile silence. Guile silence

is refraining oneself from giving suggestions to avoid additional work. In literature, traces of such behavior have been reported by [Knoll and van Dick \(2013b\)](#) and [Garfield \(2006\)](#).

Consequently, Guile Silence has been introduced here as another dimension of employee silence. In developing the construct of guile silence, is taken from literature; 1) opportunistic silence ([Knoll and van Dick, 2013b](#)), 2) 10 reasons why people dont share their knowledge ([Garfield, 2006](#)), 3) Indian-Punjabi Literature proverb “Jaira Bolay oi Kunda kholay”, 4) English literature proverb “One who touches the rope will have to ring the bell” and 5) anecdotal evidence.

[Knoll and van Dick \(2013b\)](#) developed the measures of opportunistic silence which included an item stating, “I remained silent at work because that would mean having to do avoidable additional work” on the Likert scale. Meaning thereby, a respondent agreeing to the statement is remaining silent just to avoid additional work. The scale was tested, and it was found that the item loaded significantly on a variable named opportunistic silence.

Second, [Garfield \(2006\)](#) attributed refraining oneself from speaking up at the workplace as the means to avoid additional work. According to Garfield, the employees prefer to remain silent and do not give suggestions or ideas, thinking they would be given the additional work of improvement as proposed by them.

Third, in Indian-Punjabi literature a proverb, “Jaira Bolay oi Kunda kholay” means “anyone who will ask, who is there at the door? will have to do the avoidable additional work of opening the door”. In other words, anyone who will speak (give suggestions or ideas) will have to do the avoidable additional work. Fourth, guile silence has its support in English literature as a proverb, “One who touches the rope will have to ring the bell”. In other words, one who touches the rope of the hanging bell will have to ring the bell, h/she who speaks (give suggestion or idea) will have to do the avoidable additional work. Fifth, anecdotal reports suggest that after each meeting employees laugh at the person who gave an improvement suggestion in the meeting and was assigned to do the same task. Therefore, having strong support in the literature on one hand, and having attracted little attention as a separate variable of interest on the other, this research

is the first attempt to recognize this dimension of employee silence. Thus, it can be concluded that guile silence would be a very useful construct in the management and social science literature, which also needs to be defined. A quality definition of any construct is always discriminating and general (Albarracin et al., 2014). Based on this, Guile silence has been defined as, withholding of the work-related ideas, information, or opinions to avoid additional work”.

2.9.3.1 Significance and Novelty of Guile Silence

The dimension of guile silence is significant and holds major implications for managers and researchers. By knowing, if guile silence is being exhibited in the organization, the managers can take measures not to overburden employees with the job assignments of others.

Further, they must avoid giving extra work to those employees who come with concerns, issues, and suggestions for improvement (Knoll and van Dick, 2013b). For researchers, the proposed dimension of guile silence opens venues for looking at employee silence from a different lens. In this way, the researchers can work on antecedents and consequences of guile silence to find out why this type of silence exists in the organizations, what are its consequences, and suggest ways to improve the situation.

The dimension of guile silence is a new dimension and it is novel in the sense that silence literature has never explored this type of silence explicitly and yet it is pervasive and has its roots in the literature (see (Garfield, 2006; Knoll and van Dick, 2013b)). The practitioners and researchers can significantly benefit from this research because the current understanding of ES is indeed limited and is affecting their efforts for the better. The practitioners and researchers can synergize their efforts using the tool developed in this research to understand better the factors affecting the full use of their organizations’ potential.

2.9.3.2 Guile Silence in the Larger Conceptual Framework

The guile silence fits very well in the larger conceptual framework of the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991). For instance, a larger conceptual framework

consisting of the employee attitude, along with subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and guile silence mediated by employee intentions to remain silent should be tested. Using the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991) as the underpinning theory, the guile silence variable may be added as the dependent variable. The three independent variables can be employee attitude, subjective norms within the organization, and perceived behavioral control. These independent variables and the dependent variable (guile silence) are to be mediated by the intentions to exhibit guile silence. In this way, guile silence can be added to the larger conceptual framework of the theory of planned behavior used in this study. The scope of this research encompasses defining, operationalizing, developing, and validating the guile silence variable only. The testing of the guile silence variable in the larger conceptual framework of the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991) was not part of the scope of the research, and therefore it needs to be treated separately in future research. It has, therefore, been left to the research to follow as part of future recommendations.

2.9.4 Hypotheses Development

The nomological network, including GS, had to be examined in line with the recommendations of [Borsboom et al. \(2004\)](#). Accordingly, the hypotheses related to the nomological network are given below.

2.9.4.1 Instrumental Climate and Guile Silence

Predominantly the contextual organizational factors as antecedents remained the focus of employee silence literature since its inception ([Brinsfield, 2013](#); [Jain, 2015](#); [Mao and Hsieh, 2017](#); [Morrison, 2014](#); [Morrison and Milliken, 2003](#); [Vakola and Bouradas, 2005](#)). For instance, [Morrison and Milliken \(2003\)](#) argued that the climate of silence emerges in an organization mainly because of organizational structures, policies, and managerial practices, which eventually foster employee silence ([Vakola and Bouradas, 2005](#)). Similarly, [Mao and Hsieh \(2017\)](#) argued that organizational ethical climate fosters silence behavior.

According to [Victor and Cullen \(1988\)](#), five possible ethical climate types exist in an organization; 1) instrumental climate; 2) caring climate; 3) independence climate; 4) rules climate, and 5) law and code climate. Each of these types of climate is based on an ethical standard ([Mao and Hsieh, 2017](#)). Thus, each of these furnishes norms that set the acceptable decision making criteria and acceptable behaviors for employees. For instance, the employee of the organization characterized by a caring climate will be more concerned with the well-being of the other employees. Such organizations will be then regarded as more ethical as they meet the relevant standards of those climates. Similarly, an employees egocentric behavior in an organization that is characterized by the instrumental climate will not be found as unethical by the employees following the same set of ethical standards. On the other hand, it will be found unethical by the employees of the organization who are characterized by a caring climate. An organizational climate that fosters maximization of self-interest and an egoistic concern of matters at the individual or local level is known as an instrumental climate ([Wang and Hsieh, 2013](#)).

In this type of climate, the norms of decision making revolve around the best interest of the decision-maker, and the well-being of others which include employees, department and the organization is disregarded ([Demirtas and Akdogan, 2015](#); [Macklin et al., 2015](#)). These norms, naturally then, promote ES, in circumstances that circumvent personal interests. That is to say, the high instrumental climate in organizations encourages employees to remain silent about organizational problems, concerns, and issues for self-interest; on the contrary low instrumental climate encourages employees to speak up about the organizational problems, concerns, and issues without much regard to self-interest.

Remaining silent for self-interest is inherent in instrumental climate as instrumental climate cultivates and encourages egoism in employees ([Martin and Cullen, 2006](#); [Wang and Hsieh, 2013](#)). The egoism makes an employee concerned only about problems which are related to him/her; of which either s/he is the internal-customer or the internal-supplier. It is to say that the solution to most of such problems falls either in his/her job description or of others to whom the work is related. Such employees only do as much work that keeps the system working and avoid additional work. In an organization, problems or issues arise and persist

when one is complacent and not doing her job completely as described in JD. In such cases, the employee chooses to remain silent and do not pinpoint problems, issues, and venues of improvement, since that would mean doing avoidable additional work. Therefore, it is proposed that the instrumental climate thus is likely to foster guile silence. Based on the above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₁: *Organizational instrumental climate is positively related to guile silence.*

2.9.4.2 Guile Silence and Strain

People have uncomfortable feelings when they feel that something should be said to improve things but they choose to remain silent (Knoll and van Dick, 2013b; Perlow and Williams, 2003) likely because of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1962). In the psychology literature, it has been found that emotional suppression which includes self-silencing can lead to serious health issues and poor psychological functioning (Soto et al., 2011). Negative consequences of speaking up are better than the physical and psychological harms caused by self-silencing (Cortina and Magley, 2003). Silence has repercussions that span from performance deterioration to cynicism, stress, dissatisfaction (Morrison, 2014; Morrison and Milliken, 2003; Perlow and Williams, 2003), strain, turnover intentions, and well-being (Knoll and van Dick, 2013b).

Knoll and van Dick found that strain is positively related to opportunistic silence. The opportunistic silence and guile silence are exhibited to gain personal advantage. The employees who exhibit guile silence learn vicariously (Bandura, 1982; Bandura and McClelland, 1977) and operantly (Skinner, 1938). Whenever a suggestion is put up by a fellow employee, the same fellow employee is assigned the additional task suggested by him/her. Consequently, the employees prefer to remain silent to avoid additional work and exhibit guile silence. Since guile silence becomes their learned behavior, they do not feel the strain resulting from exhibiting guile silence. Simultaneously, their conscious decision to exhibit guile silence causes fewer conflicts (Knoll and van Dick, 2013b) and no dissonance (Festinger, 1962). Further, because of the potential positive effects that employees who engage in guile silence can receive by not doing avoidable extra work, it is expected that

employees exhibiting guile silence will have less strain. In line with this following hypotheses are proposed

H₂: *Guile silence is negatively related to strain.*

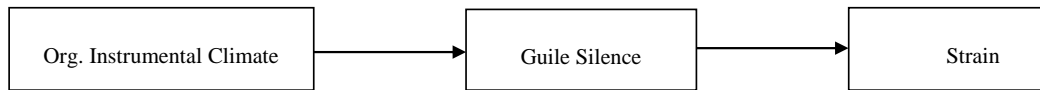


FIGURE 2.4: Correlational Model of Guile Silence

H₁: *Organizational instrumental climate is positively related to guile silence.*

H₂: *Guile silence is negatively related to strain.*

2.10 Summary

The chapter encompasses employee silence and related literature that addresses the research questions and research objectives of this research in line with the problems identified in the problem statement. It is evident from the historical perspective of employee silence that employee silence remained under-studied mainly because it was considered the negative proxy of employee voice. Nevertheless, it came to the limelight after the seminal work of Pinder and Harlos (2001) and it was recognized as a variable worthy of independent exploration. Further, unlike any other job-related behavior, the literature lacked an attitude variable fostering employee silence behavior vis-a-vis an underlying theory explaining employee silence behavior. Finally, there are many unexplored situations where employees choose to remain silent, that require further exploration. Hypotheses and research models have been developed in light of the qualitative studies (Study I III) and the literature review to address the problem(s) highlighted in the problem statement, address the research questions, and the research objectives of this research.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

Research Design is the overall strategy that a researcher chooses to find the solution to the problem at hand. Through research design, the researcher integrates different aspects of research into a rational/logical manner that is coherent to address the problem (Labaree, 2009). It can also be defined as the prescription of collection of data, measurement of data, and analysis of data that is pertinent to the research (Cooper and Schindler, 2013).

Research design allows the researcher to evaluate the relationships that were suspected/hypothesized (Bordens and Abbott, 2013) as the result of the literature review. According to Bordens and Abbott (2013), the research design should be appropriate and it determines the success/quality of the conclusion drawn as the result of the research. The research design must be aligned with the objectives of the study (Cooper and Schindler, 2013). In this chapter, the mixed-method research design has been used that is fit to use for scale development, testing, and validity (Creswell and Creswell, 2017).

3.1.1 Research Paradigm of Research

Three studies (Study-I to Study-III) are conducted in this research. The details of the research designs for the three studies are provided below.

3.1.2 Research Design of Study-I and Study-III

The research paradigm of Study-I and Study-III is Pragmatism. The pragmatic school of thought support that there are indeed multiple ways of interpreting the world and undertaking research. At the same time, they argue that there is no single viewpoint that gives the complete picture and at the same time there are multiple realities (Saunders et al., 2012). Pragmatism is different from positivism and interpretivism. Positivism and interpretivism are mutually exclusive and lie on the extremes of a continuum. On the other hand, pragmatism lies on the continuum, in which the researchers adapt to any of the methods available that best suit the requirements of their research at hand (Poth, 2018). Therefore, pragmatism can leverage both the positions of positivism and interpretivism in a single research.

Many research methodologies are based on pragmatism. These include mixed method research, generic qualitative inquiry, and Q-methodology (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). The mixed method research design leverage the collecting, analyzing, and integration of data from the qualitative and quantitative methods in the study (ies). This provides the researcher with a better understanding of the problem. In other words, the problem is addressed using the advantages of both the positivism (quantitative) and interpretivism (qualitative) philosophies. The MMR is recommended for studies for designing and validating the questionnaires or research instruments (Greene et al., 1989).

In the context of the current research, Study-I and Study-III are about designing and validating the questionnaire, therefore in these studies, MMR has been used. It is mainly because the MMR research design carries the advantages of both the quantitative research design and qualitative research design (Greene et al., 1989). The Exploratory Sequential Research Design from the categories of mixed-method research designs (Shorten and Smith, 2017) has been used in Study-I and Study-III. In the exploratory sequential research design, the qualitative research is conducted first, which is followed by the quantitative research. In this research design the sequential analysis is performed, in which the qualitative study informs the collection of quantitative data which confirms the qualitative data (Shorten

and Smith, 2017). The MMR exploratory sequential research design was applied. The exploratory research design provides a track of gaining the results and findings by taking the following steps adapted from DeVellis (2016), DeVellis and Thorpe (2021) and Boateng et al. (2018).

3.1.3 Qualitative Study Phase

The following are the steps in the qualitative study phase.

Step 1:

- Identification of Domain for the Construct
- Item Generation through Literature and Focus Group Discussion

Step 2:

- Content Adequacy and Categorization of Items into Determinants

3.1.4 Quantitative Study Phase

The following are the steps in the quantitative study phase.

Step 3:

- Purification, Initial Data Collection, and Expert Validation
- Pilot Testing
- Scale modification, Refinement, and Finalization

Step 4:

- Final Data Collection on the Statements Proposed

Step 5:

- Factor Loadings, Reliability, and Validity, Internal Consistency

Step 6:

- Hypotheses Testing

The details of each of the steps are provided as part of the research methodology in the respective sections of Study-I and Study-III.

3.1.5 Ethical Considerations

The following ethical considerations were maintained throughout the conduct of the research

- Participation of the subjects/respondents in the survey was voluntary.
- The informed consent of the subjects/respondents was taken before the collection of the data
- The self-respect and well-being of the subjects/respondents were protected at all times
- The subjects/respondents were assured about the confidentiality of the data
- The subjects/respondents were assured about the anonymity was maintained
- The research data remained confidential and anonymity was maintained

3.1.6 Research Paradigm and Research Design of Study-II

The research paradigm of Study-II is positivism with a quantitative research design. The quantitative research design focuses and elaborates based on the majority of the respondents, about how they feel, act, or think in a specific situation (Cooper & Schindler, 2013).

The correlational research was carried out to conduct the Study-II in which data was gathered using the standardized questionnaire by applying the survey methodology. In the current research, the data was gathered in the time lag manner using adapted standardized questionnaire. The details of each of the steps are provided in detail as part of the research methodology in the respective sections of Study-II.

3.2 Study I: Scale Development of Employee Reticence

3.2.1 Procedure of Developing Employee Reticence Scale

The employee reticence scale was developed by combining deductive and inductive approaches, which is considered to be the best practice in scale development (Boateng et al., 2018). The qualitative method was used for a better understanding of employee reticence and the generation of the initial items pool. The qualitative study was followed by quantitative analysis for item reduction, validity & reliability analysis, factor analysis, and testing the research model. The following were the steps of the scale development process.

3.2.1.1 Qualitative Study Phase

The following are the steps in the qualitative study phase.

Step 1:

- Identification of Domain for the Construct
- Item Generation through Literature and Focus Group Discussion

Step 2:

- Content Adequacy and Categorization of Items into Determinants

3.2.2 Quantitative Study Phase

The following are the steps in the quantitative study phase.

Step 3:

- Purification, Initial Data Collection and Expert Validation
- Pilot Testing, Scale Modification, Refinement, and Finalization

Step 4:

- Final Data Collection on the Statements Proposed

Step 5:

- Factor Loadings, Reliability, and Validity, Internal Consistency

Step 6:

- Hypotheses Testing

3.2.2.1 Qualitative Study Phase

The semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted with 67 employees and practitioners volunteering for the study from the service sector. This step was followed by the coding analysis of the interview transcripts. As a result, the items were generated in light of the contemporary school of attitudes ([Eagly and Chaiken, 2005](#)). Though not part of the objectives of the study, the structural dimensions of employee reticence were also discovered.

3.2.2.1.1 Step 1: Identification of Domain for the Construct

The construct of employee reticence belongs to the sub-domain of job attitudes. Job attitudes as defined by [Judge and Kammeyer-Mueller \(2012\)](#) are . . . evaluations of one's job that express one's feelings toward, beliefs about, and attachment to one's job, which are either high/low or positive/negative." Employee reticence is also a job attitude. It has been conceptualized and operationalized as favorable feelings and beliefs toward the employee silence in organizational settings ([Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021](#)). The various kinds of job attitudes include job commitment, job satisfaction, job involvement, and organizational justice ([Woznyj et al., 2022](#)). According to them, job attitudes play a vital role in deciding the organization's fate. The domain of employee reticence, therefore, belongs to the domain of job attitudes. The domain of job attitude belongs to the sub domain of attitudes. Therefore, the construct of employee reticence belongs to the domain of attitudes.

3.2.2.1.1.1 Item Generation through Literature and Focus Group Discussion

The interviews were conducted with the 67 employees of the service sector. It helped in the generation of items. Sixty-seven employees voluntarily participated in the interviews, which were from telecom, hospital, education, oil & gas, and others. Demographic data of the interviews revealed 31.7% were female participants. 39% of the participants belong to the telecom sector 17% were from the oil and gas service providing sector, 14.6% were from the hospital and nursing sector, 12% were from education and courier sectors and the rest were from miscellaneous service sectors.

All of the participants were having at least two years of experience. 68.2% of the participants were having 2-7 years of experience, while 17% of the employees were having 8-13 years of experience while the rest of the employees were having experience greater than 13.

Semi-structured and in-depth interviews were conducted during the interview phase. The interviews were conducted in classrooms in the university premises and were completed independently by experts who had in-depth knowledge of the phenomenon.

Before the start of the interview, the participants were briefed about the purpose of the research. Confidentiality of their demographics and information was ensured. They were briefed that no third party is involved in these interviews and the data will be used for this study only and will not be shared or sold to any other party. Two interviewers conducted the interview which was divided into groups of 5 each; the interview sessions lasted for approximately 1 hour.

The interviewers explained the interview questions very clearly and answered any query related to the question. They remained very specific in explaining the meaning of attitudes and employee reticence to have responses based on their cognitive, affective, and behavioral state of mind about employee silence.

It also helped the interviewers to keep the interview sessions to the point and guided the discussion towards employee reticence whenever felt necessary. It was

achieved by giving relative examples that could help them recall and narrate similar events.

The interviews continued for two intervals. Each interval spanned over seven days. In the first interval, the interviews were summarized, and relevant analyses were performed simultaneously. The representative quotes from the interviews are given in Table 3.1.

In the second interval no new themes or ideas emerged. Therefore, it was concluded that increasing the sample size of the respondents would not affect the emergence of new ideas. Further, the three dimensions of employee reticence were discovered in the first interval. Therefore, it was assumed not to take the interview phase in the third interval.

The generated pool of initial items also contained adapted items from existing scales, such as the scale of the sportsman-ship dimension of organizational citizenship behavior (1 item; (Organ, 1988), and the Social Reticence Scale (two items; (Jones and Russell, 1982).

3.2.2.1.2 Step 2: Content Adequacy and Categorization of Items into Determinants

The content adequacy refers to the completeness of the contents developed by the process of data collection through interviews. Once its is ensured that the content was adequate, the next step of categorization of the items into determinants is followed. So that the themes developed as the result of the interviews are categorized into meaning determinants.

3.2.2.1.2.1 Coding Process

Each interview interval was followed by the coding process. It was a two-stage process that involved (i) formal coding, and (ii) checking coding consistency. According to Charmaz (2006) open coding, categorization for each set, and axis coding are involved in the formal coding process. As recommended by Charmaz (2006) the interview content was grouped into first-order code and second-order

code. The coding process was performed independently by two researchers; however, the same steps of the coding process were followed. It was cautiously done to check the coding consistency in the coding process.

During the open coding phase of the coding process, the distinct phenomenon that emerged was conceptualized. For example, a response of “I dont ask for petty resources. Instead I buy my items such as stationery, etc and work with them instead of requisitioning them from the store” depicts that the respondents urge to remain silent can be conceptualized as “behavioral dimension of employee reticence”. This process was guided by theory and moderated by the researchers. Resultantly, 8 concepts were discovered from the data. In the next step of categorization, similar concepts were labeled together. For example, “did not want it” “is futile” and “dangerous” can be represented by the label “affect.” As expected and supported by seminal work on attitudes by [Rosenberg et al. \(1960\)](#). Accordingly, a total of 3 categories were identified.

