EMPLOYEE SILENCE; MEDIATING ROLE IN ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM BANKING SECTOR IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

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Abstract

Organizational factors such as lack of leader openness to voice, lack of open communication opportunity and defensive norms of organizational culture, may lead to the employees’ cognitive decision to intentionally engage in silence behavior. This ultimately results in low levels of organizational commitment. Yet, less consideration has been given to empirically explore these mechanisms while providing theoretical underpinnings. Hence, this study applied the theoretical lens of expectancy theory to understand how these organizational factors influence employee’s conscious decision to intentionally engage in silence behavior, which in turn impacts organizational commitment, in the new empirical context of banking sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Moreover, this study used mixed method, sequential explanatory design in which first quantitative part of the study aimed at investigating the mediating role of employee silence between organizational factors and organizational commitment, whereas second qualitative part aimed at explaining the reasons behind the significant and insignificant findings of the study and to re-conceptualize expectancy theory based employee silence model. During the first quantitative phase, probability sampling (two step stratified random sampling) was used to get sample of 1243 bankers in 258 branches of 8 commercial banks from 12 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan. The Questionnaire was used for data collection and reliability / validity of the instruments were established through Cronbach alpha and confirmatory factor analysis respectively. The regression analysis, Sobel’s test and structural equation modeling were used for mediation analyses. Furthermore, in the qualitative phase, semi structured interview was conducted while incorporating thematic coding and causal networking techniques. The results revealed that all the hypotheses regarding the direct relation between organizational factors, employee silence and organizational commitment were accepted, except one hypothesis. Moreover, the hypothesized mediated models regarding the intervening role of employee silence between organizational factors and organizational commitment were partially supported, thus extending theory to new empirical context. Additionally, the second qualitative phase provides immense theoretical contribution, by providing explanation for significant and insignificant findings of the study, and presents expectancy theory based employee silence models for the banking sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Thus, through
triangulation of data, the findings of this study add to the existing body of knowledge and provides valuable insights for bank management, policy makers and HR managers in identifying the areas that needs their attention. Thus, all these factors make this research work significant and, also timely. The limitations, future research avenues, and implications are also discussed.

**Keywords:** Employee Silence; Defensive Silence; Organizational Factors; Lack of Leader Openness to Voice; Lack of Open Communication Opportunity; Defensive Norms of Organizational Culture; Organizational Commitment; Affective Commitment; Expectancy Theory.
Chapter 1

Introduction

Organizations and Industries such as banks which are characterized by highly competitive environment, depends on the organizational factors such as leader positive attitude towards openness to voice, availability of open communication channels, and conducive norms of organizational culture. These factors foster voice behavior and enhance the level of commitment amongst their employees. Literature, however, shows that lack of leader openness to voice, lack of open communication opportunity and defensive norms of organizational culture lead to low level of commitment (Vakola & Bauradas, 2005). Moreover, these factors, while acting as the underlying motives, influence one’s conscious decision-making process to deliberately opt silence behavior that consequently reduces organizational commitment. Hence, employee silence plays a mediating role between the organizational factors and organizational commitment.

Employee silence is defined as withholding of relevant information based on certain underlying motives and are recognized as a distinct behavior than voice (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). It is conceptualized as active, conscious and purposeful behavior that is pervasive in nature. As per Dyne, Ang and Botero (2003) employee silence is a multi-dimensional phenomenon which is based on certain underlying motives, such as: acquiescent (resignation motive), defensive (fear motive) and pro-social silence (cooperation motive). Similarly, recent studies (Brinsfield, 2013 and Erigüç, Ozer, Turac, & Songur, 2014) emphasize on the need to investigate the different dimensions of employee silence.
This investigation will not only help the organizations to understand the multi-dimensional nature of employee silence but will also assist in identifying the root cause of varied forms of silence and accordingly take necessary action to overcome silence behavior in the organization.

Much of the recent interest in silence within the organizational sciences has been directed at a particular kind of silence - namely defensive silence that is a manifestation of an intentional reluctance to speak-up about an important issue, but perceived as risky to speak about it (Brinsfield, 2009 and Morrison, 2014). Defensive silence, based on desired outcome, mostly occur to avoid the risk/ fear of facing negative consequences based on prevalence of certain organizational factors which act as underlying motives behind this behavior. Moreover, Mental Calculus Theory, Psychological Safety Theory (Detert & Burris, 2007 and Detert & Trevino, 2010), Subjective Expected Utility Calculus and Issue Selling (Morrison, 2011 and Pacheco, Arruda, & Caldeira, 2015) emphasize that an employee consciously opts for silence as a self-protective behavior.

These studies primarily focus on two key judgments: (a) efficacy, which is the employee’s perception about whether engaging in voice will be effective in bringing about the desired result, and (b) safety or risk, which is the employee’s perception of whether engaging in voice will have negative consequences for him/herself or for their relationship with others. Individuals are more likely to engage in voice as their judgments of efficacy
and safety increase and more likely to remain silent as they decrease (Detert & Trevino, 2010; Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Morrison, 2011 and Pinder & Harlos, 2001). However, these theories lack investigation of a particular dimension of silence, i.e., defensive silence and how this decision calculus occurs based on the influence of certain organizational factors and the steps involved in this cognitive process.

Banking sector of Pakistan is marked as one of the centralized systems, having uncertain and stressful environment due to heavy competition among public, private and multinational banks (Hassan, Bano, Shaukat, & Nawaz, 2013). This has led to variety of job related issues such as: job stress due to inappropriate support from the branch manager and top management, work overload, time pressure, job risk, lack of good relationship with the colleagues as well as customers, poor work-life balance, long working hours, lack of technical training, unfavorable working conditions, and large responsibilities. Such unfavorable environment instills the fear of facing negative consequences among bank employees. This context points at defensive silence (based on motive to avoid the risk of facing negative consequences) rather than acquiescent or pro-social silence which is based on the underlying motives of resignation and cooperation, respectively (Dyne et al., 2003 and Pinder & Harlos, 2001). Hence, this condition makes it conducive to study how and why certain organizational factors influence conscious decision of bank employees to engage in defensive silence behavior.
To overcome all these issues, employees need a continuous communication flow with the immediate supervisor, top management, and their colleagues. On the other hand, banks need leader’s positive attitude towards employees’ voice, availability of open communication opportunities, conducive/supportive culture consisting of norms that support voice behavior to enhance employee commitment and encourage them to raise voice.

However, it is observed that mostly banks ignore these organizational factors. Due to the nonexistence of these organizational factors, lack of leader openness to voice, lack of open communication opportunity, and defensive norms of organizational culture occurs. Under such stressful and uncertain circumstances employee’s decision either to raise voice or to remain silent remains critical area of concern. Employee’s desire to raise voice or to adopt silence behavior depends on the underlying motives and the desired outcomes associated with each communicative behavior.

Lack of leader’s openness to voice refers to leader’s inability to make employees feel safe to speak up and to engage in two-way communication (Detert & Edmondson, 2011). Whereas, Lu and Xie (2013) defines lack of open communication opportunity as unavailability of free flow of information and exchange of ideas with the managers and coworkers. Yet, defensive norms of organizational culture is defined as a climate where a common set of beliefs and norms are followed by everyone and speaking up is considered as futile and unwelcomed by the organization (Mengenci, 2015 and Nikmaram, Yamchi, Shojaii, Zahrani, & Alvani, 2012).
However, it is evident from the literature (Morrison & Milliken, 2000) that due to the prevalence of above mentioned organizational factors employees perceive the context as unfavorable to raise voice and in order to avoid the risk of facing negative consequence intentionally remain silent even if they have suggestions for firm development or useful information to solve organizational issues. This further leads to low level of commitment. Besides, in past so many individual, organizational and social factors have been identified, in the service and manufacturing sectors, as the underlying motives behind intentional silence (Milliken, Morrison & Hewlin, 2003), while three of the above mentioned organizational factors were argued to be the most vital and critical antecedents of intentional silence (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). Notwithstanding, these studies lack the explanation of how and why these organizational factors have the potential ability to influence the conscious decision to engage in intentional silence behavior. Furthermore, this theoretical stance is under investigated in the empirical context of banking sector.

While talking about the consequences associated with silence behavior, Dyne et al., (2003) mentioned positive outcomes based on prosocial motive. They believe that employees remain silent for the sack of other colleagues and betterment of the organization. Whereas other studies pointed out to the negative outcomes such as job dissatisfaction, work stress, and cynicism amongst employees, increased psychological pressure, feelings of dishonor, increased aggression, hopelessness, destabilize organizational learning, low level of motivation and commitment, decreased morale, low level of trust on leader and top management and reduced organizational productivity (Detert & Edmondson, 2011 and Grant, 2013). However, organizational commitment is highlighted as one of the vital negative consequence associated with employee silence (Deniz, Noyan, & Ertosun, 2013).
Organizational commitment is defined as one’s willingness to put hard efforts to achieve organizational goals and to maintain a relationship with the firm (Vangel, 2011). As per three component model of commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991) organizational commitment has three types. First is continuous commitment which refers to employee attachment with the firm due to the higher costs of disassociation (Mengenci, 2015). The second type is normative commitment which means employees feeling to maintain employment relation with the organization based on perceived obligation towards the organization (Deniz et al., 2013). Meyer and Allen, (1991) defined the third type of commitment, i.e., affective commitment, as individual’s emotional affiliation and a strong sense of identification with the firm.

The previous studies attempted to investigate the direct association between employee silence and organizational commitment in general rather than measuring the impact of its three distinct dimensions i.e., normative commitment, continuous commitment and affective commitment (Eroglu, Adiguzel, & Ozturk, 2011; Hussain, Ali, Khalid, Shafique, & Ahmad, 2016 and Nikmaram et al., 2012). A lot of research studies have explored the predictors of organizational commitment in Pakistan’s banking context such as: delegation of authority, leadership style, organizational trust and support (Hassan et al., 2013). Furthermore, other studies highlighted the importance of affective commitment in Pakistan’s banking context in relation to demographics and personal factors like age, tenure and management level (Khan & Zafar, 2013). Likewise, work settings, pay satisfaction, involvement in decision-making process and job security are highlighted as the significant predictors of affective commitment (Abdullah & Ramay, 2011).
Although, aforementioned-studies point out the significance of affective commitment, yet lacking consideration of organizational factors including lack of leader openness to voice, lack of open communication opportunity and defensive norms of organizational culture in relation to affective commitment. Similarly, it is mentioned that as opposed to the other two types of commitment i.e., continuous and normative commitment, affective commitment is associated with employee’s willingness to maintain association with the firm based on emotional attachment and working for the betterment of the firm without expecting any gain. Moreover, it is argued that due to defensive silence, employees develop fear of facing negative consequences and intentionally remain silent. This intentional silence seems to weaken the employee’s emotional affiliation with the firms. This conceptual stance makes it more relevant to study how defensive silence impacts affective commitment.

Hence, there is a need to theoretically understand the mental mechanism involved in the step by step conscious decision making process to indulge in defensive silence, based on the influence of the organizational factors and how this decision in turn affects affective commitment.

Applying Expectancy Theory of Motivation and Process (Vroom, 1964) to the concept of employee silence can provide an answer to this theoretical gap (Lunenburg, 2011), in the following ways.
First, According to Parijat and Bagga (2014), the models based on Expectancy Theory are the actual explanation of one’s cognitive decision. They consider individual as an active agent of the environment who think critically and take conscious decisions to indulge in any of the alternative behavior conducting the subjective estimation of the expectancy that the selected behavior will result in desirable outcome and the level of probable satisfaction associated with those outcomes (Wei, Piaw, Kannan, & Moulod, 2016).

Secondly, as discussed by Redmond (2014), Expectancy Theory can provide a suitable theoretical framework to investigate employees’ perception about the influence of organizational factors on employees’ cognitive decision making process which determine employees’ motivation, choices, actions, and performance in different work settings and analyze the consequences associated with each resulting behavior (Fred, 2011).

Thirdly, by introducing the Vroom expectancy model (Vroom, 1964) into the silence behavior literature, it helps to integrate the rational decision making aspects of Expectancy Theory perspective with the employee silence construct to demonstrate when and how employee exert their efforts to indulge in silence behavior and how the elements of Expectancy Theory (expectancy, instrumentality and valence) are involved in step by step mental process of predicting the influences of certain organizational factors on ones’ conscious decision to intentionally engage in silence behavior as the best optimal choice, which consequently reduces organizational commitment.
Fourthly, the crux of the Expectancy Theory is that employees select behavioral alternatives which leads to the attainment of desired results (Vroom, 1964). Additionally, Expectancy Theory is a process theory which does not only explain underlying motives of employees’ behavior but also elaborates motivation through expectancy, instrumentality and valence. It also helps to understand the cognitive decision process while determining the effectiveness of behavioral alternatives and their consequences (Redmond, 2014).

Lastly the application of the Expectancy Theory on the concept of employee silence seems to be the most appropriate to understand the underlying motives (predictors), cognitive mechanism and consequences associated with the intentional form of silence, i.e., defensive silence. This also helps to recognizes the role of emotions (i.e., fear of facing negative consequences) and conscious processes, as the failure to engage in voice. Thus, this study aims at presenting an Expectancy Theory-based employee silence model by synergizing the Expectancy Theory argument in the literature of employee silence. This model aims at not only investigating the relationship between the study variables, through step by step conscious decision making process, based on the elements of Expectancy Theory (expectancy, instrumentality and valence) but also laying foundation to provide reasoning and explanation for why and how such relationship takes place.

The studies of Amah and Okafor, (2008) and Nikmaram et al., (2012) have explored the association among these organizational factors, silence behavior and commitment. Moreover, Mengenci, (2015) investigated the impact of these organizational factors on defensive, whereas other researchers (Deniz et al., 2013 and Laeeque & Bakhtawari, 2014) focuses on investigating the direct association between employee silence and organizational commitment. Moreover, Hussain et al., (2016) mentioned employee silence
as a vital predictor of organizational commitment in Pakistan’s educational context. Yet, these aforementioned-studies lack determining how employee silence mediates the relationship between these organizational factors and organizational commitment. On the other hand, some recent studies highlighted the mediating role of employee silence and reports that employee silence intervenes the relationship between organizational factors (such as: ethical leadership, organizational trust, interactional justice, overall justice perceptions, physical withdrawal) and organizational outcomes (such as: employee performance, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, internet deviance, emotional exhaustion, employee performance) (Chehraghi, Moghadam, & Kasmaie, 2016; De Lara, 2006; Fard & Karimi, 2015; Nikolaou, et al., 2011 and Whiteside & Barclay, 2013). However, these studies create a theoretical gap by lacking the focus on investigating employee silence mediates the relationship among organizational factors (i.e., lack of leader openness to voice, lack of open communication opportunity and defensive norms of organizational culture) and organizational commitment.

Therefore, this study aims at extending the existing theoretical stance in such a way that it contributes to existing literature on employee silence and organizational commitment, showing how the employee silence, through the elements of Expectancy Theory, plays a mediating role and predicts the relationship between these three organizational factors and organizational commitment. Moreover, this study empirically contributes by investigating the study variable in the new empirical context of banking sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.
Additionally, it is observed that most of the previous studies applied quantitative approach, (Erigüç et al., 2014; Hussain et al., 2016 and Nikmaram et al., 2012) along with a few focusing on qualitative approach (Alparslan, Can & Erdem, 2015 and Milliken et al., 2003) to provide a list of organizational factors that may lead to employee silence and low level of commitment, yet lacks explanation for how and why such relationship exists and how it takes place. Hence, this study adopted the mixed method sequential explanatory approach, which comprises detailed analysis of the study variable through quantitative phase, followed by the qualitative phase.

The first quantitative phase aims at investigating the direct as well as mediating relationship between the study variables, whereas second qualitative phase aims at explaining the reasons behind the significant and insignificant findings of the analysis through developing a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative analysis. As opposed to the previous qualitative studies, through this triangulation of data, the qualitative phase of this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by putting efforts to synergize the Expectancy Theory argument in the literature of employee silence behavior. It presents an Expectancy Theory-based employee silence model, particularly for the banking sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to explain how and why certain organizational factors create a fear of facing negative consequences and how they lead to a conscious decision to indulge in defensive silence and low level of commitment. This empirical and theoretical contribution provide valuable insights for bank management, policy makers and HR managers in identifying the areas that need their attention. Thus, all these factors make this research work significant and timely.
**Background**

In order to understand the rationale behind employees’ decision to either raise voice or to intentionally indulge in silence behavior, Pinder and Harlos (2001) stated that employees adopt voice or silence behavior to express their willingness or unwillingness to get involved in decisions making process of the organization. This intentionality to engage in voice or silence behavior is described as a conscious decision of an employee, based on influence of certain organizational factors which act as the antecedents and the underlying motives behind this decision (Pilař, Pokorná, & Balcarová, 2014). The findings of Milliken et al., (2003) pointed out fear and perception of employees regarding the influence of certain individual, organizational and social factors to play a vital role in employee’s cognitive decision process to deliberately engage in silence.

Most of the current literature on employee silence focus on the kind of silence that is an intentional behavior based on cognitive process similar to the subjective expected utility calculus and issue selling (Morrison, 2011 and Pacheco, Arruda, & Caldeira, 2015) that employees use when deciding whether to engage in any work behavior (Vroom, 1964). This form of intentional silence is based on the underlying motive to avoid the risk of negative consequences and it is called defensive silence. However, theoretical gaps exist in the investigation of this particular form of silence, the underlying motives, the cognitive mechanism and the consequences associated with this form of silence.
According to Redmond (2014) Expectancy Theory can provide a suitable theoretical framework to investigate employees’ motivation, choices, actions, and performance in different work settings (Fred, 2011). By the integration of the two distinct concepts of employee silence and Expectancy Theory, an individual selects the behavior based on his/her subjective estimation of the expectancy that the selected behavior will lead to desired outcomes. Moreover, the selection of the alternative behavior is also determined by the influence of the organizational factors prevailing in the organization. Thus, it is argued that the elements of Expectancy Theory can provide a deeper understanding of employees conscious and intentional decision to engage in silence behavior based on the influence of certain organizational factors (Vroom, 1964).

Milliken et al., (2003) in their study pointed out certain organizational factors that generate fear of facing negative consequences. These include fear of being considered a troublemaker or complainer, fear of losing relationships with people and isolation, feeling of futility and hopelessness, fear of punishment and fear of negatively impacting someone else’s job (Akbarian, Ansari, Shaemi, & Keshtiaray, 2015). While supporting the argument of Morrison and Milliken (2000), several research studies highlights three organizational factors as the most significant predictors of silence behavior. These are: negative attitude of leader towards openness to voice, lack of open communication opportunity and defensive norms of organizational culture (Amah & Okafor, 2008; Çakıcı, 2010; Eroglu et al., 2011 and Vakola & Bouradas, 2005).
Leader’s behavior can influence employees’ work behavior due to the power that they hold over employees’ outcomes as well as due to the directness of the relationship and the frequency of the contact (Schlosser & Zolin, 2012). The role of a leader is considered crucial for the successful implementation of change (Mengenci, 2015 and Yalçın & Baykal, 2012). Since leader openness to voice acts as a barrier to employee silence and reduces feeling of uncertainty and fear of facing negative consequences (Nikmaram et al., 2012). It is pertinent to state that leader openness to voice refers to “leader’s ability to engage in two-way communications, listens, supports, encourages, facilitates and involves employees in discussions and decision-making and makes employees feel safe to speak up to the hierarchy” (Detert & Edmondson, 2011 and Lu & Xie, 2013). Hence, Nikolaou et al., (2011) further states that when employees expect positive attitude of a leader towards voice, their fear of facing negative outcomes diminishes and they intentionally opt for voice behavior. Moreover, it is mentioned by Ng. & Feldman, (2012) that due to the negative attitude of the leader towards openness to voice, firm faces heavy loss in terms of low level of organizational commitment and employee silence (Nikmaram et al., 2012).