The relationship, if any, among the categories identified was found by using axial coding. No relationship was found among any of the categories identified. Finally, the coding consistency was checked, between the coding processes of both the researchers. In case the consistency was found less than 95 percent, the researchers discussed the same and recorded the data. In case the discrepancy persisted, the content/material was excluded.

It is imperative that the content developed in this manner must be adequate and fulfill the requirements of the research objectives. As expected and supported by the work of [Rosenberg et al. \(1960\)](#) three categories were finalized. For example, the affective dimension of employee reticence was reflected by “I like the colleagues who remained silent”, the cognitive dimension of employee reticence was reflected by “speaking is futile” and the behavioral dimension of employee reticence can be reflected by “I hate to speak”. Therefore, as the result of the qualitative study three determinants of employee reticence were found. The three determinants can be termed as 1) cognitive employee reticence, 2) affective employee reticence and 3) behavioral employee reticence. A representative set of quotes from the interviews alongwith their categorization are given in Table 3.1 below.

TABLE 3.1: Some representative quotes from interviewees for the items

Dimensions	Items	Representative quotes
Affective	I like the people who prefer to remain silent over raising concerns.	<p>In organizations, it is useless to raise voices and I find such people wise who understand this.</p> <p>In my organization, my colleagues have gone wiser over time; they stay calm and cool and let the manager take care of his bad decisions.</p>
	It irritates me whenever an employee gives suggestions for other departments.	<p>I do not like the colleagues who instead of focusing on their departments, always find problems in other departments.</p> <p>I find it a total waste of time, whenever employees try to be ingenious for the problems of other departments.</p> <p>I am amused by the colleagues whose own department is a mess and yet find suggestions for other departments.</p>
	It is a matter of displeasure for me, whenever the meeting is dragged away from its agenda.	<p>Too much time is wasted, as people do not stay quiet and meetings should stick to their agenda items.</p> <p>Politics and current affairs should not be discussed in the meetings</p>

Cognitive

In organizations, disagreements should be avoided.

Disagreements should only be done, when you expect something good out of them. In my experience, disagreement is a waste of time and in the end, the boss wins in any case.

Discussions are useless. In my organization, our new colleagues have to agree to all the disagreements, until the time they do disagreements no more.

In organizations, it is better to stay quiet than to give suggestions.

In this job and in the previous jobs that I have done, it's better to hold suggestions and remain silent than staking your self-respect.

I have always been told by my seniors to hold suggestions and keep a low profile for smooth

My manager does whatever he has to do even when the majority of us are not in favor, so it's better to be quiet than wasting time thinking and giving suggestions.

Conflicts in an organization can be handled by remaining silent.

My advice to conflict management is to remain silent. There is no use in saying anything, it is likely to aggravate the conflict.

Remaining silent in organizations is beneficial.

What I have learned from my working experience is that people who are silent in organizations are the ones giving the most to the organization by supporting the current system. Above all, barking dogs seldom bite.

People who are focused, get their work done, without making noise. Making noise of what you are doing is useless, since what you are doing is what you are paid for, and making noise is useless.

In organizations, bosses should discourage disagreements.

The managers are fighting at a different front and have more experience. An employee should not disagree with them until we have equal or better knowledge from them.

The managers sit on the other side of the table since they know more than their subordinates. In case their decisions carry more weight, as they are supported by more knowledge than ours. The managers should not snub disagreements.

Behavioral The job assignment which may lead to a conflict is delayed by me to the last hour.

If I know there will be discussions and possible conflict, I prefer to delay the task, until it becomes a necessity.

I wait for others to raise a concern about a common problem rather than raising it by myself.

I often do the undone work of another employee without raising my voice.

I prefer to leave things to fate than to raise a voice about them.

I don't know, but for smooth functioning, I delay the work leading to conflicts as late as possible.

I am lucky that most of the time problems similar to mine are solved by others. I wait and like this way.

I have lost my hair, as I am good at absorbing pressures, so much so that I do the task of others instead of asking them to do their task.

My colleagues often choose me as their team member as I am reliable and mainly because they know I will go the extra mile to get the teamwork done without making noise.

I am a strong believer in luck. I know, if work has to be done, it will be done in any case. There is no need to panic and make noise.

My office will be a better place if my colleagues understand things in the bigger picture of mother nature. If something is good for them it will take and if it is bad for them it will not.

I wonder why they can't sit calm.

3.2.2.1.2.2 Findings

Through semi-structured in-depth interviews, it was found that employee reticence is three dimensional: affective, cognitive, and behavioral construct. Since the dimensions were not part of the scope of the research, the qualitative analysis revealed three dimensions of employee reticence and needs to be treated separately in future research. It has been left to the research to follow as part of future recommendations.

The second phase of the qualitative study involved the item generation process. In this phase items developed were combined and an initial pool of 29 items to measure employee reticence was generated. The generated pool of initial items also contained adapted items from existing scales, such as from the scale of sportsmanship dimension of organizational citizenship behavior (1 item; (Organ, 1988), and Social Reticence Scale (two items; (Jones and Russell, 1982).

3.2.2.2 Quantitative Study Phase

To empirically test the theoretical model two sequential studies were conducted in the quantitative study phase. In the first study, the item reduction was performed using principal component analysis followed by validity analysis in the second study. In the first study, the initial item pool was subjected to item reduction through PCA. The reduced questionnaire was then administered to another set of respondents for finalization. The details of the studies are given below.

3.2.2.2.1 Step 3: Purification, Pilot Testing, Initial Data Collection, Expert validation, and Scale Refinement

3.2.2.2.1.1 Study I-A

The initial pool of 29 generated items was distributed among the 300 employees of the service sector. The response rate of the valid questionnaire was 72%. The items were based on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The demographics of the respondents revealed that 20% of

them were female. 55.5% of respondents were having at least 2 years of experience, followed by 25.7% of respondents who were having at least 11 years of experience and the rest were having at least 20 years of education. All the respondents were having at least 16 years of formal education. 85.15% of employees belonged to the private sector and semi-government sector of the industry.

Five of the items were excluded in analyzing the responses through PCA. The exclusion was based on low correlations between them and their category mean. On the remaining 24 items, the discriminant analysis was conducted by categorizing them into groups of high and low scores based on the total score of other items. T-test was used to find if a significant difference existed between each item and the low-score and high-score groups. This was done by taking the mean score of every item and applying a T-test between that score and the mean scores of the high score group and low score group. Accordingly, 11 items were removed; with insignificant differences between the high score and low score groups (DeVellis, 2016). During this process, none of the items were deleted until the consensus was reached between the researchers and 3 experts. Other than these, discussions were also done on the remaining 13 items with the experts. The items which were confusing and found redundant were removed. Resultantly, the final questionnaire of employee reticence had 11 items. These 11 items were transformed in the form of a questionnaire for data collection and further analyses in study I-B.

3.2.2.2.2 Step 4: Final Data Collection on the Statements Proposed

- Study I-B

The self-report survey-based research was selected as the methodological approach in Study I-B. The self-report method was chosen mainly because of the implicit nature of employee silence that is the behavior of employee silence is not observable, therefore, it was not possible to collect the data without the self-report method. Further, the lack of action in employee reticence, intentions, and employee silence makes it difficult for the observers to detect behavior, by mere observation of lack of voice or speech, therefore the self-report method is a recommended method in such scenarios (Wang and Hsieh, 2013).

3.2.2.2.2.1 Sampling Design

The purposive sampling design was used to collect the data to serve the specific purpose which was a selection of a respondent only if s/he agreed to the following questions 1) I have been working in the same organization for at least last two years 2) There are no major changes in the communication channels of my organization and 3) I have been with the same supervisor/line manager for at least last two years.

The first question that “I have been working in the same organization for at least two years” was included, to make sure that the respondent (employee) is well aware of the communication channels and mode of communications. Implicitly, through this question, it was also made sure that the respondents have undergone or have seen the appraisal process and outcomes of his/her and/or others behavior, and the employee reticence is updated accordingly. Through questions no. 2 & 3; it was made sure that no major-change process has occurred in the organization and employee reticence is relatively stable. An employee who is purposely chosen through this criterion is the right choice for the study.

Data was collected in 3-time lags. Time lag study is a recommended way in research where intentions have been used as a predictor of behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen, 2011). Further, since all the items were self-reported which could lead to common method bias; therefore, a time-lagged study design was adopted to avoid common method bias as recommended by Podsakoff et al. (2003).

Accordingly, the data were collected in three lags, in a cross-sectional manner. In the first time-lag, data for employee reticence were collected, after the gap of 2 weeks the data for the mediator, intentions-to-remain-silent was collected. Finally, in the third time-lag data of employee silence was collected.

3.2.2.2.2.2 Data Collection Technique

A total of 700 questionnaires were distributed among the employees working in the service sector. The data was collected through faculty members of the executive and masters level programs. 253 valid questionnaires were received back, and

the response rate was 36.7%. There were numerous reasons for the low response rate, for instance 1) rigorous process of accepting a response was chosen, 2) it was time lagged studies and respondents were either not present or did not write or remember their code words, 3) some of the field officers (concerned faculty members) could not manage the data collection well. However, the response rate did represent an adequate sample as determined by G*Power software, in line with the guidelines by [Faul et al. \(2007\)](#). Keeping in view the research model, the sample size chosen for this research (n=253), was larger than the one proposed by G*Power 3.0, with the statistical sig. (a) level 5%, the required level of power of 80% ([Hair et al., 1998](#)), and the effect size of 15 ([Cohen, 1988](#)).

3.2.2.2.3 Measures

The scale for employee reticence developed as the result of qualitative study 1, was here for analysis. Accordingly, its validity and reliability analysis such as face validity, content validity, reliability, item reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, nomological validity, and analysis was performed. All items asked participants to rate each scale item using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The scale of intentions to remain silent was adapted from the earlier work on intentions by [Chen et al. \(2011\)](#) and recommendations by [Ajzen \(2006\)](#). All items asked participants to rate each scale item using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The questionnaire for employee silence was adapted from [Vakola and Bouradas \(2005\)](#). It is based on a five-point Likert Scale ranging from 1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Very Often, 5=Always. One of the sample items from the scale was, "How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your departments issues?" The five-point Likert Scale ranging from 1=Very Difficulty, 2=Difficulty, 3=Neutral, 4=Easily, 5=Very Easily, for items such as, "How easily do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your departments issues?" In essence, all the questionnaires were adapted and based on 5 point Likert scale. This step was followed by the important step in which

the validity and internal consistency of the constructs/items were determined using different statistical techniques such as Factor Loadings, Cronbach's Alpha and Average Variance Extracted methods.

3.2.2.2.3 Step 5: Factor Loadings, Reliability, Validity, and Internal Consistency

This step is very important, since the results are based more on objective statistical results than on subjective evaluation of researchers (if any). In this step, all variables must pass/undergo the validation process, and reliability process (Padovani and Carvalho, 2016).

Validation is a multi-step process starting with the face validity and content validity of the research instrument, followed by the tests of internal consistency/reliability, item/indicator reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and nomological validity. The content validity and face validity of the scale, constructed in Study I-A was validated in line with the recommendation by Netermeyer et al. (2003). The respondents evaluated the statements/indicators of each construct as given in Table 3.3. Each statement/indicator was based on 5 point Likert scale. The content validation step was performed with 6 academicians in the area of human resource management and 4 managers who were providing services as the human resource managers. The face validation step was performed with 4 Ph.Ds and 3 consultants who were providing their services in the areas related to human resources such as leadership, talent management and acquisition etc. As the result of the input and feedback of the Ph.Ds, consultants and managers, the changes were incorporated and 2 redundant items were deleted. After the process of content validation and face validation, the final scale of employee reticence now contained only 9 items based on 5 point Likert scale.

The convergent validity of each construct was evaluated by average variance extracted (AVE) as recommended by Hair et al. (2013). According to them the value of AVE should be at least 0.50 to ascertain convergent validity. The values of AVE in this research are shown in Table 3.2. satisfied all the necessary minimum requirements. It can be seen that the values of the AVE are greater than 0.50 for all

the constructs, showing convergent validity of each construct as shown in Table 3.2.

TABLE 3.2: Discriminant validity (intercorrelations) of variable constructs

	Variables	1	2	3
1	ER	0.766		
2	ITRS	0.7153	0.824	
3	ESB	0.5331	0.713	0.736

To complement the findings of Average Variance Extraced (AVE), the convergent validity was also tested by cross-loadings of all indicator items to their respective latent constructs. It is evident that the factor loadings of each item on its respective construct were significant ($p < 0.05$). The same is indicated by the T-statistics of the outer model loadings in the PLSGraph output. These values ranged from a low of 16 to a high value of 36.

Therefore, the validation criteria for internal consistency and the convergent validity were found to be satisfactorily confirming the proposed construct of employee reticence. Each scales internal consistency, showing strong adhesion to the construct, was checked through Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The values of the Cronbach's alpha was found to be greater than 0.70, showing that the items have strong internal consistency that is reliabiliyt.

The factors and cross-loadings of all the items to their respective constructs were used to test the convergent validity of the scales. The results are shown in Table 3.3. The table indicates that all the items loaded on their respective construct with a lower bound of 0.68 to an upper bound of 0.86. The values fullfil the criteria of convergent validity.

Further, the items were loaded more on their respective construct than on any other construct. These loadings confirmed the convergent validity of these indicators. In other words, the items loaded on their respective constrcuts more than on any other consturcts implying that they are the best representation of the respective constrcut, as per the data. Through this test, the convergent validity of the items were further confirmed.

TABLE 3.3: Factor Loading (bolded) and cross-loadings

Items/Indicators	Employee Reticence	Intentions to Remain Silent	Employee Silence Behavior
ER1: In organizations, it is better to stay quiet than to give suggestions.	0.712		
ER2: Remaining silent in organizations is beneficial.	0.6841		
ER3: In organizations, being silent is being wise.	0.761		
ER4: The job assignment which may lead to a conflict is delayed by me to the last hour.	0.7728		
ER5: I like the people who prefer to remain silent over raising concerns.	0.7315		
ER6: In organizations, conflicts lead to better solutions.	0.7644		
ER7: I wait for others to raise concerns about a common problem rather than raising it by myself.	0.8615		
ER8: I prefer to leave things to fate than to raise my voice about them.	0.847		
ER9: I like the people who prefer to remain silent over giving suggestions.	0.7426		
ITR 1: In my organization, it is likely that I will remain silent on an important matter in the coming week(s).		0.7713	
ITRS2: In my organization, most likely, I will hold a suggestion in the coming week(s).		0.8458	

ITRS3: In my organization, I plan to remain silent in the coming week(s) even if I have something valuable to contribute.	0.8544
ITRS4: In my organization, I intend to remain silent in the coming week(s) even if I am asked for suggestions.	0.8211
ES1: How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your departments issues?	0.7499
ES2: How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your companys issues?	0.7007
ES3: How easily do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning company issues?	0.7516
ES5: How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your job?	0.8195
ES6: How easily do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your departments issues?	0.8009
ES7: How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning issues related to job satisfaction such as salary, working conditions etc	0.705
ES8: How easily do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your job?	0.765

3.2.2.2.4 Internal Consistency

According to [Hair et al. \(2013\)](#), Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability both evaluate the internal consistency of a scale for which the values of both should exceed 0.70. The results of Cronbach's Alpha evaluated for the scales are given in Table 3.4. The items were deleted by using the "if items deleted" provided by SPSS to reach the recommended Cronbach's Alpha value.

The resultant figures showed that the measures are robust in terms of their internal consistency/reliability as indexed by the composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values. All the values of composite reliabilities and the values of internal consistencies range from 0.870 to 0.93, which are greater than the minimum recommended value of 0.70 ([Hair et al., 2013](#); [Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994](#)), thus confirming internal consistency of the scales used in this research.

TABLE 3.4: Assessment of the measurement model; CR, Alpha, and AVE

Variable construct	The composite reliability (internal consistency reliability)	Cronbachs Alpha	The average variance extracted/explained
ER	0.927	0.911	0.5865
ITRS	0.894	0.8414	0.6787
ESB	0.9037	0.8774	0.5413

3.2.2.2.5 Step 6: Hypotheses Testing

The multivariate statistical approach was used to analyze the data statistically by using structural equation modeling (SEM). It is a recommended technique for research in which there are latent constructs/variables; in which there is a possibility of measurement errors in observed variables; and in which there is a possibility of interdependence among the observed items/variables ([Padovani and Carvalho, 2016](#)). Thus, SEM analytical technique was highly suited here; as it

fulfilled the criteria as given above, and allows finding relationships between latent constructs/variables which were measured using items/indicators (Rigdon, 2009). The guidance of Hair et al. (1998) for choosing between covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) and partial least squares SEM (PLS-SEM) was used in this research. As per their recommendation, PLS-SEM was given preference over CB-SEM due to the following characteristics of this research: the research goal involved identification and verification of key driver constructs (for key driver constructs see (Fishbein and Ajzen (2011), p. 2), the structural model is complex that is having many items/variables and constructs, and the data are non-normally distributed and/or the sample size is small. Thus, in this research the PLS-SEM approach was the right choice mainly because it relaxes on the assumption of data normality. To test the normality assumption, Skewness and Kurtosis tests were used as per the recommendation of Hair et al. (2013) instead of other tests such as KolmogorovSmirnov test (K-S test) and/or ShapiroWilks test (S-W test). SPSS 25.0 was used for normality tests. The normality of all items/indicators was confirmed. However, PLS-SEM was preferred over CB-SEM due the complex nature of the structural model. The quantitative analysis was done by bootstrapping directly in SmartPLS 2 with resamplings as recommended by Tenenhaus et al. (2005). According to Hair et al. (2013), bootstrapping procedure performs fairly robustly in case of non-normal data. In PLS-SEM, the research measurement model has to be designed either in reflective mode or formative mode. However, according to Diamantopoulos and Winklhofer (2001), caution must be exercised when the decision about the selection of the reflective or formative model is taken because both of the models have different characteristics (Padovani and Carvalho, 2016). In the reflective model, the latent-variable (LV) is seen as caused by the items/indicators; and in the formative model, indicators are caused by the LV (Diamantopoulos and Winklhofer, 2001). That is to say, in a reflective model, the items/indicators are the manifestations of the latent variable and the direction of causality is from the latent variable to its items/indicators (Henseler et al., 2009; Tenenhaus et al., 2005). To choose the mode of the measurement model and the indicators, the recommendations by Hair et al. (2013) were followed. Thus, the

reflective constructs have been used as the target constructs. According to [Diamantopoulos and Siguaaw \(2006\)](#), attitude is reflective, the other variables involved in this research are also reflective as supported by studies such as ([Al-Gahtani et al., 2007](#)). Keeping in view the above recommendations in research, the measurement model for all LVs is represented by the reflective model in this research as shown in Figure 4.1.

3.3 Study II

3.3.1 Application of Theory of Planned Behavior

3.3.1.1 Measures

The published and validated measures of MATS, CO, and ESB, were adapted. The scale for ITRS is based on earlier work on turnover intentions ([Chen et al., 2011](#); [Leana et al., 2009](#); [Leiter et al., 2011](#)) in line with the recommendations of [Ajzen \(2006\)](#). The measure of ER was based on the work of Study-I ([Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021](#)). All of the measures asked participants to rate each scale item using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire of Employee Reticence (ER) was adapted from [Qureshi and Naqvi \(2021\)](#). It is based on a five-point Likert Scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. One of the sample items in the scale was “In organizations, it is better to stay quiet than to give suggestions”. Yet another item was “Remaining silent in organizations is beneficial.” The questionnaire of Managers Attitude Towards Silence (MATS) was adapted from [Vakola and Bouradas \(2005\)](#). It is based on a five-point Likert Scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. One of the sample items in the scale was “I believe that my manager considers different opinions as something useful”. A negatively worded item was “I believe that my manager asks for criticism from his/her partners”. The questionnaire for Communication Opportunities was adapted from [Vakola and Bouradas \(2005\)](#). It is based on a five-point Likert Scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. One of the sample items in the scale was, “There is adequate

communication between employees and managers of my organization”. The questionnaire for intentions to remain silent was based on earlier work on intentions (Chen et al., 2011; Leana et al., 2009; Leiter et al., 2011) and recommendations by Ajzen (2006).

It was based on a five-point Likert Scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. One of the items from the scale was, “In my organization, it is likely that I will remain silent on the topic of concern”.

The questionnaire for employee silence was adapted from Vakola and Bouradas (2005). It is based on a five-point Likert Scale ranging from 1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Very Often, 5=Always. One of the sample items from the scale was, “How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your departments issues?” The five-point Likert Scale ranging from 1=Very Difficultly, 2=Difficultly, 3=Neutral, 4=Easily, 5=Very Easily, for items such as, “How easily do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your departments issues?”