Researchers such as Eunson (2012) highlighted the significance of open communication opportunity for the better performance of a firm and stress on the importance of diverse opinions and suggestions for efficient decision making. Open communication opportunity means availability of free flow of information with the managers and coworkers which enhances employees perceived feeling of being taken seriously (Lu & Xie, 2013). Moreover, evidence suggests that when open communication channels exist employees give greater input in the decision-making process and their level of commitment and trust on management increases (Dedahanov, Kim, & Rhee, 2015).
However, it has been observed that employees remain silent when they sense personal threat or consider it difficult and useless to speak up (Karaca, 2013). This lack of open communication opportunity motivates employees to consciously and intentionally engage in silence. More specifically, Alparslan et al., (2015) suggest that dealing with the fear and insecurity of employees, an honest and open communication and encouragement of feedback are needed to contribute to organizational development. Likewise, lack of open communication opportunity is also defined as a centralized of decision-making process and a lack of formal upward feedback mechanisms (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). Hassan et al., (2013) furthermore states that change management is unsuccessful due to a lack of open communication opportunity.

According to Bogosian and Stefanchin (2013) organizational culture as a process of collective sense-making, whereby individuals try to understand the demands, constraints, and outcome associated with their workplace. As employees in a particular work setting, have a strong need to assess their perceptions and beliefs they compare them with those of other colleagues and through this triangulation of thoughts and beliefs forms a set of common norms of organizational culture to be followed by everyone. Moreover, conducive norms of organizational culture promote a climate where employees feel safe to express themselves and their feeling of insecurity decreases, hence they adopt voice behavior (Mengenci, 2015). Defensive norms of organizational culture are categorized by two shared beliefs.
First, it is useless to speak up due to indifferent attitude of managers and top management and secondly speaking up about organizational issues is dangerous and unwelcomed by the top management. Hence, employees develop a collective perception about speaking up as costly in terms of negative consequences associated with this behavioral choice (Lu & Xie, 2013). Likewise, past research work emphasizes that due to the prevailing defensive norms of organizational culture mostly employees know the truth about the organizational issues yet dare not speak up to the hierarchy (Mengenci, 2015 and Nikmaram et al., 2012).

While considering the consequences of employee silence, low level of organizational commitment is determined as one of the vital negative outcomes associated with this behavior. Organizational commitment is considered as one of the critical issues faced by the managers as it directly affects firms’ profitability and competitiveness (Bashir & Ramay, 2010; Khan & Zafar, 2013 and Laeeque & Bakhtawari, 2014). It is defined as workers attitude and behavior, the willingness to put hard efforts to achieve organizational goals and a strong wish to build and maintain membership relation with the organization. It is also seen as psychological attachment of an individual with the firm (Hussain et al., 2016). Evidences are found in the previous studies that high level of organizational commitment encourages employees to remain with the organization, be punctual, give their best to the firm, secure organizational assets, and believe in the corporate goals (Danish, Ramzan, & Ahmad, 2013). Similarly, it is noticed that an employee commitment reduces the state of absenteeism and turnover (Vangel, 2011).
Other researches (Deniz et al., 2013 and Jaffari & Javed, 2014) reported a negative association between employee silence and commitment. Moreover, it is stated that climate of silence negatively influences commitment due to which employees are demotivated to participate in attainment of organizational goals (Akbarian et al., 2015).

It is also stated that employee silence can result in lack of feedback mechanism, lack of information sharing, less effective firm processes, employees’ feelings of not being valued, employees perceived lack of control and employees’ cognitive dissonance. All these factors in turn lead to low level of organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Laeeque & Bakhtawari, 2014).

Moreover, few of the recent studies (Chehraghi et al., 2016 and Fard & Karimi, 2015) also focus on how employee silence mediates the association between organizational factors and organizational outcomes (Nikolaou et al., 2011 and Whiteside & Barclay, 2013) yet theoretical gap exists as these studies lack determining how employee silence mediates the relationship among these organizational factors and organizational commitment.

Deniz et al., (2013) and Laeeque and Bakhtawari, (2014) provides evidences regarding the direct association between lack of leader openness to voice, employee silence and organizational commitment. These aforementioned-studies found that lack of leader openness to voice negatively influence commitment and employee silence. Furthermore, employee silence consequently leads to low level of commitment. Thus, the literature implies that employee silence plays an intervening role in lack of leader openness to voice and commitment, yet lacks empirical evidences (Danish et al., 2013 and Ng & Feldman, 2012).
Moreover, Vakola & Bouradas, (2005) reports that a negative association exists between lack of open communication opportunity and commitment. Additionally, it is found that employee silence results due to lack of open communication opportunity (Dedahanov et al., 2015). Similarly, it is mentioned that employee silence influences level of commitment negatively (Deniz et al., 2013). Hence, it is inferred that employee silence plays a mediating role between lack of open communication opportunity and organizational commitment yet not investigated the in the banking context of Pakistan. Additionally, it is mentioned in the literature that defensive norms of organizational culture reduce level of commitment (Vakola & Bouradas, 2005). Morrison and Milliken (2000) states that this climate of silence in-turn motivates employees to engage in silence behavior hence, they don’t speak the truth in front of the top management (Zehir & Erdogan, 2011). Consequently, due to this silence behavior they lose interest in their jobs and their level of commitment reduces (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). Therefore, it is argued that the relationship between defensive norms of organizational culture and commitment is mediated by employee silence, yet needs to be investigated.

Although the above literature point outs that the mediating relationship of employee silence between the organizational factors and organizational commitment exist but lacks to investigate the mediating role of the particular form of silence i.e., defensive silence. Moreover, the mediating role of employee silence, through the elements of Expectancy Theory, between these organizational factors and a specific type of organizational commitment i.e., affective commitment is an under investigated area. Additionally, the other novelty of the study is based on sectoral perspective i.e., banking sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.
Problem Statement

Organizations need committed employees who can raise voice in favor of organizational development and to be competitive in the market. However, to be competitive in the market, it is found that employees remain silent about the issues and concerns related to the organization. To understand, why employees remain silent in response to the voice opportunity, much of the recent interest in silence has been directed at a particular kind of silence — namely defensive silence that is a manifestation of an intentional reluctance to speak-up about an issue that is important but perceived as too risky to speak about. Past studies emphasize that employee silence is opted as a self-protective behavior as a conscious decision of an employee. Yet, these theories lack investigation of defensive silence and the reason how this decision calculus occurs based on the influence of organizational factors and the steps involved in this cognitive process.

Morrison & Milliken (2000) pointed out three of the organizational factors as the most critical antecedents that act as underlying motives behind intentional silence. However, how and why these factors influence the conscious step by step decision making process to intentionally engage in silence behavior as the most optimal self-protective behavior is yet to be explored and researched.

While talking about the consequences associated with silence behavior, low level of organizational commitment is highlighted as one of the vital negative consequence associated with employee silence. However, there is lack investigation of how employee silence affects the specific form of organizational commitment, i.e., normative, continuous or affective commitment. More specifically, defensive silence seems to weaken employee’s emotional affiliation with firms whereas affective commitment is based on
emotional attachment with firm. This linkage makes it more relevant to study how defensive silence impacts affective commitment rather than organizational commitment in general. Moreover, previous research ignored the effect of other organizational factors – particularly lack of leader openness to voice, lack of open communication opportunity and defensive norms of organizational culture on affective commitment. It is also found in the literature that there is lack of investigation on the mediating role of employee silence between these three organizational factors and organizational commitment.

To answer this theoretical gap, theoretical lens of Expectancy Theory of Motivation and Process (Vroom, 1964) is applied to the concept of employee silence. By integrating the two domains of research: employee silence and Expectancy Theory, the purpose of this study is to investigate how the elements of Expectancy Theory (expectancy, instrumentality and valence) help to understand the step by step cognitive decision making process to predict the influence of these organizational factors on employees’ conscious decision to intentionally engage in silence behavior and level of organizational commitment, as well as how employee silence ultimately affects the level of organizational commitment. The mediating role of employee silence between the organizational factors and organizational commitment is not given due consideration, hence the current study aims at investigating how employee silence, through the elements of Expectancy Theory, intervenes the association between these organizational factors and commitment. Moreover, this study aims at adopting mixed method sequential explanatory design based on quantitative phase followed by the qualitative phase. The quantitative phase aims at exploring the direct and mediating linkage between the study variables whereas the
qualitative phase aims at explaining the reasons for why certain relationship exists and through the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative findings this study aims at developing an Expectancy Theory-based employee silence model. Additionally, the study aims at investigating this theoretical stance in the new empirical context of the banking sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan to extend the scope of Expectancy Theory and employee silence.

**Research Questions**

This study intends to answer the following research questions:

1. How do organizational factors, including the lack of leader openness to voice, lack of open communication opportunity and defensive norms of organizational culture influence employees' level of organizational commitment?

2. What is the influence of these organizational factors on employees' conscious decision to intentionally engage in employee silence behavior?

3. How does employee silence influence the level of organizational commitment?

4. How does employee silence intervene in the relationship between these organizational factors and organizational commitment?

5. What are the reasons behind significant and insignificant findings of this study?
Research Objectives

This study aims at achieving the following research objectives:

1. To identify and investigate which of the organizational factors (lack of leader openness to voice, defensive norms of organizational culture and lack of open communication opportunity) influence organizational commitment more.

2. To explore which of these organizational factors is the strongest predictor of employee silence.

3. To establish the effect of employee silence on the level of organizational commitment.

4. To examine the mediating role of employee silence between the organizational factors and organizational commitment.

5. To explore the reasons behind the significant and insignificant findings of this study.

This chapter provided a brief overview of the thesis focusing on the main idea and overall value of this research. Research questions were provided followed by the research objectives. The next chapter presents an in-depth discussion on review of literature of this manuscript.
Employees silence as a distinct phenomenon gained popularity quite recently in literature (Brinsfield, 2013 and Erigüç et al., 2014). This review of literature attempts to comprehend how employees in the organizations make conscious decision to be silent about issues that concern them and which organizational factors influence this decision as well as shed light on the negative consequences attached to this decision.