3.3.1.2 Population and Sample

The population of the Study II was the employees having at least two years of experience in the service sector. The reason for this is that the main objective of the research at hand was to explain the behavior of employee silence through TPB, so that it was generalizable.

Therefore, it would be unwise to restrict the population to a particular industry/sector, when silence is a pervasive phenomenon in all organizations and have been studied in the nursing sector (Gkorezis et al., 2016), highly skilled workers (Dedahanov et al., 2015), for non-standard workers (Pirie et al., 2016), in distant education programs (Knoll and van Dick, 2013a,b; Whiteside and Barclay, 2013), in auditing firms (Donovan et al., 2016), in business schools (Whiteside and Barclay, 2013), on military (Pinder and Harlos, 2001), on faculty members of universities (Khalid and Ahmed, 2016), on heavy industry workers (Rhee et al., 2014), on manufacturing company workers (Brinsfield, 2013), in both the service and manufacturing sector that is 75% of respondents from the service sector and

25% from the manufacturing sector (Jain, 2015), in SMEs (Prouska and Psychogios, 2019), and so on. It is pertinent to note that in all the earlier studies in which the concept of employee silence has been crystalized and in which dimensions have been proposed, the following population has been taken as shown in Table 3.5.

TABLE 3.5: Population taken by earlier researchers

Sr. No.	Authors	Population
1.	Pinder and Harlos (2001)	Propositional study based on examples from Military
2.	Dyne et al. (2003)	Propositional Study
3.	Greenberg et al. (2007)	Propositional Study
4.	Knoll and van Dick (2013b)	Employees from multiple industries
5.	Brinsfield (2013)	
	Study 1	MBA and BBA Students with 2 years of experience and front-line and administrative employees of a midwestern manufacturing company
	Study 2	MBA and BBA Students with 2 years of experience
	Study 3	MBA and BBA Students with 2 years of experience and front-line and administrative employees of a midwestern manufacturing company
6.	Jain (2015)	Employees from multiple industries

It is clear from the literature that the behavior of Employee Silence is pervasive across all industries be it the service industry or the manufacturing industry. Therefore, the data in this regard could be collected from any industry. Keeping in view, the pervasiveness of the phenomenon, the need for generalizability, and the earlier conceptual/exploratory studies, the population of the current research study was the employees having at least two years of experience in the currently serving organization. A minimum of two years have been chosen because an employee with at least two years of experience in an organization is well aware of the outcomes of their behavior, including employee silence.

3.3.1.3 Sampling Design

There are two major types of sampling, 1) Probability Sampling and 2) Non Probability Sampling (Bordens and Abbott, 2013; Cooper and Schindler, 2013). Almost all types of probability sampling require a sampling frame. Keeping in view the population of the research at hand, as discussed above, the sampling frame was not possible. Therefore, a non-probability sampling design was to be used for this research.

The major types of non-probability samplings are convenience sampling, purposive sampling, and snowball sampling (Cooper and Schindler, 2013). In the scenario of current research, purposive sampling was used to choose the respondents who had at least two years of experience in the currently serving organization. Convenience sampling is not adequate to cater to such purpose-based sampling. And snowball sampling is meant for research in which the data is hidden and/or of sensitive nature. Therefore, purposive sampling is the right choice for the research. Purposive sampling was used for data collection through questionnaires.

In study II a respondent was purposively chosen only if s/he answered the following question positively 1) I have been working in the same organization for at least the last two years 2) There are no major changes in the communication channels of my organization and 3) I have been with the same supervisor/line manager for at least last two years.

The first question that “I have been working in the same organization for at least two years” was included, to make sure that the respondent (employee) is well aware of the communication channels and mode of communications. Implicitly, through this question, it was also made sure that the respondents have undergone or have seen the appraisal process and outcomes of his/her and/or others behavior. Through questions no. 2 & 3; it was made sure that no major-change process has occurred in the organization. An employee who is purposely chosen through this criterion was the correct choice for the study. A total of six hundred questionnaires were distributed among the employees working in the service sector. The data was collected personally and through contacts (with clear instructions about the choice of the respondent) in the organizations. 253 valid questionnaires were received

(response rate 23.7%). To determine the sample size, G*Power was used to conduct the power analysis in line with the guidelines by [Faul et al. \(2007\)](#). Keeping in view the research model, the sample size chosen for this research (n=253), was larger than the one proposed by G*Power 3.0, with the statistical sig. (α) level 5%, and the required level of power of 80% ([Hair et al., 1998](#)), and the effect size of 15 ([Cohen, 1988](#)).

3.3.1.4 Time Horizon

Data Collection with time lag is a recommended way in research where intentions have been used as a predictor of behavior ([Fishbein and Ajzen, 2011](#)) and it also reduces common method bias. Accordingly, the data were collected thrice, in a cross-sectional manner, with a time lag of at least one month. The data for employee reticence, managers attitude towards silence, and communication opportunities were collected one month before the data for intentions to remain silent was collected. Finally, the data for employee silence was collected in the third month. The details of the time lags and the data collection are given below.

3.3.1.4.1 Time Lag 01

In time T1, the data of all the independent variables of the research that is employee reticence (ER), Manager's attitude towards silence (MATS), and communication opportunities (CO) were collected from participants who were enrolled in the graduate program. All the necessary ethical considerations of the research were adhered to before the data collection process. For instance, the participants were briefed and briefly interviewed before the collection of data. They were matched with the purposive sampling criteria. For instance, a participant who was not aware of the communication opportunities available to him/her in the respective organization was dropped from the data collection process. The participants were briefed about the purpose of the research and were informed that the date of the next data collection would be in the next month.

Since the data was to be collected in the time lag, therefore, the participants were asked to write the last three digits of their registration numbers. The percentage

of female respondents was 30 and all the respondents had at least 16 years of formal education.

3.3.1.4.2 Time Lag 02

In time T2, the data of ITRS was collected from the same respondents who filled the questionnaire in time lag 01 in February of 2017. The respondents were employees of the service sector of Pakistan. The participants were again briefed about the purpose of the research and were informed that the date of the next data collection will be April of 2017. Accordingly, they were asked to write the last three digits of their registration numbers.

The percentage of female respondents was about 30% and all the respondents had at least 16 years of formal education. The respondents found the research very close to their heart, and it seemed that they had exhibited employee silence multiple times during their professional life.

3.3.1.4.3 Time Lag 03

In time T3, the data of ES was collected from the same respondents who filled questionnaires in time lag 01 and time lag 02 in February 2017 and March 2017 respectively. The participants were again briefed about the purpose of the research and were informed that it was the last time that they were asked to fill the questionnaire. The percentage of female respondents was about 30% and all the respondents had at least 16 years of formal education. The respondents shared their excitement about the research and were about the view that such research must take place to account for the problems faced by the employees who remain silent and cannot do much about it.

3.3.1.5 Statistics Software

In this research, two kinds of software were used for evaluating the proposed hypotheses. The first one was the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 21 for analysis of demographics, reliability, and correlation analysis.

Further, an extension of SPSS, Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS) version 20 was used for Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) for CFA and path analysis.

3.4 Study III: Scale Development of GS

3.4.1 Procedure of Developing Guile Silence Scale

Scale development is a complex process and requires caution at every step. The scale of GS was developed by combining deductive and inductive approaches, considered to be the best practice in scale development (Boateng et al., 2018).

To develop, validate, analyze and test the scale of guile silence, successive studies were performed. Study III-A consisted of qualitative analysis, in which the initial item pool was generated and subjected to tests for generation of the initial pool for item reduction/selection.

The study was followed by Study III-B, in which a different data set was taken to perform EFA for item reduction. EFA was followed by CFA with a different data set in Study III-C. In study III-C the items were finalized in the form of a scale to measure the construct of guile silence. In the light of the literature, the resultant scale of guile silence was subjected to a rigorous validationg and testing process through a research model in study III-C with different data set.

The details of Study III (A-to-C) and the scale development process, as adapted from DeVellis (2016), DeVellis and Thorpe (2021) and Boateng et al. (2018) is described.

3.4.2 Qualitative Study Phase

The following are the steps in the qualitative study phase.

Step 1:

- Identification of Domain for the Construct
- Item Generation through Literature and Focus Group Discussion

Step 2:

- Content Adequacy and Categorization of Items into Determinants

3.4.3 Quantitative Study Phase

The following are the steps in the quantitative study phase.

Step 3:

- Purification, Initial Data Collection, and Expert Validation
- Pilot Testing
- Scale modification, Refinement, and Finalization

Step 4:

- Final Data Collection on the Statements Proposed

Step 5 and 6:

- Factor Loadings, Reliability, and Validity, Internal Consistency

Step 7:

- Hypotheses Testing

3.4.3.0.1 Study III-A

3.4.3.0.1.1 Step-1 Identification of domain for the construct

Guile silence is a dimension of employee silence. Employee silence is a behavior (Harlos and Knoll, 2021). Therefore, the sub-domain of the Guile Silence construct is employee behavior. On the other hand the construct of Employee behavior (employee silence) is the sub-domain of organizational behavior. Similarly, the organizational behavior belongs to the domain of human behavior at large. Therefore, the domain of the construct of guile silence is organizational behavior which is the sub-domain of human behavior.

3.4.3.0.1.2 Item generation through literature and focus group discussion

The generated pool of initial items also contained adapted items from existing scales, such as from the scale of the dimension of ES that is opportunistic silence (Knoll and van Dick, 2013b). In Study-III-A, the exemplars were generated based on motives, as given in Table 3.7. Using the exemplars, the items were finalized for initial scrutiny. The details of the Study-III-A are given below.

In this phase, an inductive exploration of an employee's motives for remaining silent at the workplace was conducted. Keeping in view Whetten (1989) suggestions on being comprehensive while maintaining parsimony, the exploration was kept broad. However, the exploration remained focused on the motives of remaining silent at the workplace to avoid extra work.

Thus, the first boundary condition in this regard was to explore employee silence in the situations and context, which could lead to doing avoidable additional work. The second boundary condition was targets of guile silence which was fixed to the ones perceived to assign the avoidable additional work.

3.4.3.0.1.3 Sample

The study-III-A respondents consisted of employees who were having at least two years of experience ($n = 34$). They reported at least one incident to which they had intentionally remained silent at work to avoid additional work.

The demographics revealed that the average age of respondents was 36 years, the average work experience was 7 years, and 64 percent were males.

3.4.3.0.1.4 Procedure

In one-to-one meetings, the respondents were asked through the questionnaire to think about occasions in which s/he has intentionally remained silent to avoid additional work. Since the literature guided the research on avoiding extra work, the respondents were asked to narrate such occasions. They were asked to elaborate on each scenario's features (silence incident), which held them silent intentionally.

Next, they were asked to describe the target person they remained silent (silence target).

3.4.3.0.1.5 Analysis and Results

Once the data was collected, the content-coding of responses was conducted. The content-coding for qualitative data analysis was performed as per the standard practices (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The responses were analyzed, and exemplar statements were developed for each response. It helped reduce the total number of uniform responses, which otherwise consisted of many minor differences. Since the respondents were guided earlier about the silence incidents, only two exemplars could be seen. One type of exemplars was related to intentional silence for avoiding avoidable additional work, and the second included situations related to already discovered dimensions of employee silence. The other types of exemplars were put in the “others” category as they were not part of the research scope. No item was put in the “others” category of exemplars unless discussed among the researchers for clarity and consistency.

Situations reported to which respondents provided data for remaining silent to avoid avoidable additional work were 96. The situations reported were more than the number of respondents because many respondents reported more than one situation. The responses were categorized into two types of exemplars to cover the responses for avoiding avoidable work and the “others” category. This list was then provided to three independent judges. Two of the judges were PhDs in human resource management, and one was a PhD scholar. They were asked to see if there is some other category of exemplars like guile silence that could be identified.

Further, they were asked to group them into categories. A meeting was then held among the judges and the researchers to finalize the groupings. The consensus among the judges and the researchers emerged that the exemplars can only be divided into two categories. There is no need to increase the sample size, as indicated in Table 3.7. The reliability of categories was assessed; three other colleagues were asked to assign one of the categories to a random sample of 10

percent of the responses. The value of Fleiss Kappa was found higher than 0.70, which is considered sufficient for psychological measurement (Fleiss et al., 2003). Thus, two categories were finalized.

TABLE 3.6: Exemplars Category / Silence Incidents

Exemplar Category	Incident types in which respondents remained silent	Silence incidents reported	% of the total
1	Wanted tips for improvement	27	28
1	Asked for suggestions to a problem	21	22
1	Asked for suggestions to arrange a trip	16	17
1	Asked for ideas for a better advert	14	15
1	Asked for suggestions for customer improvement plan	8	8
1	Asked to-volunteer	5	5
2	Others	6	6
	Total	96	100

The frequency of different reported incidents is shown in Table 3.7. The most common type of silence incident reported was “wanted suggestions for improvement,” which was a count of 28% of the total respondents. It was followed by “asked for solutions for problems,” which counted 22% of total respondents. “Asked for suggestions to arrange a trip” and “Asked for ideas for better advert” accounted for 17 and 15 percent respectively. “Asked to help others” and “Asked to volunteer” accounted for 8 and 5 percent of the total responses, respectively, while 6 percent fell under the “others” category.

3.4.3.0.1.6 Target of Silence

In employee silence dimensions literature, the target of silence had rarely been defined explicitly except in Brinsfield (2013) work. In this research, attention was given to the target of silence while the guile silence dimension was explored. It was found that the respondents of this phase of the study were asked to specify

their targets (Table 3.8). According to them, they remained silent before the ones who were perceived to be capable of assigning the avoidable additional work. For instance, one of the respondents narrated that

“In a meeting, the manager of the department asked for an improvement suggestion. After the meeting and in the absence of the manager, the employees discussed different suggestions that they had but did not discuss”.

It shows that their target of silence was the manager who could assign them the task for which they were asked to give suggestions. As a result of the qualitative phase, it was evident that the target of employees exhibiting guile silence was “anyone who was perceived to be capable of assigning the avoidable additional work.”

TABLE 3.7: Target of Silence

Silence Target	No of times reported	% of the total
Line manager	49	51
Senior colleague	27	28
HR manager	15	16
Manager of another Department	6	6
CEO	2	2
Total	96	100

3.4.3.0.1.7 Reliability of Exemplars

A total of 96 statements guided the exemplars of the motive for guile-silence. Four independent judges (three (03) Ph.Ds in Human Resource Management and one (01) Ph.D in the field of Psychology) were requested to assign the exemplars to a random sample of 96 statements (10% of the original responses) to affirm the exemplars' reliability.

The independent judges' division of exemplars was found to be sufficient as the value of Kappa was found within the acceptable level (Fleiss et al., 2003). Therefore, the reliability of these exemplars was confirmed and the further process of validity was started as part of next study.

3.4.3.0.1.8 Summary of Study III-A

The purpose of this study was to focus on another dimension of employee silence, which was not only supported by the literature but also by the anecdotal evidence. In this study, 100 percent of the respondents reported that they remained silent at work to avoid additional work. These responses were based on their experiences. The targets of silence were different, but the target always remained the ones who were perceived to have control over the task allocation.

Exemplars were drawn from the responses and were subjected to reliability analysis through independent judges. The reliability of the exemplars was confirmed. On these bases, the exemplars were finalized for further analysis in Study III-B.

3.4.3.0.1.9 Step 2: Content Adequacy and Expert Validation

The assessment of content adequacy was performed to evaluate the initial item pool generated as the result of the item generation step, in line with the recommendation by [Netemeyer et al. \(2003\)](#).

The respondents evaluated the statements/indicators of each indicator. Each indicator was based on a Likert scale ranging from strongly-disagree to strongly-agree. The content adequacy step was performed with 4 PhD scholars and 3 consultants. A briefing session was also carried out before the start of the content adequacy assessment. In the briefing session, the ethical considerations were ensured. For instance, the respondents were informed that their data would remain confidential, it would not be used for commercial purpose, and that the anonymity would be ensured. Further, the objectives of the research were shared with the audience and the definition of guile silence was also communicated to them. Their questions were answered and they were asked to feel relaxed and answer the question with utmost sincerity and truthfulness.

They were then asked to check the content validity to judge the items as very relatable, relatable, and not relatable. As a result, the item pool was reduced to 13 from 24. Finally, the remaining item pool was presented to 4 academicians in the area of human resource management and 2 managers. It resulted in rephrasing and

deleting the items. As a result, the changes were incorporated and the redundant items were deleted. The final scale of guile silence now contained only 7 items.

3.4.3.0.1.10 Step 3: Purification, Initial Data Collection, and Scale Refinement Study III- B

A distinct sample was chosen for Study III-B. There were a total of 280 respondents with at least two years of full-time work experience. A total of 218 (77%) responses were received. A sample size of 218 was found appropriate for the study type and is sufficient for EFA, as recommended by [Preacher and MacCallum \(2002\)](#). The respondents were the employees who were enrolled in a 17 years master program. This strategy was intentionally chosen as many advantages were bore from this. Firstly, they could hide the identity of their organizations and were candid and open to responses. Secondly, a better response rate was ensured by keeping their attendance mandatory by the respective faculty members. Thirdly, if any clarification was required, the respondents could be contacted later in the upcoming week.

Finally, a mix of employees from different companies brought a more powerful and more in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. The demographic data of the respondents revealed that 28% were female participants. 43% belonged to the telecom sector, 18% were from the oil and gas service-providing sector, 14% were from the hospital and nursing sector, 13% were from education and courier sectors, and the rest were from miscellaneous manufacturing and service sectors. 73% of the participants had 2-7 years of experience, while 16% of the employees were having 8-13 years of experience. The rest of the employees had more than 13 years of experience.

3.4.3.0.1.11 Design and Procedure

A questionnaire-based survey was administered with the following explanations to the respondents;

“In organizations, employees choose to remain silent due to many underlying reasons. Many a time, they choose to remain silent to avoid additional avoidable

work. For the given questions, specify the extent to which you naturally experience the need to remain silent in response to suggestions or issues or events in the job to avoid additional avoidable work”.

After these instructions, ES’s items were presented, consisting of the prefix, “I remained silent to,” followed by the exemplar statements derived in Study-III-A. The questionnaire also included the six dimensions by [Brinsfield \(2013\)](#) and opportunistic silence by [Knoll and van Dick \(2013b\)](#), as shown in Table 3.9. The dimensions with the same underlying motives were not included because of redundancy and parsimony. The items were assessed using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly.

TABLE 3.8: Employee Silence Dimensions in Questionnaire

Employee Silence Dimensions	No.	Sample Item - Root Statement: of I remained silent at work Items
Deviant Silence (Brinsfield, 2013)	5	To get even with another person
Relational Silence (Brinsfield, 2013)	5	To protect my relationship with another individual
Defensive Silence (Brinsfield, 2013)	6	To protect myself from harm
Diffident Silence (Brinsfield, 2013)	5	To avoid embarrassing myself
Ineffectual Silence (Brinsfield, 2013)	5	Because I did not believe my concerns would be addressed
Disengaged Silence (Brinsfield, 2013)	3	Because I did not care what happened
Opportunistic Silence (Knoll and van Dick, 2013b)	3	Because of concerns that others could take an advantage of my ideas
Guile Silence (current research)	5	To avoid task which could overload me

3.4.3.0.1.12 Step 4: Factor Analysis

Fulfillment of psychometric criteria by each generated item is an important criterion for keeping an item in the pool ([Furr, 2011](#); [Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994](#)).

The responses were evaluated based on the 7 items exploring guile silence. To examine the underlying factor structure, EFA was conducted using SPSS v.23 with component analysis extraction and none rotation. None rotation was used as more than one factor could not be expected. The EFA component-matrix of guile silence motives is given in Table 3.14. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy was .891 which is greater than .8 and shows that the matrix of correlation is appropriate for factor analysis (Hair et al., 1998).

3.4.3.0.1.13 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is a complex statistical approach. Therefore, caution should be exercised while performing the analysis. Therefore, the sequence and steps as recommended by Thompson (2004) were followed. The five steps of EFA which were followed as recommended are given below.

1. Suitability of data for analysis
2. Method of factors' extraction
3. Criteria to determine factor extraction
4. Rotational method
5. Interpretation of factors and labeling

3.4.3.0.1.14 Suitability of Data for Analysis

For EFA, the sample size is an important determinant and a critical factor. There are different recommendations of researchers for the appropriate data size to perform EFA. However, the preferred rule of thumb is having a sample size of 200. Nonetheless, the greater the sample size the better it is. For instance, Comrey (1988) has suggested 100 to 300 samples as a good sample size for EFA, while 500 as very good and the sample size of 1000 as excellent. On the other hand, other researchers have preferred the complexity of the model as the determinant of good sample size for EFA (Sapnas and Zeller, 2002). Yet another group of researchers has recommended 10:1, factors to sample ratio for EFA.

In any case, it is always good to measure the sample adequacy before performing the factor analysis. Different tests such as Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) is an appropriate test to measure the sample adequacy. The KMO index ranges from zero to one (0-1) and the suitable level for factor analysis is ($p < 0.05$). The KMO test was performed for the sample size chosen for the study.

The sample size was found to be adequate with a significant value of 0.000. The values of KMO show that the respondent data is good to run the factor analysis as shown in Table 3.10.

TABLE 3.9: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.824
	Approx. Chi-Square	2330.406
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df	666
	Sig.	0

The correlation matrix is used in exploratory factor analysis to assess the relationship among individual indicators ([Henson and Roberts, 2006](#)).

They have called it the factorability of R and have recommended that their value must be greater than or equal to 0.30. The value of R shows that the factor accounts for 30% of the relationship from within the data set. The correlation matrix table of the data was also generated which is shown in Table 3.12.

The value indicates that each factor accounts for a minimum of 30% relationship as recommended by [Henson and Roberts \(2006\)](#). The table also indicates that the relationship of each factor with the data is significant.

The value determined should be less than 0.0001 to accept the correlation matrix. In case it is greater than 0.0001 it means that multicollinearity exists among the factors. In this case, the value of the determinant is 0.000 which shows that there is no problem of multicollinearity among the factors. Therefore, the next step of factor extraction was executed since there was no problem of multicollinearity was identified as the result of the tests performed.

3.4.3.0.1.15 Method of Factor Extraction

The factor extraction divides the loadings of factors across the factors. In this way, factors are loaded on different factors instead of being loaded on one or two factors. It also helps in simplifying the factor structures (Thompson, 2004). The principal component analysis is the most recommended method of factor extraction (Pett et al., 2003). The PCA was run on the data of this research, for factor extraction. PCA maximizes the variance amount, which is accounted for in observed variables by a small group of variables called components (O'Rourke et al., 2005). The communalities are provided in Table 3.11.

TABLE 3.10: Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
BRS1	1	0.753
BRS2	1	0.678
BRS3	1	0.796
BRS4	1	0.817
BRS5	1	0.725
BDevS1	1	0.558
BDevS2	1	0.765
BDevS3	1	0.744
BDevS4	1	0.734
BDevS5	1	0.581
BIS1	1	0.738
BIS2	1	0.832
BIS3	1	0.677
BIS4	1	0.702
BIS5	1	0.636
BDefS1	1	0.698
BDefS2	1	0.222
BDefS3	1	0.654
BDefS4	1	0.732

BDefS5	1	0.774
BDefS6	1	0.755
BDif1	1	0.7
BDif2	1	0.65
BDif3	1	0.739
BDif4	1	0.647
BDif5	1	0.722
GS1	1	0.553
GS2	1	0.761
GS3	1	0.556
GS4	1	0.628
GS5	1	0.718
BDS1	1	0.641
BDS2	1	0.694
BDS3	1	0.669
KOS1	1	0.718
KOS2	1	0.67
KOS3	1	0.713

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

3.4.3.0.1.16 Criteria to Determine Factor Extraction

According to [Comrey \(1988\)](#), the main objective of factor analysis is to reduce the number of items into factors. Different criteria have been suggested for factor extraction including having an Eigenvalue greater than 1 and scree plot ([Thompson, 2004](#)). Researchers should not count further factors when Eigenvalue drops from 1. In the current research, the limit of factors was set to eight factors. The Eigenvalues of the 8th factor is 1.2 and there can be more factors having more than 1 Eigenvalue. However, based on the already developed dimensions and the scree plot (Fig. 3.1) it was fixed to 8 and exploration of other factors was thus not warranted nor supported by the theory of literature, as shown in Table 3.13.

TABLE 3.11: Descriptive Analysis of Correlations

	BRS1	BRS2	BRS3	BRS4	BRS5	BDevS1	BDevS2	BDevS3	BDevS4	BDevS5	BIS1	BIS2	BIS3	BIS4	BIS5	BDefS1	BDefS2	BDefS3	BDefS4	BDefS5	BDefS6	BDi1	BDi2	BDi3	BDi4	BDi5	GS1	GS2	GS3	GS4	GS5	BDS1	BDS2	BDS3	KOS1	KOS2	KOS3						
BRS1	1																																										
BRS2	0.568	1																																									
BRS3	0.602	0.562	1																																								
BRS4	0.648	0.571	0.762	1																																							
BRS5	0.479	0.452	0.642	0.651	1																																						
BDevS1	0.306	0.401	0.353	0.393	0.35	1																																					
BDevS2	0.213	0.205	0.199	0.193	0.136	0.469	1																																				
BDevS3	0.32	0.31	0.162	0.213	0.199	0.497	0.664	1																																			
BDevS4	0.299	0.405	0.24	0.204	0.218	0.407	0.646	0.682	1																																		
BDevS5	0.325	0.257	0.255	0.282	0.189	0.257	0.517	0.582	0.592	1																																	
BIS1	0.443	0.211	0.451	0.397	0.266	0.245	0.261	0.296	0.142	0.18	1																																
BIS2	0.234	0.132	0.37	0.291	0.277	0.221	0.262	0.266	0.154	0.161	0.76	1																															
BIS3	0.336	0.169	0.382	0.331	0.281	0.19	0.172	0.241	0.02	0.183	0.59	0.66	1																														
BIS4	0.187	0.24	0.241	0.263	0.164	0.185	0.362	0.299	0.236	0.125	0.44	0.61	0.56	1																													
BIS5	0.157	0.342	0.289	0.249	0.238	0.207	0.194	0.283	0.234	0.14	0.48	0.5	0.45	0.61	1																												
BDefS1	0.491	0.317	0.4	0.346	0.223	0.396	0.412	0.431	0.384	0.336	0.56	0.56	0.42	0.44	0.39	1																											
BDefS2	0.018	0.009	0.067	0.072	0.116	0.134	0.184	0.181	0.117	0.077	0.14	0.16	0.02	0.08	0.24	0.27	1																										
BDefS3	0.357	0.28	0.377	0.408	0.276	0.278	0.363	0.389	0.35	0.389	0.43	0.47	0.42	0.41	0.39	0.723	0.241	1																									
BDefS4	0.431	0.276	0.245	0.326	0.33	0.261	0.234	0.304	0.291	0.237	0.39	0.42	0.38	0.23	0.21	0.494	0.163	0.594	1																								
BDefS5	0.407	0.337	0.282	0.272	0.317	0.213	0.114	0.387	0.314	0.327	0.41	0.48	0.46	0.35	0.41	0.556	0.181	0.555	0.656	1																							
BDefS6	0.365	0.412	0.262	0.27	0.231	0.142	0.244	0.388	0.393	0.269	0.31	0.35	0.33	0.3	0.36	0.514	0.226	0.527	0.582	0.723	1																						
BDi1	0.425	0.363	0.295	0.281	0.104	0.344	0.428	0.505	0.43	0.421	0.38	0.2	0.29	0.28	0.33	0.596	0.18	0.438	0.276	0.437	0.374	1																					
BDi2	0.353	0.418	0.312	0.359	0.231	0.278	0.413	0.481	0.407	0.398	0.27	0.27	0.29	0.35	0.44	0.458	0.189	0.424	0.329	0.5	0.516	0.57	1																				
BDi3	0.361	0.286	0.184	0.273	0.1	0.383	0.237	0.414	0.312	0.207	0.2	0.01	0.07	0.09	0.14	0.36	0.027	0.258	0.288	0.353	0.316	0.57	0.533	1																			
BDi4	0.524	0.313	0.259	0.41	0.196	0.267	0.394	0.416	0.307	0.428	0.27	0.18	0.3	0.24	0.16	0.418	0.069	0.347	0.396	0.404	0.375	0.56	0.588	0.577	1																		
BDi5	0.324	0.418	0.201	0.281	0.163	0.354	0.301	0.35	0.389	0.323	0.13	0.21	0.21	0.29	0.29	0.424	0.096	0.349	0.287	0.481	0.537	0.55	0.605	0.588	0.545	1																	
GS1	0.294	0.385	0.18	0.218	0.268	0.238	0.24	0.242	0.319	0.212	0.21	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.31	0.387	0.083	0.325	0.299	0.298	0.304	0.31	0.365	0.343	0.213	0.298	1																
GS2	0.313	0.38	0.155	0.238	0.272	0.335	0.26	0.329	0.423	0.373	0.12	0.05	0.09	0.15	0.18	0.257	0.079	0.223	0.281	0.238	0.27	0.19	0.297	0.324	0.203	0.244	0.51	1															
GS3	0.279	0.253	0.021	0.182	0.009	0.387	0.478	0.505	0.424	0.433	0.09	0	0.09	0.19	0.22	0.338	0.15	0.228	0.232	0.273	0.269	0.47	0.331	0.409	0.453	0.42	0.29	0.35	1														
GS4	0.293	0.235	0.108	0.13	0.21	0.06	0.292	0.227	0.27	0.243	0.17	0.1	0.16	0.13	0.07	0.241	0.066	0.195	0.273	0.235	0.271	0.17	0.34	0.183	0.283	0.177	0.42	0.57	0.33	1													
GS5	0.226	0.308	0.169	0.15	0.09	0.306	0.315	0.39	0.377	0.313	0.22	0.21	0.19	0.23	0.31	0.369	0.117	0.229	0.222	0.313	0.305	0.42	0.424	0.357	0.277	0.326	0.45	0.6	0.45	0.57	1												
BDS1	0.393	0.407	0.349	0.281	0.137	0.2	0.093	0.22	0.132	0.047	0.44	0.37	0.31	0.25	0.38	0.435	0.212	0.294	0.283	0.268	0.41	0.27	0.312	0.175	0.11	0.18	0.35	0.33	0.05	0.2	0.32	1											
BDS2	0.39	0.271	0.253	0.248	0.281	0.089	0.338	0.357	0.225	0.21	0.4	0.29	0.27	0.31	0.41	0.556	0.171	0.446	0.229	0.312	0.4	0.3	0.35	0.09	0.155	0.158	0.28	0.19	0.27	0.31	0.21	0.446	1										
BDS3	0.353	0.302	0.301	0.206	0.224	0.106	0.237	0.303	0.255	0.193	0.23	0.21	0.19	0.18	0.22	0.314	0.026	0.234	0.175	0.292	0.342	0.19	0.335	0.055	0.128	0.04	0.21	0.16	0.19	0.18	0.18	0.433	0.517	1									
KOS1	0.255	0.061	0.081	0.035	0.056	0.278	0.361	0.376	0.246	0.367	0.22	0.11	0.14	0.02	0.02	0.297	0.089	0.194	0.14	0.259	0.195	0.34	0.182	0.363	0.355	0.208	0.18	0.22	0.26	0.16	0.22	0.02	0.094	0.053	1								
KOS2	0.137	0.033	0.015	0.02	0.037	0.255	0.278	0.297	0.194	0.219	0.05	0.06	0.11	0.05	0.02	0.181	0.028	0.152	0.21	0.238	0.143	0.19	0.222	0.374	0.323	0.289	0.17	0.16	0.24	0.11	0.17	0.087	0.017	0.021	0.58	1							
KOS3	0.188	0.114	0.024	0.022	0.035	0.332	0.334	0.44	0.365	0.35	0.06	0.04	0.08	0.12	0.07	0.209	0.01	0.098	0.067	0.152	0.077	0.22	0.195	0.295	0.22	0.213	0.21	0.22	0.21	0.22	0.21	0.22	0.35	0.012	0.052	0.079	0.58	0.605	1				

*Determinant = 0.001

TABLE 3.12: Total Variance Explained

//

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	11.64	31.47	31.47	11.64	31.47	31.47	3.927	10.614	10.614
2	3.677	9.938	41.408	3.677	9.938	41.408	3.802	10.276	20.89
3	2.23	6.028	47.435	2.23	6.028	47.435	3.596	9.72	30.609
4	1.973	5.333	52.768	1.973	5.333	52.768	3.544	9.578	40.187
5	1.707	4.613	57.381	1.707	4.613	57.381	2.911	7.866	48.054
6	1.551	4.192	61.574	1.551	4.192	61.574	2.784	7.525	55.578
7	1.359	3.672	65.246	1.359	3.672	65.246	2.498	6.75	62.328
8	1.21	3.271	68.517	1.21	3.271	68.517	2.29	6.189	68.517
9	1.145	3.096	71.613						
10	1.007	2.721	74.335						
11	0.849	2.294	76.628						
12	0.754	2.039	78.668						
13	0.722	1.951	80.619						
14	0.65	1.756	82.375						
15	0.571	1.543	83.918						
16	0.556	1.503	85.421						
17	0.515	1.393	86.814						
18	0.479	1.296	88.11						
19	0.455	1.229	89.339						
20	0.427	1.155	90.494						

21	0.415	1.122	91.616
22	0.374	1.01	92.626
23	0.326	0.881	93.507
24	0.311	0.841	94.348
25	0.269	0.727	95.075
26	0.234	0.631	95.706
27	0.219	0.592	96.298
28	0.213	0.575	96.873
29	0.189	0.511	97.384
30	0.179	0.483	97.867
31	0.161	0.434	98.302
32	0.141	0.381	98.682
33	0.132	0.356	99.039
34	0.115	0.31	99.349
35	0.089	0.241	99.59
36	0.084	0.226	99.816
37	0.068	0.184	100

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Scree plot is another method that is also used for factor extraction. However, the method is very subjective and may give a different number of factors to the different researchers as per their interpretation. The general rule suggests that the number of points that are above break or debris is the number of factors to be retained, which explains the maximum variance.

The following scree plot shows from the data of the current show that there are eight points before the break, showing that there are eight factors that can be extracted from the data.

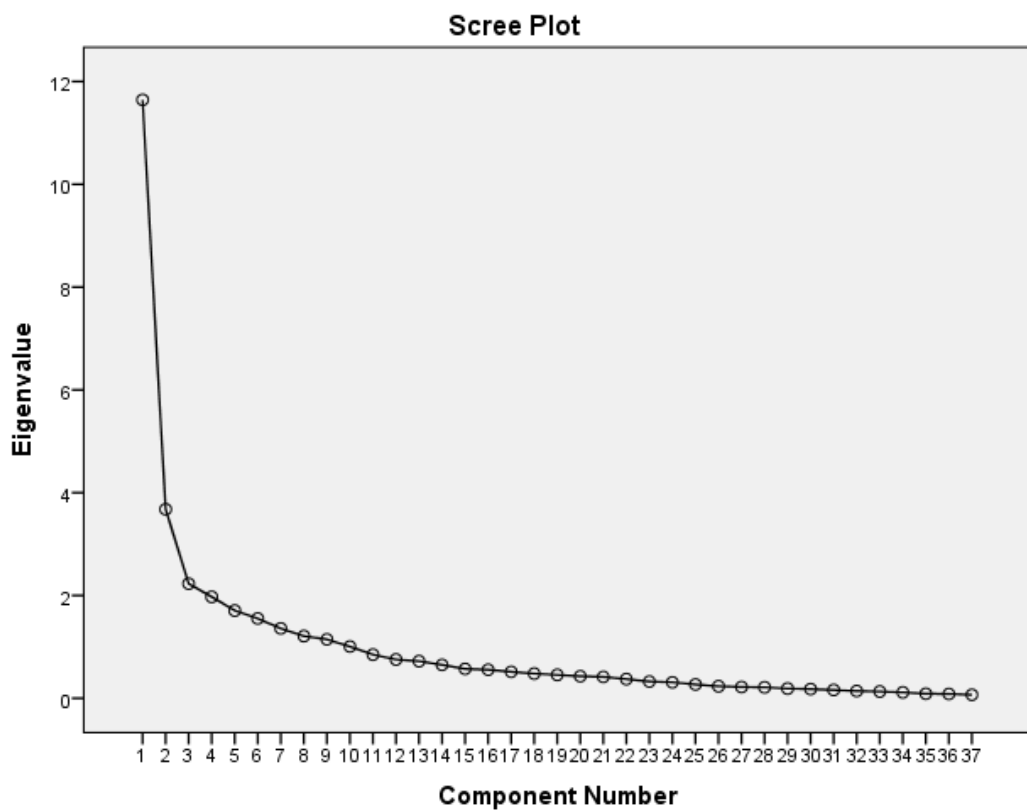


FIGURE 3.1: Scree Plot

TABLE 3.13: Component Matrix^a

	Component							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
BDefS1	0.77							
BDif2	0.71							
BDefS5	0.69							
BDefS3	0.69							
BDif1	0.69							

BDevS3	0.68		
BDefS6	0.67		
BRS1	0.66		
BDif4	0.63		
BDif5	0.61		
BDevS4	0.61		
BDefS4	0.6		
BRS2	0.6		0.52
BDevS2	0.58		
BIS1	0.58		
BRS4	0.57		0.55
GS5	0.56		
BDevS5	0.56		
BDif3	0.55		
BRS3	0.55		0.5
BDevS1	0.54		
BDS2	0.53		
GS1	0.53		
BIS2	0.53	-0.53	
BIS5	0.53		
GS3	0.53		
BIS3	0.52		
BIS4	0.5		
GS2	0.5		
BDS1			
KOS3		0.631	
KOS2		0.505	
KOS1			
BRS5			0.53
GS4			
BDS3			
BDefS2			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
a. 8 components extracted.

TABLE 3.14: EFA Pattern Matrix

Item No.	Item Description	Silence Factors / Dimensions							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Item Root: I remained silent at work	Relational	Deviant	Ineffectual	Defensive	Diffident	Guile	Opportunistic	Disengaged
BRS4	to protect my relationship with another individual	0.823							
BRS5	to avoid hurting someones feelings	0.807							
BRS3	to avoid conflict with another individual	0.785							
BRS1	because I didnt want to harm my relationship with another individual	0.745							
BRS2	because I did not want to create tension with co-worker	0.685							
BDevS2	because to purposefully harm another individual		0.816						
BDevS4	because to purposefully harm the organization		0.794						
BDevS5	because to make management look bad		0.696						
BDevS3	because to retaliate against the organization		0.676						
BDevS1	because to get even with another person		0.531						
BIS2	because management did not appear interested in hearing about these types of issues			0.823					
BIS3	because no one was interested in taking appropriate action								
BIS1	because I did not believe my concerns would be addressed								

BIS5	because I did not think it would do any good to speak up	0.686	
BIS4	because I did not feel I would be taken seriously	0.669	
BDefS4*	because I believed that speaking up may negatively impact my career		
BDefS5	because I was afraid of adverse consequences (e.g., being criticized, losing my job)	0.651	
BDefS3	because I felt it was risky to speak up	0.631	
BDefS2	because to protect myself from harm	0.616	
BDefS6	Due to fear of retaliation	0.601	
BDefS1	because I felt it was dangerous to speak up	0.557	
BDif2	to avoid embarrassing myself		0.695
BDif3	because I was unsure what to say		0.683
BDif5	because I did not want to appear incompetent		0.661
BDif4	because I felt insecure		0.653
BDif1*	because I did not feel confident enough to speak up		
GS4	to avoid task which could overload me		0.777
GS2	to avoid task which is not part of my job description		0.772
GS5	because suggesting mean sitting for extra hours		0.745
GS1	because the decision-makers assign the task of improvement to the one who comes up with the improvement idea		0.581

GS3*	to avoid facilitating another employee								
KOS1	to not give away my knowledge advantage								0.8
KOS2	because of concerns that others could take an advantage of my ideas								0.758
KOS3	because that would mean having to do avoidable additional work								0.695
BDS2	because I did not care what Happened								0.75
BDS3	because I did not want to get involved								0.717
BDS1	because the issue did not personally affect me								0.688
EigenValues		11.026	0.213	2.342	1.825	0.691	0.544	1.294	1.115
Explained		29.8	0.683	6.329	4.932	0.57	0.174	3.497	3.014
Vari-									
ance									
%									

*) Items with an asterisk could not meet the criteria.

3.4.3.0.1.17 Selection of Rotation Method

Different types of rotations provided in the factor analysis provide simplified solutions. With the help of the simplified solutions, the interpretations become very easy as high item loadings are maximized and low item loadings are minimized without compromising the overall model. Further, these rotations also provide an easy way to interpret results that produce parsimonious yet correct solutions (Henson and Roberts, 2006; Pett et al., 2003; Thompson, 2004).

In the current research, the varimax rotation method was used. The researcher has used Varimax with the Kaiser Normalization method of factor extraction. After using the method, the factors are loaded across the components. It provides the best fit both conceptually and intuitively.