To deal with the complex business environment, advancement in technology, client needs, high quality standards and to gain the competitive edge in the changing world of business, organizations require to utilize their resources effectively as well as efficiently. Being a critical resource of the firm, skillful and committed employees are vital and reliable source for gaining a sustained competitive advantage (Vakola & Bouradas, 2005). To survive in the competitive market, organizations need to focus on the retention of talented and committed workers who can take initiative, share creative and innovative ideas and take responsibility for the enhancement of the firm performance (Mustafa & Mehmood, 2015).

When talking about the importance of human resource, banks are not an exception (Hassan et al., 2013). The banking sector in Pakistan has had a significant growth from more than a decade now and faces severe competition due to the emergence of multinational and private banks.
It is of utmost importance for banks to provide satisfaction to their employees and keep them motivated and determined (Hussain et al., 2016). The banks need to put in their best efforts to motivate employees to raise voice about new ideas, opinions, suggestions, issues, wrongdoings and problems in favor of achieving organizational goals and objectives (Hassan et al., 2013).

While voice behavior is considered to be a vital source of organizational change, organizations encourage employee voice behavior, which is defined as sharing information and innovative ideas by the employees for bringing improvement in organization profitability (Takeuchi, Chen, & Cheung, 2012). However, what many organizations experience as employee silence behavior is defined as an intentional behavior to withhold important information about injustice, harassment, illegal and immoral activities, new and creative ideas which may lead to improvement in organizational performance, in order to avoid any unfavorable circumstances (Morrison & Milliken, 2000 and Pinder & Harlos, 2001).

Although the study basically focuses on employee silence behavior, a deep insight into the nature of voice behavior is required to understand the orthogonal nature of voice and silence behavior and to understand how voice and silence behavior could be considered as alternative behaviors in response to voice opportunity (Zehir & Erdogan, 2011). In general voice and silence appear to be polar opposite but in reality they are the same (Bagheri, Zarei, & Aeen, 2012). Though silence is accepted as a distinct behavior rather than the non-existence of voice, however, a relation exists between the two themes. Literature on voice provides a thorough understanding of the concept of silence behavior.
Silence is not merely a lack of speech, as not speaking can occur for many reasons, including having nothing meaningful to convey (Morrison, 2014). Rather, silence refers to intentionally avoiding speaking up when one has a suggestion, concern, information about a problem, or a divergent point of view that could be useful or relevant to share, due to fear of facing negative consequences (Brinsfield, 2013). Although employee silence is traditionally theorized as passive behavior, not all kinds of silence reflect passive behavior. Instead, as reported by Pinder and Harlos (2001) employee silence is also conceptualized as active, conscious, intentional, and purposeful behavior (Zehir & Erdogan, 2011). Additionally, Brinsfield's (2013) argued that employee silence is multi-dimensional and pervasive in nature that can be measured.

It was found in the literature that silence was considered to be the byproduct of voice (Dyne et al., 2003). However, in recent years, silence got recognition as a separate behavior than voice that employees may opt for, based on certain underlying motives (Lam, 2013 and Morrison, 2014). They further expressed that the key element that differentiate silence and voice behavior was their underlying motives. Moreover, one’s decision to raise voice or to remain silent also depends on the desired consequences, such as the desired outcome behind the intentional silence behavior is to protect oneself from the risk of negative consequences (Mengenci, 2015). Silence can also be used in order to fulfill a specific motive and in this manner, the non-existence of the voice of the employee can be distinguished from the term silence (Pinder & Harlos, 2001) as well as silence can also be distinguished from the pauses that occur in the verbal discourse during communication (Dyne et al., 2003).
Theories of Employee Silence

Voice mechanism has been viewed from many perspectives such as boat rocking, organizational learning, principled organizational dissent, issue selling, knowledge transfer, change management, bad news reporting, procedural justice, behaviors of organizational citizenship, whistle-blowing, and more (Argyris, 1993; Dutton & Ashford, 1993; Graham, 1986; Hollenbeck, LePine, & Ilgen, 1996; Klaas, 1989; Miceli & Near, 1992 and Organ, 1988). However, the landscape of the intentional silence was not taken into account by these researches.

Employee silence is being associated with different types of motives and is studied from varied point of view such as organizational norms, dedicated authority, group pressure, management practices and policies etc. (Brinsfield Edwards, & Greenberg, 2009). The theories that may help to understand the concept of employee silence and the reasons associated with it are discussed below in order to get a deeper insight into the phenomenon of employee silence.

Pluralistic Ignorance

The term pluralistic ignorance describes the situation in which nearly all members of a group privately reject group norms yet believe that most of the other group members accept them (Katz & Allport, 1931). Further it is described as a condition of widespread conformity to social norms in the absence of widespread private support. It occurs when individuals hide their true feelings due to the fear of embarrassment or social boycott.
Diffusion of Responsibility

Latane and Darley (1968) explain the reason why individual remain silent in the organization during the time of emergency. They believe “diffusion of responsibility” is the main cause behind this silence. It is defined as a situation when an individual witness an emergency in which others are witness too and he/she does not take any action to manage it because he expects someone else to take actions against it. This reduces his personal sense of responsibility.

Exit, Voice, Loyalty and Neglect Framework

According to Hirschman’s (1970) Exit-Voice-Loyalty framework, employees express their dissatisfaction about organizational issues either through voice or exit behavior and when these two options do not work they adopt silence behavior with the hope that issue will be resolved with the passage of time. This framework equated silence with “loyalty” based on the assumption that nothing was wrong in the organization until the issues are being raised.

Farrell (1983) further added “neglect,” to list of response to job dissatisfaction, characterized as apathy and passive disengagement. Since then silence is equated with loyalty, neglect, inaction, or the maintenance of the status quo; with the idea that silence might be meaningful beyond passive endorsement, with distinct cognitive, affective, and behavioral elements generally disregarded (Pinder & Harlos, 2001).
The MUM Effect

Rosen and Tesser (1970) described MUM effect as an individual general reluctance to be the bad news reporter and has been identified as one of the reason behind intentional silence at workplace. It is found that reluctance to communicate bad news may result from many factors such as fear of damaging working relationship and the guilt associated with not sharing recipients’ misfortune, feeling uncomfortable while reporting concerns about potential problems or wrongdoing to their superiors as opposed to their colleagues or subordinates (Milliken et al., 2003).

Groupthink

Groupthink occurs when group members abide by the group norms to get group acceptance (Janis, 1972). Groupthink, may itself not be a form of employee silence, but it is certainly a significant cause of silence in organizations.

Spirals of Silence

The theory of spiral of silence (Noelle-Neumann, 1974) provides insight into how silence may manifest and perpetuate in the conformance to public opinion. According to this theory, when individual find themselves as a minority group they intentionally opt for silence behavior due to fear of isolation or self-doubt.

Abilene Paradox

Harvey (1974) described the term “Abilene Paradox” as a phenomenon wherein a group of people collectively choose a course of action that contrasts with the preferences of any of the individuals in the group. It entails a common breakdown of group communication in which each member mistakenly believes that their own preferences contrast with the group’s and, therefore, he/she does not raise objections.
This concept has elements of both voice and silence: Voice in the sense that people are speaking up by falsely consenting to the perceived wishes of the group; silence in the sense that they are remaining silent concerning their true feelings.

**Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB - Silence Focus)**

While looking at the previous research on silence it is concluded as a negative phenomenon (Morrison & Milliken 2000 and Pinder & Harlos, 2001). However, there are situations where remaining silent may have positive consequences for the organization. These positive consequences of silence are being associated with the broader phenomenon of OCB. More recently, prosocial silence has been introduced as withholding of important information and ideas with the aim of promoting other organizational members - based on altruism or cooperative motives (Dyne et al., 2003).

**Deaf Ear Syndrome**

Another organizational factor that may motivate to remain silent is identified as organizational failures to respond in a positive way to employees’ harassment complaints (Peirce, Smolinski, & Rosen, 1998). This phenomenon functions as an organizational norm that discourages open and free flow of information exchange with the management as well as colleagues. Moreover, Pinder and Harlos (2001) attributed formalized system for reporting complaints to be the predictor of employee silence.
Social Ostracism

According to Williams (2001) social ostracism is viewed either as a form of employee silence (i.e., giving employees the silent treatment at work), or as a factor that may lead to silence (i.e., employees may remain silent due to the fear of being ostracized). Social ostracism is often related to the phenomenon of “silent treatment” which focuses on social boycott at work, hence employees fear of ostracism affect employees’ willingness to voice.

Job Withdrawal

The term job withdrawal is a broader phenomenon and covers variety of job behavior such as employee turnover, absenteeism, neglect, disengagement, and more recently, employee silence (Conlon, Meyer, & Nowakowski, 2005; Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Dyne et al., 2003; Hirschman, 1970 and Pinder & Harlos, 2001). Employee silence is that form of withdrawal that may act as the predictor of other forms of job withdrawal behaviors such as absenteeism, disengagement or turnover.

Organizational Silence

The conceptual work by Morrison and Milliken (2000) coined the term “organizational silence” for the first time to define employee silence behavior as a collective level phenomenon of withholding information, opinions or concerns related to work issues, to avoid the risk of facing negative consequences. Their work pointed out two reasons for organizational silence to occur such as fear of facing negative consequences and perception of employee regarding the organizational factors, contributing to organization-wide silence norms which motivate employees to intentionally engage in silence behavior. Moreover, unlike previous studies they do not only talked about the
antecedents of silence behavior but also provide a new research avenue by highlighting the negative consequences associated with silence behavior. They document low level of job satisfaction and commitment to be the dominant negative consequences of intentional silence behavior. Based on the work of Morrison and Milliken (2000) the succeeding studies (Dyne et al., 2003; Milliken et al., 2003 and Pinder & Harlos, 2001) document employee silence and voice as a distinct construct and not simply the opposites of each other. They focus on the antecedent as well as the consequences of employee silence behavior.

**Employee Silence**

The term “employee silence” began to appear in the work of Pinder and Harlos (2001) who 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 effecting change or redress”. The main difference between organizational silence and employee silence is that organizational silence is viewed as collective level phenomenon and employee silence as individual phenomenon.

According to Pinder and Harlos (2001) employee silence takes place in response to injustice and it is a distinct communicative behavior than voice based on cognition and intention. Moreover, they presented two dimensions of employee silence based on injustice i.e., quiescent and acquiescent silence along with the negative consequences of employee silence behavior.
Subsequently, some other researchers (Dyne et al., 2003; Milliken et al., 2003 and Vakola & Bouradas, 2005) define silence however two insight regarding employees silence behavior remain dominant i.e., consciously analyzing the predictors and the consequences of employee silence and intentionally engaging in silence to protect oneself from the risk of negative consequences (Morrison & Milliken, 2000 and Pinder & Harlos, 2001).

**Dimensions of Employee Silence**

With the gradual development of this new phenomenon, other researchers broaden the concept of employee silence as a multidimensional construct which is influenced by different individual and organizational factors that act as underlying motives behind silence behavior (Brinsfield 2009; Dyne et al., 2003; Lu & Xie, 2013 and Milliken et al., 2003). The first categorization of employee silence was given by Pinder and Harlos (2001) as acquiescent and quiescent silence, based on injustice motive. Later this categorization broadened and accommodated different personal and situational factors as the underlying motives. Dyne et al., (2003) proposed three dimension of employee silence such as acquiescent, defensive, and prosocial silence, based on resignation, fear and cooperation motives, respectively.

Moreover, recently some other dimensions of employee silence also emerged such as Zhang (2010) proposed three types of silence based on certain organizational factors such as institutional silence, cultural silence and structural silence. Moreover, Zhao (2012) provided three dimensions of employee silence: organization system barrier silence, interpersonal fear silence and low self-esteem silence. Whereas, Ma (2010) presented double-win silence and no-win silence as the two dimensions of silence. Furthermore, Brinsfield (2013) presented six dimensions of silence based on certain underlying motives
such as ineffectual silence, relational silence, defensive silence, diffident silence, disengaged silence and deviant silence. Irrespective of varied dimension of employee silence, three of the initial dimension of silence i.e., acquiescent silence, quiescent/defensive silence and prosocial silence present the basic underlying motives behind employees’ silence behavior (Dyne et al., 2003).

**Acquiescent Silence**

According to Pinder and Harlos (2001) acquiescent silence occurs when an employee has given up hope for improving an unsatisfactory situation or circumstance. This feeling of hopelessness may lead to an employee suffering in silence. When employee feels speaking-up futile that compels the employee into further states of disengagement and withdrawal. Furthermore, employees who are not aware of alternative options, prefer to remain silent (Vakola & Bouradas, 2005).

While supporting the argument of Pinder and Harlos (2001), Dyne et al., (2003) define acquiescent silence as a behavior that is more passive and inactive in nature because employees do not express their ideas, as they believe that speaking up is useless or ineffective because of low assessment of self-efficacy. They remain silent not because of any fear or high cognitive dissonance but due to their attitude of apathy and hopelessness (Laeeque & Bakhtawari, 2014).
Acquiescent silence is also characterized as a form of withdrawal behavior which includes low participation, negligence, carelessness, ignorance and stagnation. For example, an employee refuses expressing his opinion because he believes that there is no use to talk and it is impossible to make a difference and change the situation through talking and commenting. In addition, he/she may think that their personal ability is unreliable to influence the conditions. In both cases, silence is a result of the submission and acquiescence to any situation (Chehraghi, Moghadam, & Kasmaie, 2016).

**Prosocial Silence**

Pro-social silence is exhibited by an employee when he/she purposely holds back job-related information, feelings, or thoughts for the sake of benefiting the organizational members or the organization (Brinsfield et al., 2009 and Pinder & Harlos, 2001). Like defensive silence, the employee showing pro-social silence is aware about the existence of alternatives to being mute and willfully chooses to stay quiet. However, unlike defensive silence, the driving force behind pro-social silence is thoughtfulness about others instead of the apprehension of unconstructive outcomes on the professional wellbeing that might result from raising one’s voice (Zheng, Ke, Shi, & Zheng, 2008). Moreover, prosocial silence is based on the literature of organizational citizenship behavior. This type of silence is intentional and non-passive in nature and primarily emphasizes other people, based on cooperation motive (Dyne et al., 2003).
Defensive Silence

In defensive silence, the ideas, opinions, and information is withheld for the protection of one’s self due to fear motive. This definition is the same as the conceptualization of silence presented by Morrison and Milliken (2000) who explained this phenomenon of silence based on the fear motive. Moreover, this dimension of silence is also like the concept of psychological safety (Kish-Gephart, Detert, Trevino, & Edmondson, 2009). Additionally, Schlosser and Zolin (2012) expressed defensive silence as the behavior that is proactive as well as intentional to protect oneself from threats of unfavorable consequences.

Conscious Decision to Engage in Silence Behavior: Defensive Silence Perspective

The focus of this research study is on the exploration of a specific dimension or magnitude of silence thus the adoption of a precise definition is mandatory. Based on the work of previous researchers (Dyne et al., 2003; Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Pinder & Harlos, 2001; Schlosser & Zolin, 2012 and Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2012) this study focuses on the defensive silence dimension of employee silence that is derived from fear based motive of facing negative consequences and define defensive silence as the purposeful reserving of relevant knowledge and ideas by the workers based on adverse outcomes.
The previous research studies claim that fear is the most common factor causing organizational silence and intensifies climate of silence in the organization (Milliken et al., 2003; Morrison & Milliken, 2000 and Nikolaou et al., 2011): employees’ fear of reprimand, punish, missing any rewards or even dismissal and managers fear of negative feedback and risk of isolation. Because of these kind of fears, organizational culture dominants climate of defensive silence in organization and employees take a conscious decision to intentionally engage in silence behavior to avoid the risk of facing negative consequences (Akbarian et al., 2015 and Mengenci, 2015).

According to Dyne et al., (2003) defensive forms of silence is more proactive in nature containing awareness regarding the available alternatives and it also contains information regarding the withholding of ideas and information that involves cognitive decisions as they believe it is a safe and secure manner of response. Furthermore, it is also planned in a good manner and is the pre-emptive behavior expressed by the employees who intend to avoid the risk of negative consequences (Pinder & Harlos, 2001). Defensive silence as opposed to acquiescent one is more tactical. It involves full knowledge and contemplation about the choices with which an employee makes a cognitive decision of refusing to communicate their viewpoints, knowledge, or information with others (Milliken et al., 2003).

According to Tangirala and Ramanujam (2012) defensive silence has been theorized as conscious and deliberate withholding of information and ideas instead of an unintentional failure to communicate or simply having nothing to say. It is considered as a communicative choice adopted by the employees as a safe response while confronting the latent voice opportunity (Morrison, 2014). The above conceptualization emphasizes on the
intentional nature of silence explaining the systematic process of how silence takes place in organization (Morrison, 2011 and Schlosser & Zolin, 2012). They point out the antecedents influencing employees’ conscious decision to intentionally engage in silence. Furthermore, Pinder and Harlos (2001) report that in such climate of silence employees consciously analyze the influence of these organizational factors and if they perceive speaking up as futile or dangerous they deliberately take a decision to remain silent rather than to raise voice to protect themselves from the risk of facing negative consequences. Hence, employee silence is considered as intentionally withholding of ideas to avoid the risk of facing negative consequences due to the influence of certain organizational factors.

Perkins (2014) provides a sound theoretical reasoning for understanding the reasons behind fear-based withholding of information with a hope to understand the importance of defensive silence as well as to understand how to avoid fear-based withholding of information in the organization.

Table 1

Research Streams Highlighting Defensive Silence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research streams</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pluralistic Ignorance</td>
<td>Employees remain silent to hide their true feelings due to fear of embarrassment or social boycott (Katz &amp; Allport, 1931).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUM Effect</td>
<td>Employees intentional decision to remain silent based on fear of damaging work relationship (Rosen &amp; Tesser, 1970).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spiral of Silence</td>
<td>Employees consciously remain silent due to fear of isolation (Noelle-Neumann, 1974).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue selling</td>
<td>Fear of negative consequences is a top threat associated with selling an issue to upper management (Dutton &amp; Ashford, 1993).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Silence</td>
<td>Employees’ shared beliefs about the danger and/or futility of speaking up (Morrison &amp; Milliken, 2000; Milliken et al., 2003 and Vakola &amp; Bouradas, 2005).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Ostracism</td>
<td>Employees fear of ostracism affects their willingness to raise voice (Williams, 2001).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Silence</td>
<td>The intentional withholding of relevant information based on fear of facing negative consequences (Pinder &amp; Harlos, 2001).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking up</td>
<td>Speaking up is more likely when individuals believe it is safe and worthwhile (Detert &amp; Edmondson, 2006 and Premeaux &amp; Bedeian, 2003).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical upward feedback</td>
<td>Perceived fear of retaliation negatively impacts one’s desire to provide critical upward feedback within an organization (Tourish &amp; Robson, 2006).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upward maintenance</td>
<td>Behaviors designed to maintain relationships with supervisors with respect to a baseline level of intimacy and attachment (Tepper, Moss, Lockhart, &amp; Carr, 2007).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Communication apprehension  An employees’ fear or anxiety related with either real or anticipated communication with a person or persons (McCroskey, 2009).