3.4.3.0.1.18 Interpretation of Factors and Labeling

In this section of the factor analysis, each new factor is interpreted and labeled with a name that is relevant to the items, supported by the literature, and must depict the construct it is representing. In the current research, the generated factor has been labeled as Guile Silence, which is relevant, has support in the literature, and depicts the construct it represents.

3.4.3.0.1.19 Internal Consistency of Items

The most common method of measuring the internal consistency of items is Cronbach Alpha. It shows how closely a set of items are related to each other in a group (Cortina, 1993).

The following table shows the internal consistency of each of the constructs used in the factor analysis. The value of Cronbach Alpha is very much within the limits for adequate internal consistency as recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994).

3.4.3.0.1.20 Step-5 and 6: Reliability and Validity

While EFA is a good way of identifying the factor structure, it cannot quantify the goodness of fit of the resulting factor structure. On the other hand, CFA enables

the researchers to statistically assess the quality of factor structure by testing the model fitness and item loadings.

Therefore, in this study, the CFA of the silence items retained in Study III-A was conducted to further test and refine construct validity.

TABLE 3.15: Cronbach Alpha Coefficient

Latent Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha Coefficient	Items Removed	Revised Cronbach Alpha Coefficient
Relational	5	0.888	–	0.888
Deviant	5	0.681	1	0.846
Ineffectual	5	0.841	–	0.841
Defensive	6	0.768	–	0.768
Diffident	3	0.722	–	0.722
Guile	7	0.769	3	0.891
Opportunistic	3	0.806	–	0.806
Disengaged	5	0.877	–	0.877

3.4.3.0.1.21 Sample

The initial pool of 7 items was distributed among the 300 employees. The respondents were enrolled in 17 years of weekend education at one of the top universities in the country. Since this data was collected from employees cum students; the response rate of the valid questionnaire was 92%.

The items were based on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The questionnaires were completed by respondents in the dedicated time during their class time.

The demographics of the respondents revealed that 30.2% of them were female. 57% of respondents were having at least 2 years of experience, followed by 29% of respondents who have at least 11 years of experience and the rest were having at least 20 years of education.

Since the data was collected from a 17 years class, all the respondents were having 16 years of formal education. 95% of employees belonged to the private sector and semi-government sector of the industry. The further details in the tabular form are provided in the next section.

3.4.3.0.1.22 Descriptive Statistics

In this section, the demographic variable of gender has been described. Table 3.18 explains that most of the respondents were male (72%). The experience profiling of the respondents shows that most female respondents (72%) were having 2-7 years of experience. Similarly, mostly male respondents (73%) were having 2-7 years of experience.

TABLE 3.16: Statistics

Gender	Valid	N	218	%	Experience	Valid	N	218	%
Female	61	28			2-7	44	72		
					8-13	9	15		
					13 +	8	14		
Male	157	72			2-7	114	73		
					8-13	25	16		
					13 +	16	11		

The qualification profile of the respondents reveals that all the respondents were having a minimum of 16 years of education, while 5% of the respondents were also having 18 years of education.

3.4.3.0.1.23 Normality Analysis

For the normality analysis of the data Skewness and Kurtosis tests were performed using the SPSS v. 21 packages. The normality tests were performed on the data obtained for the variables 1) employee reticence, 2) intentions to remain silent and 3) employee silence. Table 4.3 shows the value of normality statistics item-wise, while Table 4.4 shows the values of the normality statistics as composite variables.

According to [Schumacker and Lomax \(2004\)](#), the values of Skewness and Kurtosis should be in the range of -3 to +3, for normality to exist. It is evident from Table 4.3 and Table 4.4 that the values of skewness and kurtosis are within adequate normality ranges. The sample size (n=253) was adequate to run the skewness and kurtosis test with a minimum value of 1 representing strongly disagree and a maximum value of 5 representing strongly agree.

The values of skewness and kurtosis are within the threshold level showing the normality of the data.

TABLE 3.17: Normality Statistics

	Valid	Min	Max	Std. Dev	Skewness		Kurtosis	
					Stat	Stat	Stat	Std. Error
GS1	218	1	5	1.1499	0.061	0.172	-0.848	0.343
GS2	218	1	5	1.2173	0.08	0.173	-1.013	0.344
GS3	218	1	5	1.2456	0.583	0.174	-0.677	0.346
GS4	218	1	5	1.1378	0.087	0.174	-0.775	0.346
GS5	218	1	5	1.1622	0.166	0.174	-0.851	0.346
BIS1	218	1	5	1.2544	0.185	0.173	-1.119	0.345
BIS2	218	1	5	1.14	0.125	0.173	-0.914	0.344
BIS3	218	1	5	1.1406	-0.095	0.172	-0.79	0.343
BIS4	218	1	5	1.1774	0.175	0.173	-0.881	0.344
BIS5	218	1	5	1.1623	0.076	0.173	-0.91	0.345
BDS1	218	1	5	1.1277	0.121	0.173	-0.82	0.345
BDS2	218	1	5	1.1835	0.261	0.173	-0.802	0.345
BDS3	218	1	5	1.2112	0.132	0.173	-1.042	0.345
BDefS1	218	1	5	1.2393	0.214	0.172	-0.965	0.343
BDefS2	218	1	5	2.4471	9.366	0.173	114.65	0.344
BDefS3	218	1	5	1.1155	0.128	0.174	-0.765	0.346
BDefS4	218	1	5	1.2254	-0.042	0.173	-1.03	0.344
BDefS5	218	1	5	1.1912	0.106	0.174	-0.964	0.346
BDefS6	218	1	5	1.1564	0.122	0.173	-0.856	0.344
BRS1	218	1	5	1.1147	-0.369	0.173	-0.694	0.345
BRS2	218	1	5	1.1557	-0.217	0.173	-0.873	0.345
BRS3	218	1	5	1.1665	-0.364	0.173	-0.835	0.345
BRS4	218	1	5	1.1349	-0.29	0.173	-0.806	0.344
BRS5	218	1	5	1.114	-0.339	0.175	-0.622	0.347
BDevS1	218	1	5	1.1534	0.07	0.173	-0.77	0.345
BDevS2	218	1	5	1.1588	0.242	0.173	-0.899	0.344
BDevS3	218	1	5	1.2178	0.382	0.173	-0.783	0.345
BDevS4	218	1	5	1.2463	0.333	0.173	-0.977	0.345
BDevS5	218	1	5	1.1946	0.575	0.173	-0.57	0.345
BDif1	218	1	5	3.2179	10.71	0.173	136.82	0.345
BDif2	218	1	5	1.2377	0.205	0.173	-0.968	0.345
BDif3	218	1	5	1.1876	0.001	0.173	-0.948	0.344
BDif4	218	1	5	1.2027	0.352	0.173	-0.841	0.344

BDif5	218	1	5	1.2308	0.197	0.173	-1.034	0.345
KOS1	218	1	5	1.3145	0.348	0.218	-1.037	0.433
KOS2	218	1	5	1.2512	0.156	0.218	-1.062	0.433
KOS3	218	1	5	1.2129	0.389	0.218	-0.777	0.433

While EFA is the right way of identifying the factor structure, it cannot quantify the goodness of fit of the resulting factor structure. On the other hand, CFA enables the researchers to statistically assess factor structure quality by testing the model fitness and item loadings. Therefore, following the EFA, the CFA was conducted to test whether the dimensions tested in EFA were empirically distinct.

The CFA result confirmed the distinctiveness of dimensions of employee silence from each other as well as from guile silence. The model provides a good fit [$\chi^2 (n = 221) = 759.821$; $df = 499$; CFI = .922; RMSEA = .049] as shown in Figure 3.2.

Based on the nature of the items as derived in Study III-A & III-B and literature support, it is confirmed that employees do remain silent to avoid additional work.

3.4.3.0.1.24 Summary of Study III-B

The construct of Employee silence is multidimensional. The current study builds upon and extends the earlier research on dimensions of employee silence. Based on the investigation in Study III-A and Study III-B, it is evident that guile silence is significantly different from other dimensions of employee silence. The findings confirmed the earlier dispersed literature related to remaining silent to avoid additional work.

Further, in Study III-B, the goodness of fit was quantitatively assessed for the measurement model. The measurement model was assessed based on the EFA performed in Study III-B. CFI and RMSEA indicate the model fit. The data revealed that the values of RMSEA are well within the range (Schreiber et al., 2006).

The study confirmed the validity of the measures developed in Study III-B. Next, in Study III-C, construct validity is further obtained by examining the nomological network.

3.4.3.0.1.25 Step 7: Hypotheses Testing Study III-C: Nomological Network

In Study III-C, the nomological network, including GS, was examined in line with the recommendations of Borsboom et al. (2004). It is important to note here that a different data set was obtained from different respondents to conduct the study. The scale of guile silence developed as the result of study III-A-B was administered to a different group of respondents along with the

measures of other related constructs. The other related constructs were 1) Instrumental climate, and 2) Strain. While the data of demographic variables commonly used with the silence-related research (Brinsfield, 2013) was also obtained.

3.4.3.0.1.26 Sampling Design

Purposive sampling was used to collect the data. A response was included in the data set if the respondent answered the following two questions affirmatively. The first question that “I have been working in the same organization for at least the last two years” was to ensure that the respondent (employee) is aware of the outcomes of his/her and/or others’ behavior. Through question no. 2; it was made sure that a no-major-change process has occurred in the organization that could have changed employee behavior outcomes.

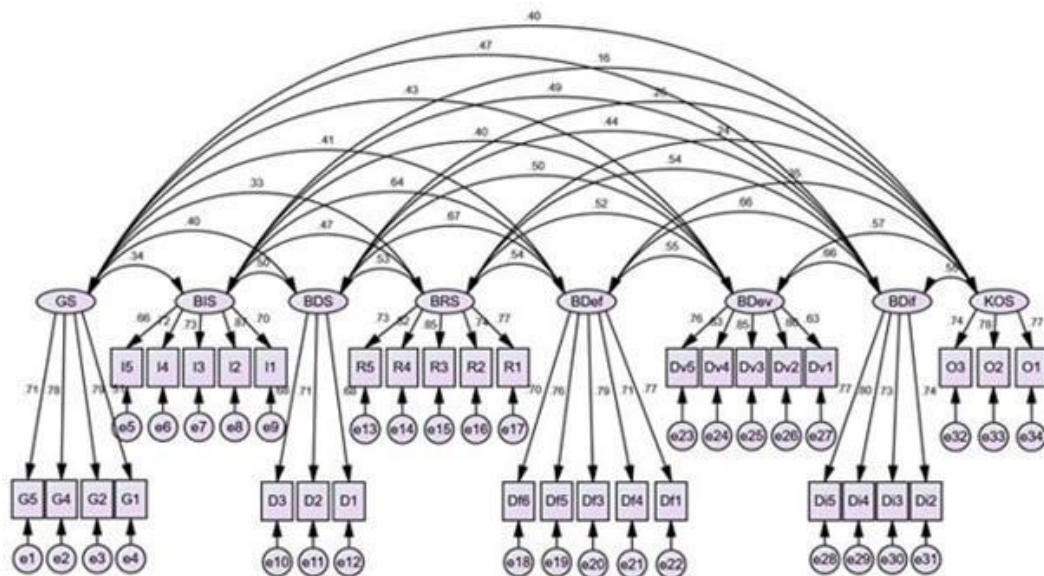


FIGURE 3.2: Results of CFA

3.4.3.0.1.27 Data Collection Technique

All items in the study were self-reported, which could lead to common method bias; therefore, a time-lagged study design was adopted to avoid common method bias as recommended by Podsakoff et al. (2003). Therefore, data were collected in 3-time lags in a cross-sectional manner. First, data for instrumental climate were collected, after the gap of 2 weeks, the data for guile silence were collected. Finally, in the third time-lag, data for strain were collected. The respondents were briefed about the research and confidentiality before the start of the data collection process.

A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed among the employees working in the service sector. Two hundred sixty-seven valid questionnaires were received back, response rate 76%,

which represents an adequate sample determined through power analysis by G*Power software (Faul et al., 2007). The demographic analysis revealed that 20% of the respondents were female. 64% of the respondents had a bachelors degree, and the rest had a masters degree (18 years of education). 63% of the respondents had 2-7 years of experience, while 30%, 6%, and 1% of the respondents had 8-13, 14-19, and 19 plus years of experience, respectively, in the current organization. 91% of the respondents were from the private sector, 6% were from the government sector, and the rest were from the semi-government sector.

3.4.3.0.1.28 Measures

All the scales were based on a five-point Likert scale. The Respondents were asked to evaluate the extent to which they agreed with the items, with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agreeing. The scale of GS that was developed as the result of Study III-A-B to assess guile silence was used. The questionnaire consisted of 4 items. One of the items was, "I remained silent at work because suggesting means sitting for extra hours." The Cronbach alpha value for guile silence was found to be .769. The questionnaire developed by Victor and Cullen (1988) was utilized to measure instrumental climate. The questionnaire consisted of seven items. One of the items was, "In this organization, people are mostly out for themselves." The Cronbach alpha with items deleted had six items with the alpha value for instrumental climate was found to be .84. An 8-item scale by Mohr et al. (2006) was used to assess strain. One of the sample items is "Even at home, I often think of my problems at work". The Cronbach alpha value for the strain was found to be .91.

Chapter 4

Results

In this chapter, the results of the analyses performed as per the researched methodology are given. There were three main studies conducted in this research. Therefore, the result of each study is shown separately to avoid any ambiguity. The results of Study-I, followed by Study-II and Study-III are given. Each set of results contain a description of demographics, normality analysis, reliability analysis, validity analyses, confirmatory factor analyses, and hypotheses testing where applicable.

4.1 Data Screening and Descriptive Analysis of Study I

The data screening process in the study was conducted in line with the recommendations of [DeSimone et al. \(2015\)](#). Accordingly, the archival screening method was adopted to screen out the data. It involves the assessment and inspection of patterns of response behavior of the respondent in the questionnaire. From the myriad of techniques available under the inspection of patterns method, the longstring responding method was utilized. The longstring responding method is also known as invariant responding. It was an appropriate technique to be used in the research due to the nature of the questionnaires ([Huang et al., 2012](#)). Accordingly, the filled questionnaires with longstring of similar responses were discarded. More

responses were obtained to fulfill the requirements for the sample size. Further, the missing values in the responses were treated using the elimination method. In which the questionnaires which had missing values were discarded and therefore, eliminated from the research.

TABLE 4.1: Statistics

Gender	Valid	N	253	%	Experience	Valid	N	253	%
Female	47	18.5	2-7	21	45				
			8-13	17	36				
			14-19	9	19				
			20-25	–	0				
Male	206	81.5	2-7	113	55				
			8-13	72	35				
			14-19	19	9				
			20-25	2	1				

The demographic section of the data set revealed that most of the respondents were male (Table 4.1). It was because there is a lesser number of the female population in the professional job sector than the male population of the country. The experience profiling of the respondents shows that 53% of the respondents (n=253) were having 2-7 years of experience in the current organization, while 19%, 11%, and less than 1% of the respondents were having 8-13, 14-19, and 19+ years of experience with the current organization respectively.

The data also revealed that 81.1% of the respondents were from the private sector, while 7.6% of the employees were from the government sector and the rest were from the semi-government sector.

TABLE 4.2: Qualification

Valid	N	253	Education	Frequency	Percent
			Bachelors / Masters (16 years)	176	69
			MS (18 years)	77	31

The qualification profile of the respondents reveals that most of the respondents (69%) were having 16 years of education followed by respondents (31%) who were

having 18 years of education. None of the respondents had less than 16 years of education, similarly none of the respondents had more than 18-years of education.

4.2 Normality Analysis

For the normality analysis of the data Skewness and Kurtosis tests were performed using the SPSS v. 21 packages. The normality tests were performed on the data obtained for the variables 1) employee reticence, 2) intentions to remain silent and 3) employee silence. Table 4.3 shows the value of normality statistics item-wise, while Table 4.4 shows the values of the normality statistics as composite variables.

According to [Schumacker and Lomax \(2004\)](#), the values of Skewness and Kurtosis should be in the range of -3 to +3, for normality to exist. It is evident from Table 4.3 and Table 4.4 that the values of skewness and kurtosis are within adequate normality ranges. The sample size (n=253) was adequate to run the skewness and kurtosis test with a minimum value of 1 representing strongly disagree and a maximum value of 5 representing strongly agree. The values of skewness and kurtosis are within the threshold level showing the normality of the data.

TABLE 4.3: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Min	Max	Std. Dev.	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Valid	Stat	Stat	Stat	Stat	Std. Error	Stat	Std. Error
ER1	253	1	5	1.34127	-0.53	0.152	-1.08	0.303
ER2	253	1	5	1.32029	-0.61	0.152	-0.94	0.303
ER3	253	1	5	1.3714	-0.51	0.152	-1.15	0.303
ER4	253	1	5	1.35362	-0.64	0.152	-0.99	0.303
ER5	253	1	5	1.40101	-0.63	0.152	-1.07	0.303
ER6	253	1	5	1.38895	-0.61	0.152	-1.07	0.303
ER7	253	1	5	1.3389	-0.59	0.152	-1.04	0.303
ER8	253	1	5	1.34137	-0.6	0.152	-1.03	0.303
ER9	253	1	5	1.31238	-0.59	0.152	-1.02	0.303

ITRS1	253	1	5	1.52348	-0.58	0.152	-1.2	0.303
ITRS2	253	1	5	1.37366	-0.56	0.152	-1.15	0.303
ITRS3	253	1	5	1.3386	-0.42	0.152	-1.14	0.303
ITRS4	253	1	5	1.29612	-0.46	0.152	-1.1	0.303
ES1	253	1	5	1.38135	-0.46	0.152	-1.14	0.303
ES2	253	1	5	1.46841	-0.3	0.152	-1.45	0.303
ES3	253	1	5	1.49741	-0.42	0.152	-1.46	0.303
ES4	253	1	5	1.34688	-0.26	0.152	-1.29	0.303
ES5	253	1	5	1.22831	-0.82	0.152	-0.52	0.303
ES6	253	1	5	1.4001	-0.73	0.152	-0.99	0.303
ES7	253	1	5	1.19156	-0.56	0.152	-0.93	0.303
ES8	253	1	5	1.38	-0.4	0.152	-1.27	0.303

TABLE 4.4: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Min	Max	Std. Dev.	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Stat	Stat	Stat	Stat	Stat	Std. Error	Stat	Std. Error
	Valid				Stat	Std. Error	Stat	Std. Error
ER	253	1.2	4.8	1.25586	-0.74	0.153	-1.36	0.305
ITRS	253	1	5	1.29406	-0.7	0.153	-1.3	0.305
ES	253	1.1	4.8	1.19344	-0.64	0.153	-1.36	0.305

The multivariate statistical approach was used to analyze the data statistically by using structural equation modeling (SEM). It is a recommended technique for research in which there are latent constructs/variables; in which there is a possibility of measurement errors in observed variables; and/or in which there is a possibility of interdependence among the observed items/variables (Padovani and Carvalho, 2016).

Thus, SEM analytical technique was highly suited here; as it fulfilled the criteria as given above, and allows solving causal relationships between latent constructs/variables which were measured using items/indicators (Rigdon, 2009).

The guidance of [Hair et al. \(2013\)](#) for choosing between covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) and partial least squares SEM (PLS-SEM) has been used in this research. As per their recommendation, PLS-SEM was given preference over CB-SEM due to the following characteristics of this research: the research goal involved identification and verification of key driver constructs (for key driver constructs see [\(Fishbein and Ajzen \(2011\), p. 2\)](#)), the structural model is complex that is having many items/variables and constructs, and the data are non-normally distributed and/or the sample size is small.

Thus, in this research the PLS-SEM approach was the right choice mainly because it relaxes on the assumption of data normality. The data normality could be compromised mainly because the data was collected from different sectors as per the earlier research on employee silence.

To test the normality assumption, Skewness and Kurtosis tests were used as per the recommendation of [Hair et al. \(2013\)](#) instead of other tests such as Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (K-S test) and/or ShapiroWilks test (S-W test). SPSS 25.0 was used for normality tests. The normality of all items/indicators was confirmed. PLS-SEM was preferred over CB-SEM. The quantitative analysis was done by bootstrapping directly in SmartPLS 2 with resamplings as recommended by [Tenenhaus et al. \(2005\)](#).

In PLS-SEM, the research measurement model has to be designed either in reflective mode or formative mode. However, according to [Diamantopoulos and Winklhofer \(2001\)](#), caution must be exercised when the decision about the selection of the reflective or formative model is taken because both of the models have different characteristics ([Padovani and Carvalho, 2016](#)).