Of these research streams, defensive silence (Dyne et al., 2003 and Kish-Gephart et al., 2009) a subset of employee silence research, emerged as the most salient foundation of all these studies. This literature provides sufficient support to establish significance of defensive silence. “Fear is an unpleasant feeling of perceived risk or danger, whether real or not” (De Lara, 2006).

If one’s risk assessment elicits a strong negative affective state, such as fear, the person can remain silent which means that the desire to avoid negative outcomes can play an important role in one’s decision to remain silent (Milliken et al., 2003). Thus, defensive silence involves awareness and consideration of alternatives (risk assessment) and a “withholding of information as a form of self-protection, based on fear” (Dyne et al., 2003).

Conscious Decision to Engage in Silence Behavior: Expectancy Theory Perspective

Most of the current literature on employee silence focus on the kind of silence that is an intentional behavior based on cognitive process like the subjective expected utility calculus and issue selling (Morrison, 2011 and Pacheco et al., 2015) that employees use when deciding whether to engage in any work behavior (Vroom, 1964). The findings of Milliken et al., (2003) further point out fear and perception of employees regarding the influence of certain individual, organizational and social factors to play a vital role in employees’ cognitive decision process to deliberately engage in silence. However, these researches lack to empirically elaborate the impact of certain organizational factors on
employees conscious and deliberate decision to engage in silence behavior and direct as well as mediating association between these organizational factors, employee silence and organizational commitment, particularly in the context of banking sector (Detert & Edmondson, 2011).

Applying Expectancy Theory of Motivation and Process (Vroom, 1964) to the concept of employee silence can provide an answer to this theoretical gap (Lunenburg, 2011). According to Redmond (2014) Expectancy Theory can provide a suitable theoretical framework to investigate employees’ perception about the influence of organizational factors on employees’ cognitive decision making process which determine employees’ motivation, choices, actions, and performance in different work settings (Fred, 2011).

According to Parijat & Bagga (2014) the models based on Expectancy Theory are the actual explanation of one’s cognitive decision and consider individual as an active agent of the environment who think critically and take conscious decisions to indulge in any of the alternative behaviors while conducting environmental scanning to evaluate the influence of certain organizational factors prevalent in the environment, as well as subjective estimation of the expectancy that the selected behavior results in desirable outcome, and the level of probable satisfaction associated with those outcomes (Wei, Piaw, Kannan, & Moulod, 2016). Moreover, the selection of a particular behavior is based on one’s perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs regarding maximizing gains and minimizing losses.
According to Vroom (1964) Expectancy Theory consists of three components: expectancy, instrumentality and valence that together makes the motivational force to adopt a particular behavior amongst the alternatives available. Expectancy is defined as one’s belief that effort (E) results in the achievement of desired performance (P). When individuals’ belief regarding the desired result is beyond their ability to influence, expectancy is low. When expectancy is low, people are less motivated to adopt a particular behavior (Lunenburg, 2011).

Whereas, instrumentality is about one’s perception that an expected outcome/reward will be received if the performance expectations are met. This desired reward could be in form of increase in salary, promotion, recognition by the management or feeling of accomplishment. If an individual does not see any association between reward and performance, instrumentality is low and they are less motivated to adopt a particular behavior (Mercer, Carpenter, & Wyman, 2010).

However, valence is defined as the extent to which an individual values a given result or outcome. This value is interpreted as: -1, 0 and +1, where -1 means negative valence when one tries to avoid the outcome: 0 refers to indifferent attitude towards the outcome; and +1 indicates that one welcomes the outcome. In other words, valence is defined as positive valence: that is preferring an outcome, negative valence: preferring not to have an outcome, or zero valence: that is being indifferent towards outcome (Greenberg, 2011; Hellriegel & Slocum, 2011 and McShane & Von Glinow, 2011).
Based on the elements of Expectancy Theory, it is stated that an individual adopts a particular behavior if Motivational Force (MF) to adopt that particular behavior is high. MF is defined as the multiplicative function of expectancy, by instrumentality and valence. It is formalized as: \( (MF) = \text{Expectancy} \times \text{Instrumentality} \times \text{Valence} \) (Redmond, 2014). If there is low level of expectancy and instrumentality or if valence is negative or zero, motivational force also becomes zero and thus a particular course of action is not adopted (Vroom, 1964). In other words, motivational force to adopt a particular behavior only exists when all three elements of expectancy, instrumentality, and valence are met. While selecting one’s behavior over the other behaviors, a person selects a behavior that has the greatest motivational force.

**Applying Expectancy Theory Lens on Employee Silence**

By introducing the Vroom expectancy model (Vroom, 1964) into the silence behavior literature, helps to integrate the rational decision making aspects of Expectancy Theory perspective with the employee silence construct to demonstrate when and how an employee exerts their efforts to indulge in silence behavior, and how the elements of Expectancy Theory (expectancy, instrumentality and valence) are involved in step by step mental process of predicting the influences of certain organizational factors on one’s conscious decision to intentionally engage in silence behavior as the best optimal choice.
An Expectancy Theory states that most of the time an employee has something important to share and this situation is called voice opportunity (Morrison, 2014). Now employees have two alternative behavior choices, either to raise voice or to choose defensive silence behavior. Before engaging in any of the alternative behaviors, i.e., either to raise voice or to remain silent, employees first assess the environment for 'context favorability'. A favorable environmental context is termed as one where an employee perceives it safe to raise voice. This in turn ensures the psychological safe environment and the probability of uncertainty or fear of facing negative consequences is low, hence employees opt for voice behavior (Detert & Trevino, 2010 and Grant, 2013).

However, if employees are not provided with these circumstances, they perceive context as unfavorable where speaking up is considered as futile and dangerous (Lebel, 2012). Under the unfavorable context, the prevailing organizational factors create the risk of facing negative consequences, thus employees take a conscious and deliberate decision to engage in silence behavior (Lavena, 2016 and Moore, Hester, & Yager, 2016). Additionally, it is suggested that the motivation of an employee to intentionally engage in silence behavior is determined by his/her perception of the likelihood that the choice to engage in silence behavior leads to specific desired outcome (i.e., to avoid the risk of negative consequences) coupled with their perception of the attractiveness of this outcome (Dyne et al., 2003, Pinder & Harlos, 2001 and Vroom, 1964). The crux of the Expectancy Theory is that employees select that behavioral alternative which leads to the attainment of desired results (Vroom, 1964).
Additionally, Expectancy Theory is considered to be process theory which does not only explain underlying motives behind employees’ behavior but also defines how motivation takes place. Process theories also help to understand the cognitive decision process one goes through while determining the effectiveness of behavioral alternatives and their consequences. It also determines the behavioral direction, how it originates and diminishes (Redmond, 2014).

Expectancy Theory provides the cognitive explanations of individual behavior that presents an individual as an active, thinking, predicting creature of the environment (Vroom, 1964). A person constantly assesses the consequences of his/her behavior and subjectively evaluates the probability that each of their possible actions results in numerous consequences. The level of effort that one exerts is based on a persistent analysis of the worthiness of the rewards associated with the consequences; the likelihood that rewards will be achieved because of these consequences, and the likelihood of reaching these consequences through possible efforts and actions (Redmond, 2014).

Factors Predicting Employee Silence

Study conducted by Morrison and Milliken (2000) explore the motives behind employee silence. The investigation report that an employee might choose to keep quiet within the organization due to fear motive. The fear that employees might have to face negative consequences impacts the actions of the employees (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). Top management at times interprets ideas in a negative manner and this is also avoided by the employees (Detert & Burris, 2007 and Milliken et al., 2003). Furthermore, employees who feel the risk of being treated negatively by the manager in response to raising voice automatically adopt the safe response of silence behavior for the sake of self-protection.
from these kinds of negative consequences. Moreover, Pinder and Harlos (2001) argue that when the climate of silence prevails in the organization, employees perceive speaking up as dangerous or futile. These perceptions are basically the result of negative role of top management that discourages voice behavior, hence organization develop defensive norms of culture to be followed by everyone. While supporting the findings of Pinder and Harlos (2001), Milliken et al., (2003) also mention fear to be the crux of employee silence. Hence, it is observed that fear act as one of the vital motives behind silence behavior (Akbarian et al., 2015).

Further, the study of Milliken et al., (2003) highlights the issues that employees feel hesitant to talk about. About 40 employees working in various industries like advertising, pharmaceuticals, media, finances, consulting etc. were interviewed to know the reason for remaining silent and the results depicted that there were situations in which employees were very concerned regarding the issue but they did not talk about it to the supervisor.

The respondents in their study reported the following issues on which they could not raise voice. These are:

- Incompetency of supervisor(s) or colleagues.
- Hesitancy regarding giving suggestions about the problems and process of the organization.
- Issues concerning their compensation or promotion.

The study by Milliken et al., (2003) further, investigates that why employees choose to be silent and find that distinct opinions might not be expressed due to the consensus of a group and so that cohesiveness within the organization can be maintained (Brinsfield et al., 2009).
Normative pressures and social pressures also exist within a group and contribute towards the silence of the employees (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). An employee might also opt to avoid speaking up of those ideas, which are not welcomed by others (Dyne et al., 2003). Often when individuals belong to the minority group, they hold on their views due to fear of isolation from the group. The study also explores that silence is the result of this perception built by the employees that no heed is going to be paid to whatever they say as voice is falling on so called “deaf ears” and hence they resign. (Bowen & Blackmon, 2003).

More recently, Detert et al., (2010) surveyed 439 employees working in different organizations and find that 42% reported withholding of information when they felt they had nothing to gain, or something to lose, by sharing it. This withholding did not just include information about illegal or unethical activities but suggestions for addressing routine problems or for making improvements. Additionally, Lu and Xie (2013) with the help of a Hofsted model of culture, stated that the social background and culture with large power distance have an impact on the employees’ decision to adopt silence. Moreover, besides these factors, most of the time employees remain silent to keep unity with other colleagues.
Zehir and Erdogan (2011) found a negative association between organizational silence and ethical leadership in the national and multinational companies of Turkey. Additionally, some other studies reported negative effects of perceived organizational justice and employee silence (Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2012 and Tulubas & Celep, 2012). According to Richard (2003) the factors that cause the silence in organizations are fear, embarrassment, narrow conceptions of ethical responsibility, implicated friends, lack of opportunity for voice and lack of organizational political skills.