In the reflective model, the latent-variable (LV) is seen as caused by the items/indicators; and in the formative model, indicators are caused by the LV ([Diamantopoulos and Winklhofer, 2001](#)). That is to say, in a reflective model, the items/indicators are the manifestations of the latent variable and the direction of causality is from the latent variable to its items/indicators. ([Henseler et al., 2009](#); [Tenenhaus et al., 2005](#)). To choose the mode of the measurement model and the indicators, we have followed the recommendations by [Hair et al. \(2013\)](#).

Therefore, the reflective constructs as target constructs were used. According to Diamantopoulos and Siguaaw (2006), attitude is reflective, the other variables involved in this research are also reflective as supported by studies such as (Al-Gahtani et al., 2007). Keeping in view the above recommendations in research, the measurement model for all LVs is represented by the reflective model in this research as shown in Figure 4.1. The beta values of all path coefficients are shown which are statistically significant (at $p < 0.05$). Employee Reticence had a positive influence (beta = 0.715, $p < 0.001$) on intentions to remain silent. Intentions to remain silent had a positive influence (beta = 0.679, $p < 0.001$) on employee silence. Finally, the direct path from ER to ES is significant with T value less than 0.2 as shown in Figure 4.1. Table 4.5 presents the hypotheses, outcomes and the conclusions as the result of the analysis. It is evident that all the hypotheses were accepted and that full mediation took place between the ER and ES.

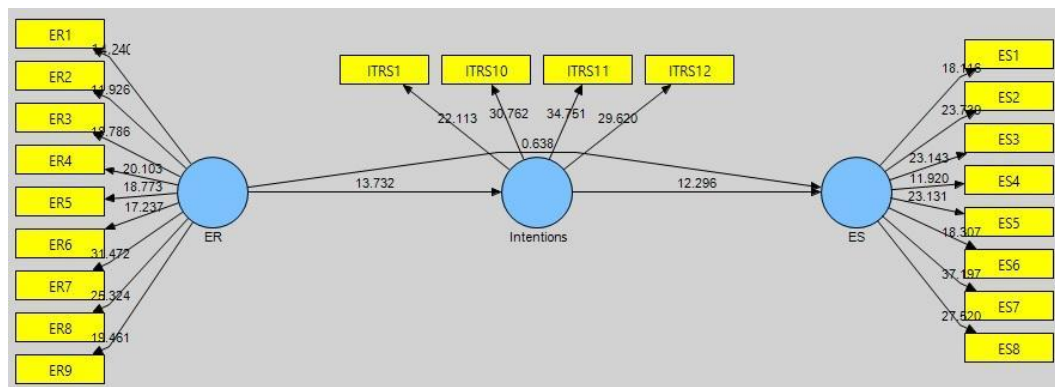


FIGURE 4.1: The Measurement Model

ER: Employee Reticence, Intentions: Intentions to remain silent, ES: Employee Silence

TABLE 4.5: Hypotheses Conclusions

Hypotheses	Findings	Conclusion
H ₁ : Employee Reticence is positively related with Intention to Remain Silent.	Yes: (beta = 0.715, $p < 0.05$)	Supported
H ₂ : Intentions to Remain Silent is positively related with Employee Silence.	Yes: (beta = 0.679, $p < 0.05$)	Supported
H ₃ : Intentions to Remain Silent fully mediates the relationship between Employee Reticence and Employee Silence.	Yes: Direct path insignificant	Supported

4.3 Study II Results

4.3.1 Data Screening and Descriptive Analysis of Study II

The data screening process in the study was conducted in line with the recommendations of [DeSimone et al. \(2015\)](#). Accordingly, the archival screening method was adopted to screen out the data.

It involves the assessment and inspection of patterns of response behavior of the respondent in the questionnaire. From the myriad of techniques available under the inspection of patterns method, the longstring responding method was utilized. The longstring responding method is also known as invariant responding.

It was an appropriate technique to be used in the research due to the nature of the questionnaires ([Huang et al., 2012](#)). Therefore, the technique was used to screen the data. Accordingly, the questionnaires with longstring of similar responses were discarded.

Further, the missing values in the responses were treated using the elimination method. In which the questionnaires which had missing values were discarded and therefore, eliminated from the research. To meet the requirement of the sample size more data was gathered and same techniques were used for the data screening process.

TABLE 4.6: Gender Statistics

Gender	Valid	N	253	%	Experience	Valid	N	253	%											
Female	56	22	2-7	32	57	8-13	16	29	14-19	7	12									
			20-25	1	1															
			Male	197	78							2-7	128	65	8-13	45	23	14-19	21	11
												20-25	2	1						

In this section, the details of demographic variables of Study II are provided. Table 4.6 explains that most of the respondents were male (78%).

The experience profiling of the respondents shows that most of the female respondents (57%) were having 2-7 years of experience. Similarly, mostly male respondents (65%) were having 2-7 years of experience. The qualification profile of the respondents of Study-II revealed that hundred percent of the respondents were having 16 years of education.

4.3.2 Normality Analysis

For the normality analysis of the data Skewness and Kurtosis tests were performed using the SPSS v. 21 packages. The normality tests were performed on the data obtained for the variables 1) employee reticence, 2) managers attitude towards silence, 3) communication opportunities, 4) intentions to remain silent, and 5) employee silence. Table 4.7 shows the value of normality statistics item-wise, while Table 4.7 shows the values of the normality statistics as composite variables.

According to [Schumacker and Lomax \(2004\)](#), the values of Skewness and Kurtosis should be in the range of -3 to +3, for normality to exist. It is evident from Table 4.7 that the values of skewness and kurtosis are within adequate normality ranges. The sample size (n=276) was adequate to run the skewness and kurtosis test with a minimum value of 1 representing strongly disagree and a maximum value of 5 representing strongly agree. The values of skewness and kurtosis are within the threshold level showing the normality of the data.

TABLE 4.7: Normality Stats: Skewness and Kurtosis Values

	Min Stat	Max Stat	Std. Dev Stat	Skewness		Kurtosis	
				Stat	Std. Error	Stat	Std. Error
EmpAtt2	2	5	0.73011	-0.68	0.153	-0.39	0.305
EmpAtt4	2	5	0.6516	-0.18	0.153	-0.08	0.305
EmpAtt9	1	5	0.7733	-0.65	0.153	0.355	0.305
EmpAtt12	1	5	0.65023	-0.97	0.153	2.23	0.305
EmpAtt15	1	5	0.81736	-0.35	0.153	0.325	0.305
EmpAtt16	1	5	0.99379	-0.42	0.153	-0.5	0.305
EmpAtt17	1	5	0.71483	-1.53	0.153	4.663	0.305

EmpAtt22	2	5	0.76609	-0.64	0.153	-0.2	0.305
EmpAtt23	1	5	0.75398	-0.82	0.153	0.588	0.305
ITRS1	1	5	0.74723	-1.17	0.153	2.187	0.305
ITRS10	1	5	0.7516	-1.07	0.153	2.259	0.305
ITRS11	1	5	0.83494	-1.04	0.153	1.736	0.305
ITRS12	1	5	0.78811	-0.81	0.153	1.183	0.305
ITRS13	1	5	0.87037	-0.73	0.153	0.505	0.305
ESB1	1	5	0.8184	-1.35	0.153	2.694	0.305
ESB2	1	5	0.6749	-1.15	0.153	3.234	0.305
ESB3	1	5	0.70859	-1.63	0.153	4.293	0.305
ESB4	1	5	0.68566	-1.12	0.153	3.476	0.305
ESB5	2	5	0.80625	-0.77	0.153	-0.25	0.305
ESB6	1	5	0.71614	-1.23	0.153	3.285	0.305
ESB7	1	5	0.79014	-1.7	0.153	4.197	0.305
ESB8	1	5	0.78184	-1.88	0.153	4.918	0.305
ESB9	1	5	0.74357	-1.32	0.153	2.274	0.305
PMAAtt1	1	5	0.83609	1.019	0.153	0.997	0.305
PMAAtt2	1	5	0.80753	1.051	0.153	2.113	0.305
PMAAtt3	1	5	0.86409	1.346	0.153	2.407	0.305
PMAAtt4	1	5	0.79981	1.116	0.153	2.37	0.305
PMAAtt5	1	5	0.80699	0.303	0.153	-0.31	0.305
PMAAtt6	1	5	0.83312	1.168	0.153	2.344	0.305
PMAAtt7	1	5	0.80423	0.9	0.153	1.488	0.305
CO1	1	5	0.84851	1.282	0.153	2.103	0.305
CO2	1	5	0.92497	0.952	0.153	1.184	0.305
CO3	1	5	0.83325	0.852	0.153	1.118	0.305
CO4	1	5	0.87039	0.587	0.153	0.478	0.305
CO5	1	5	1.00808	1.347	0.153	1.806	0.305
CO6	1	5	0.91666	0.811	0.153	0.224	0.305
CO7	1	5	0.91067	1.047	0.153	1.094	0.305

4.3.3 Reliability and Validity Analysis

According to [Hair et al. \(2013\)](#), Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability both evaluate the internal consistency of a scale for which the values of both should exceed 0.70. The results of Cronbachs Alpha after items deleted are given in Table 4.8. The data indicate that the measures are robust in terms of their internal

consistency/reliability as indexed by the composite reliability and Cronbachs alpha values.

All the values of composite reliabilities and the values of internal consistencies range from 0.870 to 0.93, which are greater than the minimum recommended value of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2013; Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994), thus confirming internal consistency.

TABLE 4.8: Assessment of the measurement model

Variable constructs	The composite reliability (internal consistency reliability)	Cronbachs Alpha	Average variance extracted / explained
ER	0.9037	0.87	0.5733
PMATS	0.9245	0.904	0.6381
CO	0.9332	0.916	0.6675
ITRS	0.8941	0.842	0.6791
ESB	0.9271	0.911	0.5869

According to Fornell and Larcker (1981) and Henseler et al. (2009), the discriminant validity is confirmed if the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is higher than the correlation among all the latent constructs/variables. As reported in Table 4.9 the elements in the matrix diagonals, representing the square roots of the AVEs, are greater in all cases than the off-diagonal elements in their corresponding row and column, supporting the discriminant validity of our scales (Henseler et al., 2009).

TABLE 4.9: Discriminant validity (intercorrelations) of variable constructs

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1 ER	0.7571				
2 PMAT	-0.5807	0.7988			
3 CO	-0.5304	0.6392	0.817		
4 ITRS	0.6944	-0.7889	-0.5982	0.824	
5 ESB	0.5118	-0.6917	-0.4196	0.7125	0.766

Finally, the nomological validity was based on the effect size that can range from 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 for weak, moderate, and strong effects, respectively (Hair et al., 2013).

For item/indicator reliability, a recommendation by Hair et al. (2013) was followed according to which the item loadings should exceed the minimum value of 0.4 for items/indicators reliability. The items/indicators reliability results are presented in Table 4.10, which indicates that all items loaded on their respective construct with a value greater than 0.40. The reliability ranged from a lower bound of 0.65 to an upper bound of 0.90. The table also indicates that the items/indicators loaded highly on their respective construct than on any other, which is in line with the recommendations by Howard (2016). To complement the AVE findings, convergent validity was also tested by cross-loadings of all indicator items to their respective latent constructs. The validation process and analysis of the research model were done using PLS structural equation modeling tool SmartPLS 3. According to Al-Gahtani et al. (2007), SmartPLS not only assesses the psychometric properties of the measurement model but also estimates the parameters of the structural model. The provision of simultaneous analysis of all the LVs and items/indicators by the tools also allows the analysis of all the interactions among variables.

It was found that each items factor loading on its respective construct was significant ($p < 0.05$) as indicated by the T-statistics of the outer model loadings in the PLSGraph output as shown in Figure 4.2. These values ranged from a low of 6 to a high value of 24. The constructs items loadings and cross-loadings presented in Table 4.10, and the highly significant T-statistic for each item loading both confirm the convergent validity of these indicators as representing distinct latent constructs. These results suggest that all the validation criteria for internal consistency and convergent validity for the variables were satisfied.

Figure 4.2 shows the analysis results (structural model). The beta values of all path coefficients are shown which are statistically significant (at $p < 0.05$). ER had a positive influence (beta = 0.34, $p < 0.001$) on intentions to remain silent. Managers' attitude towards silence had a positive-significant (beta = 0.548, $p < 0.001$) influence on intentions to remain silent.

TABLE 4.10: Factor Loading (bolded) and cross-loadings

Items/Indicators	Employee Reticence	Managers Attitude Towards Silence	Communication Opportunities	Intentions To Remain Silent	Employee Silence
In organizations, it is better to stay quiet than to give suggestions.	0.7504				
Remaining silent in organizations is beneficial.	0.7014				
In organizations, being silent is being wise.	0.7516				
The assignment which may lead to a conflict is delayed by me to the last hour.	0.8195				
I like the people who prefer to remain silent over raising concerns.	0.8011				
In organizations, disagreements should be avoided.	0.7044				
I wait for others to raise concern about a common problem rather than raising it by myself.	0.7641				
I believe that my manager handles conflicts well among his/her subordinates.		0.9092			
I believe that my manager pays attention to what his/her subordinates say.		0.7844			
I believe that my manager encourages his/her partners to express different opinions.		0.7948			
I believe that my manager asks for criticism from his/her subordinates.		0.6712			
I believe that my manager considers different opinions as something useful.		0.7449			

I believe that my manager encourages his/her partners to express disagreements.	0.8213	
I believe that my manager considers disagreements as something useful.	0.8446	
Communication with colleagues from other departments is satisfactory in my organization.		0.732
There is a systematic exchange of knowledge among employees in my organization.		0.8408
There is adequate communication between employees and managers of my organization.		0.7279
Organizational changes are communicated adequately to the employees in my organization.		0.8098
There is an organized exchange of experiences among employees in my organization.		0.8421
My organization keeps employees informed regarding its plans.		0.8751
My organization keeps employees informed regarding its progress.		0.8768
In my organization, it is likely that I will remain silent on an important matter in the coming month.		0.7492
In my organization, most likely, I will hold a suggestion in the coming month.		0.8564
In my organization, I plan to remain silent in the coming month even if I have something valuable to contribute.		0.8542

In my organization, I intend to remain silent in the coming month even if I am asked for suggestions.

0.8319

How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your departments issues?

0.7115

How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your companys issues?

0.6842

How easily do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning company issues?

0.7605

How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your job?

0.7727

How easily do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your departments issues?

0.7313

How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning issues related to your team?

0.7644

How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning issues related to job satisfaction such as salary, working conditions etc

0.8616

How easily do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your job?

0.8473

How easily do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning issues related to job satisfaction such as salary, working conditions etc

0.7433

The communication opportunities (facilitating conditions) to communicate had a significant negative influence (beta = -0.067, $p < 0.001$) on intentions to remain silent. Intentions to remain silent had a positive influence (beta = 0.713, $p < 0.001$) on employee silence behavior. The model explains 70.9% of the variance in intentions to remain silent and 50.8% of the variance in employee silent behavior. Table 4.11 presents the hypotheses, outcomes, and conclusions as to the result of the analysis.

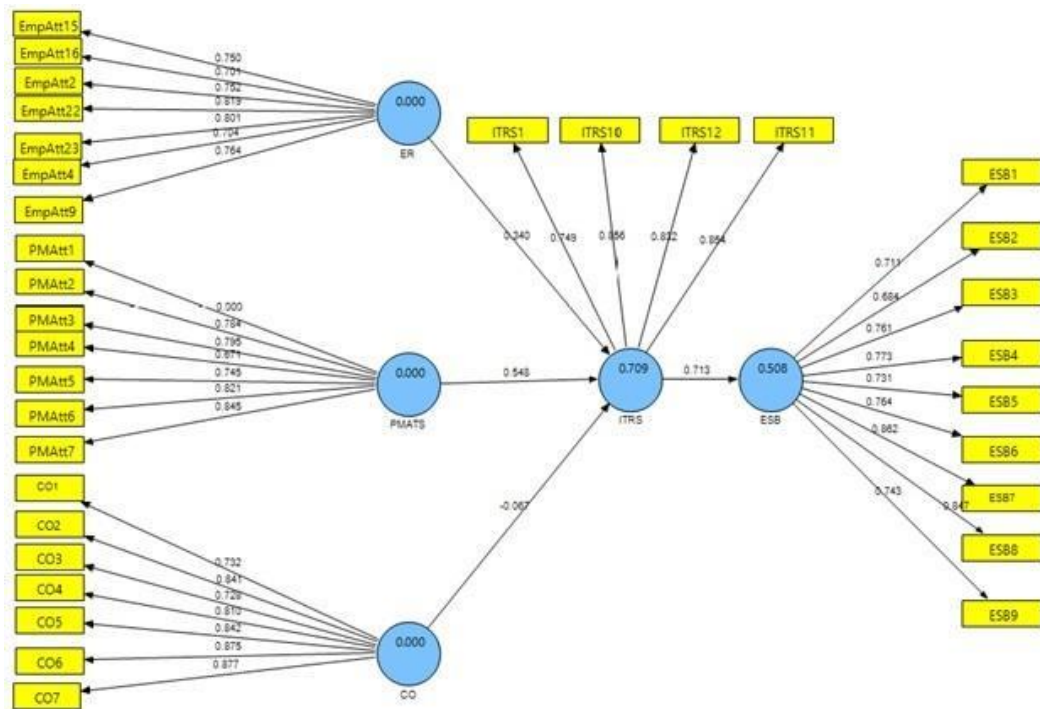


FIGURE 4.2: Measurement Model Results

ER: Employee Reticence, PMATS: Managers Attitude Towards Silence, CO: Communication Opportunities, ITRS: Intentions to Remains Silent, ESB: Employee Silence Behavior

From the results of the measurement model it is evident that the employee reticence has a significant positive affect on employee intentions to remain silent. Similarly, manager’s attitude towards silence also has significant positive affect on employee intentions to remain silent. The communication opportunities has been found to have significant negative affect on employee intentions to remain silent. Finally, the intentions to remain silent has been found to have significant positive affect on employee silence and employee intentions to remain silent mediates between ER, MATS, CO and ES.

Therefore, the researchers fail to reject hypothesis 1, hypothesis 2, hypothesis 3 and hypothesis 4. The summary of the hypotheses acceptance/rejection is provided in Table 4.11.

TABLE 4.11: Hypotheses Conclusions

Hypotheses	Findings	Concl.
H ₁ : Employee Reticence (ER) has a positive significant effect on intentions to remain silent.	Yes: (beta = 0.34, p < 0.05)	Supported
H ₂ : Managers (positive) attitude towards silence have a positive significant effect on the employee's intention to remain silent.	Yes: (beta = 0.548, p < 0.05)	Supported
H ₃ : Communication opportunities (CO) have a significant negative effect on employee intentions to remain silent.	Yes: (beta = -0.067, p < 0.05)	Supported
H ₄ : The intentions to remain silent mediate between ER, PMATS, CO, and ESB.	Yes: (beta = 0.713, p < 0.05)	Supported

4.4 Guile Silence

Study III-A-C were conducted to develop and validate the guile silence scale. The results of III-C are elaborated below.

4.4.1 Data Screening and Descriptive Analysis of Study III

The data screening process in the study was conducted in line with the recommendations of [DeSimone et al. \(2015\)](#). Accordingly, the archival screening method was adopted to screen out the data. It involves the assessment and inspection of patterns of response behavior of the respondent in the questionnaire. From the myriad of techniques available under the inspection of patterns method, the longstring responding method was utilized. The longstring responding method is also known as invariant responding. It was an appropriate technique to be used in the research due to the nature of the questionnaires ([Huang et al., 2012](#)).

Therefore, the technique was used to screen the data. Accordingly, the questionnaires with longstring of similar responses were discarded. Further, the missing values in the responses were treated using the elimination method. In which the questionnaires which had missing values were discarded and therefore, eliminated from the research.

In this section, the demographic variable of gender has been described. The demographic analysis revealed that 20% of the respondents were female. 64% of the respondents had a bachelors degree, and the rest had a masters degree (18 years of education). 63% of the respondents had 2-7 years of experience, while 30%, 6%, and 1% of the respondents had 8-13, and 13 plus years of experience, respectively, in the current organization. 91% of the respondents were from the private sector, 6% were from the government sector, and the rest were from the semi-government sector as shown in Table 4.12.

TABLE 4.12: Statistics

Gender	Valid	N	267	%	Experience	Valid	N	267	%
Female	53	20			2-7	34	64		
					8-13	16	30		
					13 +	4	6		
Male	214	80			2-7	134	63		
					8-13	64	30		
					13 +	15	7		

4.4.2 Normality Analysis

For the normality analysis of the data Skewness and Kurtosis tests were performed using the SPSS v. 21 packages. The normality tests were performed on the data obtained for the variables 1) instrumental climate, 2) Guile silence, and 3) strain. Table 4.3 shows the value of normality statistics item-wise, while Table 4.4 shows the values of the normality statistics as composite variables. The values were found to be normal and within the prescribed range Skewness and Kurtosis that is -3 to +3, for normality to exist as recommended by [Schumacker and Lomax \(2004\)](#). The respective tests were conducted using SPSS version 25.

4.4.3 Analysis and Result

Table 4.13 presents the descriptive statistics and correlations of the concepts included in the study.

TABLE 4.13: Reliabilities, descriptive statistics, and intercorrelations among the study variables

Variables	Items	Alpha	M	SD	1	2	3
1 Instrumental Climate	6	0.84	2.39	0.89	1		
2 Guile Silence	4	0.79	3.32	1.1	.34**	1	
3 Strain	8	0.91	2.35	0.92	.28**	-.23**	1

** . Correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

4.4.4 Findings

The data did not show any statistically significant differences in guile silence according to qualification ($r = .012$; $p = .81$) and gender ($r = .019$; $p = .70$). Positive correlation was predicted between the organizational instrumental climate and guile silence in Hypothesis 1. The data confirmed the hypothesis, as shown in Table 4.13. As expected, guile silence is positively related to instrumental organizational climate ($r = .21$; $p = .00$). It is an important discovery because it indicates that organizational relationships foster guile silence based on Social Exchange Theory (Emerson, 1976). Social Exchange Theory (SET) states that social interactions are based on cost-benefit analysis. This is similar to the findings of Knoll and van Dick (2013b). In their study, the climate of silence was found to be related to silence. In conducting the research related to guile silence with strain, it was found that guile silence is negatively related to strain. This confirms Hypothesis 2, as shown in Table 4.13. As expected, guile silence is negatively related to strain ($r = -0.18$; $p = .00$). It is evident that silencing oneself for self-benefit decreases the strain. It is mainly because exhibiting guile silence is their conscious and learned behavior. Further, it is because of the potential positive effects that employees who engage in guile silence cannot avoid avoidable extra work.

4.4.5 Summary of Study III

Study-III was designed to test the guile silence construct's validity and scale, which was developed in Study-III-A and Study-III-B. The study provides us with preliminary evidence that the construct is valid, and its scale fulfills the minimum criteria and performs as expected concerning antecedents and consequences.

Chapter 5

Discussion, Conclusion, Limitations, and Recommendations

In this chapter, the discussion, conclusion, limitations, and recommendations of the studies conducted in the research are discussed.

The discussion of the studies is based on the findings of the research which are based on the assessment of the data. The discussion entails the details of the research questions that were answered and the objectives were achieved.

The prime objectives of the studies conducted were three, 1) to conceptualize, define, operationalize, develop, validate and test the construct of Employee Reticence and its scale, 2) application of the Theory of Planned Behavior on Employee Silence, and 3) to conceptualize, define, operationalize, develop, validate and test the construct of Guile Silence and its scale. All the research questions are discussed in detail in the following discussion section.

5.1 Research Question 1

Does the Concept of employee reticence needs to be conceptualized, defined, operationalized, developed, validated and tested as an important predictor of employee intention of exhibiting employee silence?

5.1.1 Summary of Results

The results of the research confirm the importance and need of operationalizing, measuring, developing and validating employee reticence. The hypotheses were formulated to test the relation between employee reticence, intentions to remain silent and employee silence. The data and the consequent results confirmed the acceptance of the hypotheses.

5.1.2 Discussion Study I: Development and Testing of Employee Reticence Scale

In Study I, the employee reticence construct was proposed and its scale was developed and validated. The study was a successful attempt in answering the research question and meeting its objectives. Employee reticence has been defined as an attitude towards employee silence (Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021). During the qualitative phase, in-depth semi-structured interviews confirmed the presence of such attitudes in the employees. As the result of the qualitative phase of the study, three dimensions of employee reticence that is 1) cognitive employee reticence, 2) affective employee reticence, and 3) behavioral employee reticence were also discovered.

In the quantitative phase, two studies were conducted. In this phase, the questionnaire was finalized by performing PCA and expert opinion. In the second study using internal consistency, validation tests including PLS-SEM analysis were performed to streamline the questionnaire.

The PLS-SEM analysis of the study showed acceptance of the hypotheses, thereby suggesting a significant relationship between employee reticence and employee silence mediated by intentions to remain silent. In other words, the greater the Employee Reticence the greater would be the employee intentions to remain silent, consequently leading to the Employee Silence. It is in line with the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein, 1979, 2008), the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985; Fishbein and Ajzen, 2011), functional attitude theory (Katz, 1960), and attitude-behavior consistency principle (Haddock and Maio, 2007). Thus, if an employee

is high at employee reticence the employee will intend to remain silent and vice versa.

Finally, the intention to remain silent (ITRS) was found to have a significant positive effect on employee silence. This is in line with the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein, 1979, 2008) and theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985; Fishbein and Ajzen, 2011) and consistent with findings of multiple research based on these theories. That is to say, if an employee has intentions to remain silent, the employee is likely to exhibit employee silence.

Therefore, in an organization, if an employee is asked for input, the employee with intentions to remain silent will remain silent even if the employee has something important to contribute (Harlos and Knoll, 2021; Morrison, 2014).

Further, it was found that intentions to remain silent fully mediate the relationship between employee reticence and employee silence. As shown in Figure 4.1, the direct path from employee reticence to employee silence is insignificant depicting full mediation of intentions. It is in line with the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein, 2008) and the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985).

The findings of the research that employee reticence does exist in organizations, meaning thereby that an employee can be predisposed to remain silent in the workplace. Not surprisingly, attitudes are developed per the organizational behaviors (Robbins and Judge, 2014). Most importantly, employees' behavior depends largely on their attitude (Fischer and Karl, 2022). Thus, an employee with higher ER would likely have intentions to remain silent.

The same is empirically tested and theoretically supported. For instance, as per the meta-analytic studies, employees behave as per their attitude, for example, see (Hao et al., 2022; Woznyj et al., 2022). Similarly, according to the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 2015; Aldammagh et al., 2021), one's attitude affects one's behavior. In the context of employee reticence, the employees are likely to remain silent even at the moments when it is formidable to remain silent for instance on seeing some illegal or immoral activity (Pinder and Harlos, 2001), in emergencies, and even when such employees are asked to participate or suggest things for improvement in the organizations (Qureshi and Naqvi, 2022).

The literature suggests that attitude is a three-dimensional construct (Eagly and Chaiken, 2005), that is 1) cognitive, 2) affective, and 3) behavioral. In the current research, the three dimensions of employee reticence were discovered. Since the dimensions of ER attitude were not in the scope of the study, therefore, this is left to the scope of future research to empirically test these dimensions. These dimensions can be named cognitive ER, affective ER, and behavioral ER. The discovery of the dimension of ER was expected since the other job attitudes also have such dimensions. For instance, the job attitude titled organizational commitment has three dimensions (Allen and Meyer, 1990; Woznyj et al., 2022).

The various kinds of job attitudes such as commitment, job satisfaction, job involvement, organizational justice (Woznyj et al., 2022), and others. According to Woznyj et al., job attitudes play a vital role in deciding the organization's fate. Therefore, future researchers and practitioners must pay due attention to ER and its dimension in managing employee behavior for the betterment of the organizations.

The introduction and scale development of employee reticence has not only added in the employee silence literature but has also opened venues for studies related to employee silence, respondents bias, attitudinal and behavioral modification studies. It can be used to develop and test new theories related to employee silence, personality, knowledge sharing, teamwork, stress, anxiety, employee health problems, harassment, and bullying. Similarly, the introduction of the intentions to remain silent as a mediator between employee reticence and employee silence will pave the way to find answers of why employees choose to remain silent despite being the witness and victim of bullying, harassment, and alike behaviors in organizations.

In organizations, successful management requires continuous feedback and input from lessons learned, however, employee silence impedes improvements and corrections (Dedahanov et al., 2016). It is a matter of prime importance to mitigate employee silence. Attitudinal updating seems to be the easiest way of doing it. Employee reticence scale can be used for different types of research design including pre-test, post-test research design for attitudinal updating of employees. The change management, and creative jobs require continuous knowledge sharing.

The recruiters and managers can use the employee reticence scale for the initial screening of the candidates for such types of jobs.

5.2 Research Question 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6

5.2.1 Research Question 2

Does ones attitude towards silence affect employee intentions to exhibit employee silence?

5.2.2 Research Question 3

Do subjective norms affect the employee intention to exhibit employee silence?

5.2.3 Research Question 4

Does perceived behavioral control affect the employee intention to exhibit employee silence?

5.2.4 Research Question 5

Does employee intention to exhibit employee silence lead to employee silence?

5.2.5 Research Question 6

Does employee intention to exhibit employee silence mediate the relationship between attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control and employee silence?

5.2.6 Summary of Results

The findings of the study confirm that the employee attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control affect the intentions to remain silent. Further, the employee intentions to remain silent affects employee silence.

The findings of the study confirms intentions to remain silent as a mediating variable. The mediated hypothesized relations are accepted that is intentions to exhibit employee silence mediates the relationship between the attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control and employee silence.

5.2.7 Discussion Study II (RQ2 - RQ6): Employee Silence and Application of TPB

The purpose of the study-II was to examine the effect of factors, such as employee reticence (ER) (Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021), managers attitude toward silence (MATS) (Zhuang et al., 2021), communication opportunities (CO) on employee silence behavior (ES) mediated by intentions to remain silent (ITRS) based on the theory of planned behavior by Ajzen (2005). The PLS-SEM analysis of the study showed acceptance of the four hypotheses, thereby suggesting a significant relationship between the IVs (ER, MATS, & CO) and DV (ES) mediated by ITRS. These IVs (ER & MATS) were found to have a significant positive relationship with ITRS leading to ESB, while the CO was found to have a significant negative relationship with ITRS leading to ESB in organizations, in line with the Theory of Planned Behavior (Li, 2022).

In other words, the greater the Employee Reticence (ER), the greater would be the employee intentions to remain silent, consequently leading to Employee Silence, which is in line with the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein, 1979), theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985), functional attitude theory (Katz, 1960) and attitude-behavior consistency principle (Haddock and Maio, 2007). Thus, if an employee is high in ER, the employee will likely intend to remain silent and vice versa (Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021; Woznyj et al., 2022). Further, in line with the findings of Vakola and Bouradas (2005), a significant direct relationship between MATS, CO, and ES, was found. MATS was found to have a significant positive effect on ESB mediated by ITRS. In other words, when the manager has a strong attitude towards silence, the silence will be considered important and the employees working in such subjective norms will likely remain silent on important matters of concern regarding the job/organization/project (Hao et al., 2022).

The communication opportunities were found to have a negative effect on intentions to remain silent. Implying that adequate communication opportunities negatively affect the intentions to withhold concerns and ideas on work-related issues and vice versa (Meng and Boyd, 2017). The finding is consistent with, Lee et al. (2015) study positing that the availability of CO is negatively related to ESB. Finally, the intentions to remain silent (ITRS) was found to have a significant positive effect on employee silence. It is in line with the theory of planned behavior (Hassan et al., 2021) and consistent with the findings of multiple empirical researches (Fischer and Karl, 2022; Woznyj et al., 2022). That is to say, if an employee has ITRS, the employee is likely to exhibit ES.

5.3 Research Question 7

Does the concept of guile silence need to be defined, operationalized, measured, developed, and validated as the consequence of employee intention of exhibiting guile silence?

5.3.1 Summary of Results

The results of the research confirm the importance and need of operationalizing, measuring, developing and validating Guile Silence construct. The hypotheses were formulated to test the relation between instrumental climate, guile silence and strain. The data and the consequent results confirmed the acceptance of the hypotheses.

5.3.2 Discussion Study III: Development and Testing of Guile Silence Scale

Employee silence surfaced in literature in its form as the result of the seminal work of Pinder and Harlos (2001). Earlier, it was considered as the opposite of voice (Morrison, 2014). It also appeared in other forms, such as “loyalty & neglect” of Hirschman (1970) or “Deaf Ear Syndrome” of Peirce et al. (1998). Later it was

confused with knowledge hiding (Xiao and Cooke, 2019). Consequently, the organizations, teams, and employees had duly suffered (Benevene, 2020; Perlow and Williams, 2003). Secondly, it required further exploration (Vemuri, 2019). Addressing the problems and filling these gaps were essential for the field of employee silence. We are confident that we have addressed these problems, and the gaps were filled successfully.

First, the difference between knowledge hiding and employee silence was clarified. During our research, Xiao and Cooke (2019) also addressed the same problem in their research. They also substantiated and clarified the differences between them in the same methodology as adopted in this paper. Thus, our conclusion had also been confirmed in their research. Secondly, the literature on the dimensions of ES was reviewed, and unexplored situations/motives were found.

The research contributes by further exploring and introducing another dimension of ES. Three studies were conducted through which the items were generated (study III-A), which were found to be reliable and valid (study III-B), and were tested phenomenologically (Study III-C). Guile silence was found to be mutually exclusive of the earlier dimensions of employee silence and represent ES with the motive of avoiding additional work. It was an important discovery that was guided by the literature and empirical testing. This has also helped in crystallizing the ES literature as it has further refined it and has opened avenues for future research.

Its discovery guided by the literature, observation, and anecdotal evidence. Most importantly, guile silence has its footings in one of the items of opportunistic silence (Harlos and Knoll, 2021) which was about remaining silent to avoid additional work. Similarly, the work by Garfield (2006) also stated it as one of the reasons for not sharing knowledge. Moreover, the Indian-Punjabi Literature proverb "Jaira Bolay oi Kunda kholey", English literature proverb "One who touches the rope will have to ring the bell" and anecdotal evidence also suggest the presence of guile silence.

One may argue that guile silence is an offshoot of opportunistic silence, but in fact, guile silence only has its footing in opportunistic silence. The opportunistic silence has been tested in multiple industries (Knoll et al., 2021).

On the other hand, guile silence focuses only remaining silent to avoid additional work. It is worth noting here that the guile silence is a uni-dimensional construct. The data suggest that like any other dimension of ES, guile silence does not have more than one dimension.

In the validation process of guile silence, the vital discovery of a significant positive effect of instrumental climate on guile silence was also found. It also confirmed the findings of earlier research on instrumental climate fostering self-oriented behaviors (Macklin et al., 2015).

The scale should be of interest to the researchers and practitioners. The researchers can use the construct and its scale for developing further research questions and finding their answers. The practitioners can learn to keep their employees focused on complete adherence to their job descriptions. Further, the tools box of managers are limited and it is difficult for them to assess and understand intentional silence (Brinsfield, 2013).

As a result of this result, the practitioners will have another tool to understand the employee silence from another dimension. This will in turn provide the practitioners the opportunity to develop and implement strategies that are focused on the underrated and unobserved phenomenon of silence. They need to establish norms through which suggestions are not silenced to avoid additional work. Instead, the additional work should be assigned to the ones to whom the job description belongs. In case the suggestion is not part of the job description of anyone, the additional work should be awarded in the form of appraisals and bonuses.

5.4 Limitations and Future Recommendations

Study I: Development and Testing of Employee Reticence Scale

Although this research has advanced the understanding of attitudes, it is just the beginning of building the foundations of ES attitude. The research has not only confirmed the presence of such an attitude but also developed and validated its

scale. The limitations of the scale of the ER can be removed by further delineating it with the dimensions of attitude that are cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions. Moreover, with the availability of ER scale, further research can be guided to predict its antecedents and consequences.

Based on the recommendation of TPB, other variables such as organizational silence, managers attitude can also be included as IV to represent subjective norms, and communication opportunities can be included as IV to represent perceived behavioral control. Personality and gender may be used as moderators. In addition, organizational and team-level attitudes of silence can be explored. Further, the same research may be replicated in non-service sectors, where ER and ES can have devastating effects on success.

Finally, the readers in general, and the organizational behaviorists, in particular, will greatly benefit from this concept and scale. Its scale is a useful tool, largely for organizational behaviorists for change intervention programs and recruiters for ensuring PO fit. It will also be of use to researchers for further exploration and using it as in organizational research including but not limited to ES, knowledge management, and stress. Psychologists can take the lead from the concept of ER to develop similar constructs for their field for analyzing their patients of stress etc. from this perspective. One may argue that introverts are likely to be high on the employee reticence scale and extroverts will likely score low on the employee reticence scale. Based on Free-Trait theory it can be argued that in organizational settings employees pursue their core projects even if they have to act against their biogenic sources of action ([Little, 2008](#)).

That is to say, an extrovert employee has to act like an introvert if the success of personal core projects is compromised by being an extrovert at the workplace. In such a case it can lead to a favorable evaluation of silence behavior at the workplace and a high score on the employee reticence scale.

However, testing the free-trait theory using an employee reticence scale is recommended. Further personality and gender can be used as moderators in similar research. The study was cross-sectional in design and did not have any moderators such as gender. Further subjective norms and perceived behavior control were not

taken into consideration, since the main focus of the research was to work on the employee reticence scale.

5.5 Limitations and Future Recommendations

Study II: Employee Silence and Application of TPB

The earlier studies that had conceptualized ES, its dimension, or both do not account for the theoretical foundations of the behavior. The theory of planned behavior has been found comprehensive to explain the employee silence behavior. It will open venues for more ways of looking at the behavior.

ES is intentional behavior. Unlike earlier research on ES, the intention of an individual has been used in this research as another variable. This is likely to give researchers the liberty to find out reasons why employees choose to speak up in situations where they had earlier exhibited ES.

The introduction of the ITRS as a mediator between the antecedents-of-ESB and ES is likely to pave the way to find answers to why employees choose to speak despite odds at their ends. Continuous feedback is imperative for success, thus, if ES is exhibited, success will not be possible. Therefore, it is a matter of prime importance to mitigate ES in organizations. Based on the findings, this study suggests several practical implications for the management of organizations and higher management. First, the study revealed that ER elevates ITRS leading to elevated ESB, therefore, ER should be changed and reduced. Moreover, the study further surfaced that that managers attitude plays a very important role in ITRS that leads to ES. Thus, subjective norms should not be conducive to ES, rather the higher management, and other organizational factors should encourage dialogue, discussions, and feedback. Further, systems should be developed so that individuals confidentiality is protected (Dedahanov et al., 2016; Milliken et al., 2003). The findings also demonstrate that communication opportunities reduce the ITRS that leads to ESB. Thus to hinder ES, the organizations should establish

channels of communication and ways of systematic exchange of knowledge and experiences among employees and top management. Finally, the study was cross-sectional in design and did not have any moderators such as gender and personality dimensions such as from the Big-Five model. Further subjective norms could include other variables such as organizational silence as described by [Morrison and Milliken \(2000\)](#).

5.6 Theoretical and Practical Implications

The theoretical and practical implications of this research is provided below.

5.6.1 Theoretical Implications

Although this research has advanced our understanding of attitudes, it is just the beginning of building the foundations of employee silence attitude. This research has not only confirmed the presence of such an attitude but also developed and validated its scale.

The scale of the employee reticence can be enhanced by further delineating it with the dimensions of attitude that are cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions. Moreover, with the availability of the employee reticence scale, further research can be guided to predict its antecedents and consequences. The theory of planned behavior has been tested to successfully explain the behavior of employee silence. Multiple advantages are boreed from the theoretical implication. For instance, the organizational and individual level factors can be incorporated within in one research framework using the theory of planned behavior. Further, the employee silence which is an intentional behavior would be used explained by the relevant theory. Further, the successful testing of the theory of planned behavior provides avenues to test other constructs such as subjective norms and perceived behavioral control to see if they predict employee silence. The framework of the theory of planned behavior also demonstrates the antecedents of employee silence which was not previously studied. The framework is characterized by various pathways through which the ES is explained. Further, the theoretical contribution is the

operationalization, measurement, and validation of the employee reticence and guile silence scale, which has not only opened new horizons but also expanded the literature on employee silence. They provide a better explanation to measure and validate ES and confirm the implications of TPB.

It is recommended that the interactive effects of guile silence with voice behavior may be investigated using TPB. This could lead to the possible exploration of contexts where employees choose to have avoidable additional work. Further, based on the recommendations by Knoll and van Dick (2013), it would be interesting to explore the application of guile silence with team level or organizational level units of analysis.

Although this research has advanced our understanding of the nature of ES motives, we are just beginning to build a foundation of knowledge on the topic. According to the present findings, there is redundancy in the literature concerning ES dimensions. Future researchers will need to empirically determine the validity of these findings.