Akbarian et al., (2015) and Richard in 2003 figured out some of the factors that are reason for causing silence, which are politics of the organizations, no opportunity to raise voice, narrow mindedness in case of ethical responsibilities, embarrassment, fear etc. Moreover, the reasons mentioned by the respondents, in the study of Milliken et al., (2003) to remain silent were as follows:

- To avoid being considered as troublemaker or complainer.
- Fear of losing relationships with people and isolation.
- Feeling of futility and hopelessness.
- Fearing that they would get punished.
- Indifferent attitude of supervisor.
- Negatively impacting someone else’s job.

Similarly, Park and Keil (2009) presented in their paper that team members of IT projects are mostly reluctant to report bad news that may result in failure of those projects. They incorporated the main elements of organizational silence model (Morrison & Milliken, 2000) i.e. organizational structures/policies; managerial practices; and degree of demographic dissimilarity between employees and top managers, with the whistle-blowing
model adapted from Dozier and Miceli (1985), to gain a better understanding of factors that influence one’s decision to report or not to report bad news. In their study, they presented eight scenarios with two different levels for each type of organizational factors (organizational structures/policies; managerial practices; and degree of demographic dissimilarity between employees and top managers), that were manipulated in a controlled laboratory experiment to evaluate how the climate of silence affects an individual’s decision to report voice or remain silent within the boundary of the basic whistle-blowing model. The result of the study suggest that all three factors create a climate of silence and ultimately influence one’s decision to report bad news.

Other studies also put light on some other common factors causing organizational silence that are; the culture of inconsistent treatment of employees, climate of silence, organizational culture, administrative issues, negative feedback by management, prejudice, personal characters of managers, lack of trust, risk of talking, risk of isolation, bad experiences in the past, fear of damaging relationships, characteristic differences, cultural issues, values and norms and fear of management power (Çakıcı, 2010; Demir & Ozturk, 2010 and Eroğlu et al., 2011).

More recently, employee silence is defined as an intentional behavior based on the perception of employees about the influence of certain personal, social and organizational factors (Akbarian et al., 2015; Bagheri et al., 2012 and Bogosian, 2012) which are further discussed below:
**Individual Factors**

While talking about the individual factors, some of the studies mention that employee silence is a product of psychological factors stemming from individual employee’s personality characteristics (Ozkan, Tengilimoğlu, & Yilik, 2015) such as gender, self-esteem, self-efficacy, locus of control, introvert and extrovert behavior etc. Similarly, Lu and Xie (2013) suggested that individuals with strong sense of responsibility tend to raise voice whereas the easy-going employee are more inclined towards silence behavior as they don’t want to create problems for others. Moreover, the empirical investigation by Malekpoor and Fakhr-eddini (2015) shows that sense of accountability and extrovert personality characteristics have a positive correlation with willingness to express voice.

Some other researchers mention that employees level of self-esteem, self-monitoring and locus of control affect their decision to remain silent or to speak up. Lack of self-confidence and lack of interpersonal skills are the root causes of silence (Deniz et al., 2013).

**Cultural Factors**

Few of the other studies pointed out socio economic factors as the predictors of employee (Magotra, 2016). Lu and Xie (2013) mentioned in their study that according to the Hofsted model of culture social background and culture with large power distance have an impact on the employees’ decision to adopt silence.
Organizational Factors

However, evidences are found in the literature that most of the work emphasize on organizational factors to be the strongest predictors of fear-based employee silence and consider them as more critical than individual and social factors. Based on the initial work of Morrison and Milliken (2000) some of the past research work emphasize on the role of organizational structures/policies, managerial practices and degree of demographic dissimilarity between employees and top managers as the antecedents of employee silence (Karaca, 2013 and Muthusamy & Priyadarsini, 2015). They argue that these factors develop the climate of silence and employees adopt silence behavior as a collective mechanism. Moreover, Pinder and Harlos (2001) argue that when the climate of silence prevails in the organization, employees perceive speaking up as dangerous or futile.

Milliken et al., (2003) in their study pointed out certain organizational factors that generate fear of facing negative consequences and hence act as the antecedents of employee silence (Akbarian, et al., 2015). While supporting the argument of Morrison and Milliken (2000), they mention these three organizational factors to be the significant predictors of silence behavior. However, some other researchers added up to this list and mentioned pressure to maintain group consensus and cohesiveness within the firm (Deniz et al., 2013) Normative and social pressures (Morrison & Milliken, 2000) being a part of minority group (Dyne et al., 2003) commitment and some moral issues (Deniz et al., 2013) organizational politics and procedural justice (Lu & Xie, 2013) and feeling of futility, especially among the new comers, due to negative attitude of supervisor (Bagheri, et al., 2012 and Detert & Trevino, 2010) to be the cause of employee silence behavior.
Although the above literature focuses on variety of organizational factors yet all these factors stem from the most dominant three organizational factors mentioned above (Çakıcı, 2010 and Eroglu, et al., 2011). For this study, the three most critical organizational factors identified by Morrison and Milliken (2000) have been adopted as the predictors of employee silence which act as the underlying motives during the decision process to engage in silence behavior. As little empirical work, has been done to investigate how these organizational factors determine employee silence behavior, this study get the initiative to explore how these factors influence the cognitive decision process to intentionally engage in defensive silence behavior as a response to voice opportunity. These organizational factors are considered as the predictors of employee silence and are discussed below in detail:

**Lack of Leader Openness to Voice**

Leader behavior affects employee’s work behavior due to the power that they hold over employee outcomes and as well as due to the directness of the relationship and the frequency of the contact (Schlosser & Zolin, 2012). The role of leader is considered crucial for the successful implementation of change (Mengenci, 2015 and Yalçın & Baykal, 2012). Leader openness to voice act as a barrier to employee silence and reduces feeling of uncertainty and fear of facing negative consequences (Nikmaram et al., 2012). Leader openness to voice implies to leader’s capability to involve in two-way communication, listen, support, encourage, facilitate and involve employees in discussions and decision-making, to make employees feel safe to speak up (Detert & Edmondson, 2011). Leader’s positive attitude towards voice in-fact reduces employees’ fear of facing negative consequences and they intentionally raise voice (Nikolaou et al., 2011). Similarly, Panahi
et al., (2012) suggest that positive leader attitude act as a factor responsible for promoting culture of openness (Karaca, 2013) and influences job performance, career development, communication and relationships with other co-workers and managers. Moreover, Morrison (2014) and Magotra (2016) in their study highlighted the significance of an open and psychologically safe working environment where leader's attitude may encourage employees to speak up.

However, Ng. & Feldman, (2012) mentioned that a firm incur heavy losses due to lack of leader openness to voice, which ultimately affects organizational performance negatively and foster employee silence behavior. There are many reasons given for lack of leader’s openness to voice, yet the two main streams to which all other reasons are associated were presented by Morrison and Milliken (2000). These two reasons are: leaders’ fear of getting negative feedback from the employees and leaders implicit beliefs such as, employees are self-interested and untrustworthy, employees have little knowledge about organizational issues and the belief that unity is good that is why dissent must be avoided (Dobre, 2013; Fritsch, 2010 and Yildiz, 2013).

The subsequent studies support these instrumental reasons and suggest that during the stressful time, leaders mostly feel threatened by the prospect of examining their own role, responsibility and performance hence, their level of tension increases due to the fear of getting negative feedback.
The tensed supervisor is more inclined to give deaf ear to employees’ problems and issues and even due to his own incompetency refuses ideas and innovation by the employees. In such context, employees perceive their leader as reluctant to voice and find no point in speaking up and develop fear that if they will speak up their leader will penalize them. While supporting this argument, Ozkan et al., (2015) mention that leaders discourage voice behavior to cover their mistakes, to avoid embarrassment and feeling of incompetence and hence discourage employee’s feedback (Erigücü et al., 2014).

Likewise, Sabbi (2015) document that the environmental as well as economic conditions create more pressure for the firm due to which employees are expected to generate more output with lesser input. Moreover, this uncertain and stressful environment increase stress for leaders due to which they become less sensitive to their employees’ defensive silence with the attitude “No news is good news!”.

Additionally, Yalçın and Baykal (2012) point out that some common tactics used by the leaders to avoid dissent from the employees is to make employees feel that they are too young to participate in decision making process of the organization and are not experienced enough to act as an efficient team members and that their input can only result in failure. Additionally, it is said that leader through their actions make employees realize that consent and agreement is good however, this approach is opposite to pluralistic view of the firm which regards disagreement as healthy for the firm development.
To avoid risk of getting negative feedback from employees, leaders themselves engage in defensive silence. In return, to show unity, consent and agreement with the leader, employees do not raise voice about the wrongdoings and adopt the same behavior while considering it as a safe response to deal with the current situation. This concept is also supported by emotional contagion theory (Mengenci, 2015) according to which a person automatically adopts that behavior which is adopted by others.

In all three types of situations, leader is signaling fear and risk of facing negative consequences in terms of raising voice. Thus, whether to speak or not to speak becomes a crucial decision for employees (Schlosser & Zolin, 2012). Furthermore, Tangirala and Ramanujam (2012) mention that before adopting any alternative behavior, individuals first scan their existing environment to perceive the influence of the certain powerful forces prevailing in the environment. If employees perceive speaking up as dangerous due to the reluctance and negative attitude of leader towards openness to voice, they adopt the safe response of silence to avoid the risk of negative consequences (Knoll & Dick, 2013). Moreover, it is documented that employees take a conscious and deliberate decision to engage in defensive silence because they do not want to be characterized as “troublemaker” and suffer possible negative consequences affecting their professional life (Nikmaram et al., 2012).