5.6.2 Practical Implications

This research has multiple practical implications. Employee silence is a pervasive phenomenon and it has devastating effects on employees and organizations. Accordingly, organizational and team-level attitudes toward silence must be explored. Further, researchers and practitioners can synergize their efforts using the measurement tools developed in this research to better understand the factors affecting the full use of human resources and their potential. It is equally useful for work-from-home scenarios, in which employee reticence and guile silence can be disastrous for the organizations. Further, the practitioners can establish organizational norms through which suggestions are not silenced to avoid additional work. Instead, additional work should be assigned to the ones who are the task owners. If the suggestion is not explicitly part of anyones job description, the additional work should be assigned in light of social exchange theory (Emerson, 1976). According to this theory, an employee reciprocates in return that is if additional work is given to an employee, the organization should reward accordingly.

The research elucidates the effects of GS on work performance. Silence can lower managerial access to critical information (Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2008), consequently harming the organization. This implies that the consequences of GS revealed by this research must be carefully considered by both researchers and practitioners. Organizations need to hear from their employees to maintain operations. Overall, the findings imply that researchers and practitioners should try to foster conditions to lessen employee reticence and reduce instances of GS.

5.7 Limitations and Future Recommendations

Study III: Development and Testing of Guile Silence Scale

This study has not only proposed a new dimension of employee silence but also developed its measurement scale. Although comprehensive, this research is not without limitations. For instance, construct and scale development is an iterative process (Brinsfield, 2013) that requires continuous refining and validity improvement. The current research requires attention in the validation process. Secondly, the mixed-method research design was used in this study. The qualitative aspects of this study were delimited through literature towards avoiding additional work. Using a broader perspective could have presented other dimension(s) of employee silence. Further research should include contextual factors such as communication channels and the use of technology as antecedents since they are stable and independent of individual employees' perceptions.

In line with Moss and Martinko (1998) suggestion, it is recommended that the causal antecedents of guile silence may be established in laboratory settings. Further, the interactive effects of guile silence with voice behavior may be investigated. It could lead to the possible exploration of contexts where employees choose to have avoidable additional work. Further, based on Knoll and van Dick (2013b) recommendations, it would be interesting to explore the application of guile silence with team level or organizational level unit of analysis. GS should also be tested with Hofstede cultural dimensions.

As the researchers are also apprehensive that the employees from national and organizational cultures, characterized by Hofstede's individualism, are more prone to guile silence. Therefore, the guile silence should also be tested with different Hofstede cultural dimensions. The scale developed in the study can be used in longitudinal studies as such studies are considered a better way of collecting data by contemporary researchers and brings with its various advantages.

Dispositional factors (emotions/personality) that can influence the decision to speak up or to remain silent are discussed in the literature. But these have not yet been examined empirically. Therefore, it is recommended that such factors be empirically tested to see if they have any role as antecedent or moderating variables of employee silence.

The scale developed in the study can be used in longitudinal studies. Collecting data longitudinally is considered a better way of collecting data by contemporary researchers and brings with its various advantages. Further research should include contextual factors such as communication channels and the use of technology as antecedents. Since they are stable and independent of the perception of individual employees. It is recommended that the interactive effects of guile silence with voice behavior may be investigated. This could lead to the possible exploration of contexts where employees choose to have avoidable additional work. Further, based on the recommendations by [Knoll and van Dick \(2013b\)](#), it would be interesting to explore the application of guile silence with team level or organizational level unit of analysis.

5.8 Conclusion Study I: Development and Testing of Employee Reticence Scale

In this research, the phenomenon of employee reticence has been proposed and its scale has been developed and tested. The scale development of ER builds upon and extends previous theoretical and empirical work on attitudes and behaviors by bringing in new perspectives in the existing body of knowledge on ES. Although previous research on ES has focused mainly on organizational factors, this research

on employee attitude towards silence has furthered our understanding of why employees choose to remain silent. Conceivably, the recruiters, OB-interventionists, and researchers greatly benefit from this research because existing measures do not assess employee attitudes towards silence.

5.9 Conclusion Study II: Employee Silence and Application of TPB

ES is a pervasive phenomenon that is exhibited as the result of convolution of ones attitudes, attitudes of important others, and communication opportunities as supported by the theory of planned behavior. In organizational settings, where communication is vital for success, ES is to be discouraged. For this, personal attitudes and managers attitudes should be molded in favor of communication for the greater good of the company, and communication opportunities should be provided and enhanced.

The study extended the silence literature by presenting a new attitudinal variable that is Employee Reticence, which can be used in studies related to employee silence behaviors, respondents bias, attitudinal studies, etc. The scale of ER has also been developed. The job attitude can be used in the development of (new) theories related to ES, personality, knowledge sharing, teamwork, stress, anxiety, employee health problems, harassment, and bullying. With the introduction of the ITRS as a mediator between the antecedents-of-ES and ES, it is likely to pave the way to find answers to why employees choose to speak despite odds at their ends. The introduction of ITRS as a mediating variable has also answered the situations where the individuals break the silence even when they had the intentions of keeping it.

Successful management requires continuous feedback and input from lessons learned, however, if EB is exhibited, successful management will not be possible as ES impedes improvements and corrections ([Dedahanov et al., 2016](#)). It is a matter of prime importance to mitigate ES in organizations. Based on the findings, this study suggests several practical implications for managers. The study

revealed that ER, MATS, and lack of COs have a positive effect on ITRS leading to elevated ES, therefore, ER should be updated, subjective norms should not be conducive to ES, and CO should be enhanced to reduce the ITRS that leads to ES.

The researchers are apprehensive that explaining ES with the underpinning theory will pave way for a better understanding of the behavior and exploration of more of its antecedents.

5.10 Conclusion Study III: Development and Testing of Guile Silence Scale

Employee silence has long been considered the antithesis of employee voice and has been confounded with knowledge hiding. Therefore, though pervasive, the concept of ES remained under-researched for a long time. Accordingly, the abundance of different situations in which an employee exhibits ES remained unexplored, and the organizations remained mostly vulnerable. Thus, it was imperative to differentiate ES from employee voice and knowledge hiding. It was also equally important to further investigate ES for unexplored situations in which the employees exhibit ES. The mixed-method research methodology employed in the research led to the development, validation, and testing of a new ES dimension. It has paved the way for further research and can be very beneficial in work settings. The researchers and academicians stand a greater chance of benefit by better understanding the phenomenon and exploring other similar situations.

The practitioners can significantly benefit from it because the current understanding of ES is indeed limited and is affecting their efforts for the better. The practitioners can synergize their efforts using this tool to understand better the factors affecting the full use of their organizations' potential. It is equally useful for the practitioners managing the work-from-home scenarios, where ES can be disastrous for the organizations. In light of the abundance of evidence in the form of unsuccessful ventures such as Enron ([Trinka and Giacalone, 2005](#)), findings of disaster aftermath such as the Columbia Space Shuttle ([Beamish, 2002](#)), there is

little doubt that the organizations from different industries will benefit from the findings of this research.

5.11 Conclusion

Employee silence is a pervasive phenomenon ([Harlos and Knoll, 2021](#); [Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021](#)). However, it required further exploration for a better understanding of the phenomenon ([Abd El-Fattah Mohamed Aly et al., 2021](#)). Accordingly, the research had three main objectives, 1) to develop, introduce and validate the construct of employee reticence (employee-silence attitude) and its scale, 2) to describe the employee silence with the theoretical underpinning, and 3) to develop, introduce and validate the construct of guile silence (a new dimension of ES) and its scale.

The research has amicably addressed the problem and has filled the respective research gaps. The foremost gap in the literature was the unavailability of a construct to depict employee disposition toward silence behavior. It was a gap on one hand and a problem on the other. The absence of such an attitude was a problem because all the intentional theories such as the theory of planned behavior ([Ajzen et al., 2018](#); [Fischer and Karl, 2022](#)), the theory of reasoned action ([Saleem et al., 2022](#)), and technology acceptance model theory have the attitudinal construct ([Oyman et al., 2022](#)) but such a construct was not available for the employee silence. Probably, it was the reason that an intentional behavior (ES) was not supported by a theory in which intention was used a separate variable ([Qureshi and Naqvi, 2021](#)). This twofold problem and gap were addressed by proposing, validating, and testing employee reticence. Its an employee disposition towards remaining silent that its an employee attitude to remain silent. The proposition, validation, and testing of employee reticence paved the way to provide ES with the theoretical foundations that is to explain an employee's behavior with the help of a theory ([Bandura, 1974](#)). It was achieved and the employee silence was explained with the help of the infamous theory of planned behavior ([Ajzen, 2005](#); [Fishbein and Ajzen, 2011](#)). The TPB was applied by using ER, MATS, and CO which were mediated with the ES through ITRS.

Through the application of the theory of planned behavior, research questions one to six were addressed. The final research question was about proposing, validating, and testing another dimension of employee silence which was termed as guile silence. The research gap was based on the recommendations of [Morrison \(2014\)](#) who emphasized exploring situations where employees remain silent with different motives. Based on the literature review, observations, and anecdotal evidence, it was proposed that the employees also remain silent to avoid additional work in the organizations. In line with its footing in the literature ([Harlos and Knoll, 2021](#)), observations, and anecdotal evidence, the data validated guile silence as another dimension of ES. Further data also tested guile silence as another dimension of ES. And that is how the research was able to achieve its objectives and has been able to address the problem and fill the gaps.

The research has been able to amicably achieve all of its objectives, through the respective research design that fitted each objective. The results of the research have opened venues for practitioners and researchers to think beyond the regular research and work closely with the employees suffering in silence; to make their workplace better. The scale of ER and GS developed as the result of this research can help in better understanding of ES and further the research in this field.

Finally, the researchers are apprehensive that explaining ES with the underpinning theory will pave way for a better understanding of the behavior and exploration of more of its antecedents. Keeping in view the abundance of evidence on the negative role of ES in cases such as the Challenger space shuttle disaster and Enron ([Lalich et al., 2018](#)), there is little doubt that organizations of all types could benefit from better understanding the antecedents of ES. The findings of this research also transcend to work-from-home scenarios where employees are more prone to employee silence. It has paved the way for further research and can be very beneficial in different types of work settings.

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Appendix-A

Questionnaires

Dear Respondent,

My name is Ahmed Ali Qureshi. As a doctoral candidate at Capital University of Science and Technology (CUST), Islamabad, I am collecting data for my dissertation. The main variable of my study is employee silence.

It will take your 15-20 minutes to answer the questions and to providing the valuable information. This will help to understand the phenomenon of employee silence better. All the data will be treated in a confidential manner. There is no right or wrong answer, only your personal opinion is required. Your kind cooperation is much appreciated.

Thanks a lot for your help and support!

Sincerely,

Ahmed Ali Qureshi

Ph.D. Candidate

Faculty of Management and Social Sciences

Capital University of Science and Technology

Demographic Data

Gender:

Male Female

Qualification:

Bachelors Masters Doctorate Other _____

Experience in years:

2-7 yrs 8-13 yrs 14-19 yrs 19+

Experience in current organization:

2-7 yrs 8-13 yrs 14-19 yrs 19+

Sector working in:

Government Semi Government Private

Last three digits of Registration No. ____ ____ ____ (where applicable)

Study-I

Questionnaires

Employee Reticence

Please answer the following questions, keeping in view the following scale.

The scales for the following items are: **1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree**

ER1: In organizations, it is better to stay quiet than to give suggestions.	5	4	3	2	1
ER2: Remaining silent in organizations is beneficial.	5	4	3	2	1
ER3: In organizations, being silent is being wise.	5	4	3	2	1
ER4: The job assignment which may lead to a conflict is delayed by me to the last hour.	5	4	3	2	1
ER5: I like the people who prefer to remain silent over raising concerns.	5	4	3	2	1
ER6: In organizations, conflicts lead to better solutions.	5	4	3	2	1
ER7: I wait for others to raise concerns about a common problem rather than raising it by myself.	5	4	3	2	1
ER8: I prefer to leave things on fate than to raise voice about them.	5	4	3	2	1
ER9: I like the people who prefer to remain silent over giving suggestions.	5	4	3	2	1

Intentions to Remain Silent

Please answer the following questions, keeping in view the following scale.

The scales for the following items are: *1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree*

ITR 1: In my organization, it is likely that I will remain silent on an important matter in the coming week(s).	5	4	3	2	1
ITRS2: In my organization, most likely, I will hold a suggestion in the coming week(s).	5	4	3	2	1
ITRS3: In my organization, I plan to remain silent in the coming week(s) even if I have something valuable to contribute.	5	4	3	2	1
ITRS4: In my organization, I intend to remain silent in the coming week(s) even if I am asked for suggestions.	5	4	3	2	1

Employee Silence

Please answer the following questions, keeping in view the following scale.

The scales for “often” items *1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Very Often, 5=Always* The scales for “easily” items *1=Very Difficultly, 2=Difficultly, 3=Neutral, 4=Easily, 5=Very Easily*

How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your department’s issues?	5	4	3	2	1
How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your company’s issues?	5	4	3	2	1
How easily do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning company issues?	5	4	3	2	1
How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your job?	5	4	3	2	1
How easily do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your department’s issues?	5	4	3	2	1
How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning issues related to your team?	5	4	3	2	1
How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning issues related to job satisfaction such as salary, working conditions etc	5	4	3	2	1
How easily do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your job?	5	4	3	2	1
How easily do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning issues related to job satisfaction such as salary, working conditions etc	5	4	3	2	1

Study-II

Questionnaires

Employee Reticence

Please answer the following questions, keeping in view the following scale:

The scales for the following items are: *1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree*

ER1: In organizations, it is better to stay quiet than to give suggestions.	5	4	3	2	1
ER2: Remaining silent in organizations is beneficial.	5	4	3	2	1
ER3: In organizations, being silent is being wise.	5	4	3	2	1
ER4: The job assignment which may lead to a conflict is delayed by me to the last hour.	5	4	3	2	1
ER5: I like the people who prefer to remain silent over raising concerns.	5	4	3	2	1
ER6: In organizations, conflicts lead to better solutions.	5	4	3	2	1
ER7: I wait for others to raise concerns about a common problem rather than raising it by myself.	5	4	3	2	1
ER8: I prefer to leave things on fate than to raise voice about them.	5	4	3	2	1
ER9: I like the people who prefer to remain silent over giving suggestions.	5	4	3	2	1

Perceived Managers Attitude towards Silence

Please answer the following questions, keeping in view the following scale:

The scales for the following items are: *1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree*

MATS1: I believe that my manager handles conflicts well among his/her subordinates.	5	4	3	2	1
MATS2: I believe that my manager pays attention to what his/her subordinates say.	5	4	3	2	1
MATS3: I believe that my manager encourages his/her partners to express different opinions.	5	4	3	2	1
MATS4: I believe that my manager asks for criticism from his/her subordinates.	5	4	3	2	1
MATS5: I believe that my manager considers different opinions as something useful.	5	4	3	2	1
MATS6: I believe that my manager encourages his/her partners to express disagreements.	5	4	3	2	1
MATS7: I believe that my manager considers disagreements as something useful.	5	4	3	2	1

Communication Opportunities

Please answer the following questions, keeping in view the following scale:

The scales for the following items are: *1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree*

CO1: Communication with colleagues from other departments is satisfactory in my organization.	5	4	3	2	1
CO2: There is a systematic exchange of knowledge among employees in my organization.	5	4	3	2	1
CO3: There is adequate communication between employees and managers of my organization.	5	4	3	2	1
CO4: Organizational changes are communicated adequately to the employees in my organization.	5	4	3	2	1
CO5: There is an organized exchange of experiences among employees in my organization.	5	4	3	2	1
CO6: My organization keeps employees informed regarding its plans.	5	4	3	2	1
CO7: My organization keeps employees informed regarding its progress.	5	4	3	2	1

Intentions to Remain Silent

Please answer the following questions, keeping in view the following scale:

The scales for the following items are: *1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree*

ITR 1: In my organization, it is likely that I will remain silent on an important matter in the coming week(s).	5	4	3	2	1
ITRS2: In my organization, most likely, I will hold a suggestion in the coming week(s).	5	4	3	2	1
ITRS3: In my organization, I plan to remain silent in the coming week(s) even if I have something valuable to contribute.	5	4	3	2	1
ITRS4: In my organization, I intend to remain silent in the coming week(s) even if I am asked for suggestions.	5	4	3	2	1

Employee Silence

Please answer the following questions, keeping in view the following scale:

The scales for “often” items *1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Very Often, 5=Always* The scales for “easily” items *1=Very Difficultly, 2=Difficultly, 3=Neutral, 4=Easily, 5=Very Easily*

How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your department’s issues?	5	4	3	2	1
How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your company’s issues?	5	4	3	2	1
How easily do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning company issues?	5	4	3	2	1
How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your job?	5	4	3	2	1
How easily do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your department’s issues?	5	4	3	2	1
How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning issues related to your team?	5	4	3	2	1
How often do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning issues related to job satisfaction such as salary, working conditions etc	5	4	3	2	1
How easily do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning your job?	5	4	3	2	1
How easily do you express your disagreements to your managers concerning issues related to job satisfaction such as salary, working conditions etc	5	4	3	2	1

Study-III

Questionnaires

Scales of Dimensions of ES

Please answer the following questions, keeping in view the following scale:

The scales for the following items are: *1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree*

Item Root: I remained silent at work					
to protect my relationship with another individual	5	4	3	2	1
to avoid hurting someone's feelings	5	4	3	2	1
to avoid conflict with another individual	5	4	3	2	1
because I didn't want to harm my relationship with another individual	5	4	3	2	1
because I did not want to create tension with co-worker	5	4	3	2	1
because to purposefully harm another individual	5	4	3	2	1
because to purposefully harm the organization	5	4	3	2	1
because to make management look bad	5	4	3	2	1
because to retaliate against the organization	5	4	3	2	1
because to get even with another person	5	4	3	2	1
because management did not appear interested in hearing about these types of issues	5	4	3	2	1
because no one was interested in taking appropriate action	5	4	3	2	1
because I did not believe my concerns would be addressed	5	4	3	2	1
because I did not think it would do any good to speak up	5	4	3	2	1
because I did not feel I would be taken seriously	5	4	3	2	1
because I believed that speaking up may negatively impact my career	5	4	3	2	1
because I was afraid of adverse consequences (e.g., being criticized, losing my job)	5	4	3	2	1
because I felt it was risky to speak up	5	4	3	2	1

because to protect myself from harm	5	4	3	2	1
Due to fear of retaliation	5	4	3	2	1
because I felt it was dangerous to speak up	5	4	3	2	1
to avoid embarrassing myself	5	4	3	2	1
because I was unsure what to say	5	4	3	2	1
because I did not want to appear incompetent	5	4	3	2	1
because I felt insecure	5	4	3	2	1
because I did not feel confident enough to speak up	5	4	3	2	1
to avoid task which could overload me	5	4	3	2	1
to avoid task which is not part of my job description	5	4	3	2	1
because suggesting mean sitting for extra hours	5	4	3	2	1
because the decision-makers assign the task of improvement to the one who comes up with the improvement idea	5	4	3	2	1
to avoid facilitating another employee	5	4	3	2	1
to not give away my knowledge advantage	5	4	3	2	1
because of concerns that others could take an advantage of my ideas	5	4	3	2	1
because that would mean having to do avoidable additional work	5	4	3	2	1
because I did not care what Happened	5	4	3	2	1
because I did not want to get involved	5	4	3	2	1
because the issue did not personally affect me	5	4	3	2	1

Guile Silence

Please answer the following questions, keeping in view the following scale:

The scales for the following items are: *1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree*

Item Root: I remained silent at work					
to avoid task which could overload me	5	4	3	2	1
to avoid task which is not part of my job description	5	4	3	2	1
because suggesting mean sitting for extra hours	5	4	3	2	1
because the decision-makers assign the task of improvement to the one who comes up with the improvement idea	5	4	3	2	1

Instrumental Climate

Please answer the following questions, keeping in view the following scale:

The scales for the following items are: *1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree*

Item Root: I remained silent at work					
In this company, people protect their own interests above all else.	5	4	3	2	1
In this company, people are mostly	5	4	3	2	1
There is no room for one's own personal morals or ethics in this company.	5	4	3	2	1
People are expected to do anything to further the company's interests, regardless of the consequences.	5	4	3	2	1
People here are concerned with the company's interests -to the exclusion of all else.	5	4	3	2	1
Work is considered substandard only when it hurts the company's interest.	5	4	3	2	1
The major responsibility of people in this company is to controls	5	4	3	2	1

Strain

Please answer the following questions, keeping in view the following scale:

The scales for the following items are: *1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree*

I have difficulty relaxing after work	5	4	3	2	1
Even at home I often think of my problems at work.	5	4	3	2	1
I get grumpy when others approach me.	5	4	3	2	1
Even on my vacations I think about my problems at work.	5	4	3	2	1
From time to time I feel like a bundle of nerves.	5	4	3	2	1
I anger quickly.	5	4	3	2	1
I get irritated easily, although I don't want this to happen.	5	4	3	2	1
When I come home tired after work, I feel rather irritable.	5	4	3	2	1