On contrary, Nikolaou et al., (2011) believe that most of the time leaders show their openness to bad news, or negative feedback by the employees, but often employees are reluctant to show their dissent and disapproval due to their perception that if they share the information it will be considered as negative by the supervisor and top management. Hence, their personal belief also results in silence behavior (Panahi et al., 2012). However,
other researchers suggest that the supportive and open attitude of the immediate supervisor may influence employees’ perception at work place and hence play a vital role in creating an upward voice mechanism (Detert & Treviño, 2010). Other studies also support this argument and state that employees voice their opinions when the leader of the organization invites the employee to give input that is related to work (Karaca, 2013; Morrison, 2011 and Muthusamy & Priyadarsini, 2015). Besides, Ozkan et al., (2015) reported that workers’ decision to speak up is more influenced by how much a leader is approachable and responsive towards their information.

It is also argued in the literature that the more the supervisor helps in creating trust, the more employees refrain from keeping silent. The supervisors in this manner will trust the suggestions of the employees and take notice. This will lead to greater results and innovations and more practical ideas will be found out because employees are the one who are working, so they know about it (Lu & Xie, 2013).

From the above literature, it is concluded that leader’s positive attitude towards openness to voice have the potential to influence employees’ cognitive and deliberate decision to choose either voice or silence behavior. The immediate manager must provide a conducive environment to make employees feel free to express themselves, otherwise they will intentionally engage in silence behavior (Akbarian et al., 2015).
Lack of Open Communication Opportunity

Most of the past researches stressed on the importance of open communication opportunity for the development of the firm as well as emphasized on the significance of diverse opinions and suggestions for the efficient decision making (Eunson, 2012). Open communication opportunity implies to exchange of information in an open and trustworthy environment with the managers and coworkers, which facilitate in developing a perceived feeling of employees for being taken seriously (Lu & Xie, 2013). Moreover, evidences are found in the literature that when open communication channel exists, employees give greater input in decision making process and their level of trust in management increases (Dedahanov et al., 2015). Regarding “openness”, employees perceive a sense of opportunity to communicate up to the hierarchy about variety of issues such as wrongdoing in the organization, their dissent towards organizational policies, ethical issues etc., which in turn result in high level of organizational commitment (Detert & Edmondson, 2011).

Some other researchers have also identified few more positive outcomes associated with availability of open communication opportunity such as levels of absenteeism, empowerment, sense of identification and productivity (Bagheri et al., 2012). According to the literature reviewed, open communication opportunity is needed to encourage voice behavior yet this factor is being ignored by many firms which in turn results in silence behavior among employees (Çakıcı, 2010 and Erigücü et al., 2014).
Employees remain silent when they sense a personal threat or consider it difficult and useless to speak up to the hierarchy (Karaca, 2013). This lack of open communication opportunity motivates employees to consciously and intentionally engage in silence. More specifically, Alparslan et al., (2015) suggest that to deal with the fear and insecurity of employees, an honest and open communication and encouragement of feedback are needed; otherwise organizational development will be hindered. Likewise, Morrison and Milliken (2000) mention lack of open communication opportunity as in terms of lack of formal upward feedback mechanisms and centralized decision making system, to be the cause for employee silence behavior.

On the other hand, it is argued that due to employee silence, employee level of trust, morale and commitment decrease as well as result in high absenteeism rate and turnover. This in turn negatively impacts organizational development (Bagheri et al., 2012). Similarly, Othman, Roose and Lim (2013) highlight that due to prevailing employee silence, employees perceive no point in speaking up and develop indifferent behavior towards their job, product quality and overall goal of the firm, resulting in financial loss to the firm.

These negative outcomes associated with employee silence indicate how much an organization can suffer due to lack of open communication opportunity. Moreover, Hassan et al., (2013) mention the lack of open communication opportunity to one of the dominant causes behind the failure of the management. Hence, employees should be given fair chance and conducive environment to speak up with a free flow of information up to the hierarchy and among colleagues.
Defensive Norms of Organizational Culture

Organizational culture refers to a set of cognitions, shared norms and expectations that guide employees thinking and behavior at work place. Beheshtifar, Borhani and Moghadam (2012) emphasize that organizational culture assists workers to cognitively develop an organized view of the world to minimize the uncertainty of events. These cognitions are learned through socialization processes that expose individuals to different types of culture-bearing elements, which are the observable activities and interactions, shared information as well as the artifacts that form the life time experiences. Furthermore, these elements in terms of colleague experiences, rumors, role expectations and reported events deliver normative information about the suitability and desirability of behaviors and reinforce the way employees behave and think in the organization. Additionally, Bogosian and Stefanchin (2013) describe organizational culture as a process of collective sense-making, whereby individuals understand the demands, constraints, and outcome associated with their workplace. As employees in a work setting have strong need to assess their perceptions and beliefs. They compare them with those of other colleagues and through this triangulation of thoughts and beliefs forms a set of common beliefs to be followed by everyone.

According to Cooke and Rousseau (1988) there are different forms of organizational culture which determine the thinking and behavior of the employees in relation to their task and other individuals and reflect the direction or content of certain organizational norms and expectations. However, amongst different styles of culture, passive culture is the one in which employees think and behave as desired rather than as they perceive it as ideal. In a passive culture, the underlying motive of the employees is to
please the immediate boss and top management to make their position safe and secure in the firm. There are some significant characteristics of a passive culture. First, approval style where employees can’t take decisions by themselves and need approval of the manager before implementing any idea. Secondly, conventional style in which employees are stick to the laws and standards of the firm. Thirdly, dependent style employees perform in accordance with the instructions of their boss. Lastly, the avoidance style employees adhere to the organizational policies. Due to these characteristics of passive culture, defensive norms originate which motivate employees to remain silent to avoid the risk of facing negative consequences (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988).

These defensive norms of organizational culture are categorized by two shared beliefs. First, it is useless to speak up due to indifferent attitude of managers and top management and secondly, speaking up about organizational issues is dangerous and unwelcomed by the top management. Hence, employees develop a collective perception about speaking up as costly in terms of negative consequences associated with this behavioral choice (Lu & Xie, 2013).

Likewise, past research work emphasizes that due to the prevailing defensive norms of organizational culture mostly employees know the truth about the organizational issues yet dare not speak up to the hierarchy (Mengenci, 2015 and Nikmaram et al., 2012). Similarly, Panahi et al., (2012) argue that most of the organizations indirectly transfer message to their workers that they should not dare "rock the boat" by expressing their dissent views about the organizational policies and practices otherwise they must bear negative consequences, hence, employees develop a common perception that silence is a safer response to voice opportunity (Bagheri et al., 2012).
Consequences of Employee Silence

While talking about the consequences associated with silence behavior, some of the studies mention positive outcomes whereas other point out the negative outcomes. They further mention that silence can express agreement as well as dissent, hence acting as a pressure mechanism for both employees and firms (Çakıcı, 2010). While supporting the argument Dyne et al., (2003) pointed out positive outcomes based on prosocial motive and mention that employees remain silent to favor other colleagues and for the sake of betterment of the organization.

However, while considering the negative outcomes associated with employee silence behavior it is found that it can result in destabilized organizational learning, as well as undermining error correction and efforts to prevent disasters. It also results in some negative outcomes such as job dissatisfaction, work stress, and cynicism amongst employees, increased psychological pressure, feelings of dishonor, increased aggression, hopelessness, destabilize organizational learning, low level of motivation and commitment, decreased morale, low level of trust in leader and top management and reduced organizational productivity (Detert & Edmondson, 2011 and Grant, 2013). Similarly, intentional silence may also result in overall failure of the firm such as in case of crash of the space shuttle Columbia in 2003 (Brinsfield, 2013) and the collapse of Enron in 2001 (Milliken et al., 2003).
Beside all these factors, employee silence is considered as the strongest predictor of low level of organizational commitment. Jaffari and Javed (2014) mentioned a negative association between employee silence and organizational commitment. Employee silence can result in lack of feedback mechanism, lack of information sharing, less effective firm processes, employees’ feelings of not being valued, employees perceived lack of control and employees’ cognitive dissonance. All these factors in turn lead to low level of organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

**Organizational Commitment as Consequence of Employee Silence**

Organizational commitment is considered as one of the critical issues faced by the managers, as it directly affects firms’ profitability and competitiveness (Bashir & Ramay, 2010; Khan & Zafar, 2013 and Laeeque & Bakhtawari, 2014). It is defined as workers attitude and behavior, the willingness to put in hard efforts to achieve organizational goals and a strong wish to build and maintain membership relation with the organization. It is also seen as psychological attachment of an individual with the firm (Hussain et al., 2016). High level of organizational commitment encourages employees to remain with the organization, be punctual, give their best to the firm, secure organizational assets, and believe in the corporate goals (Danish et al., 2013). Similarly, employee’s commitment reduces absenteeism and turnover (Vangel, 2011).
As per the description presented by WeiBo, Kaur, and Jun (2010) organizational commitment consists of behavioral and attitudinal school of thoughts. According to behavioral school, commitment is defined as a high level of organizational citizenship behavior that leads to sustained association with the firm keeping in view the long-term gain (Vangel, 2011). On the contrary, attitudinal school of thought expresses commitment as individual’s willingness to put in their best efforts to attain organizational goals and maintaining future oriented citizenship behavior.

The construct of organizational commitment is defined in a variety of ways. Magotra (2016) defines organizational commitment as workers attitude and behavior; the willingness to put in hard efforts to achieve organizational goals and a strong wish to build and maintain membership relation with the organization. Moreover, Mengenci (2015) mentions commitment as one’s desire to associate oneself with the firm as well as one’s involvement in the organization. It is also seen as psychological attachment of an individual with the firm.

**Organizational Commitment: Three Component Model**

Meyer and Allen (1991) mentions three types of commitments. This model of commitment provides the deeper explanation and analysis of different types of organizational commitment. The three types of commitment experienced by the employees are discussed below:
Affective commitment refers to individual emotional association and strong sense of identification with the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). This can be expressed by a sharing of organizational values, willingness to maintain membership with the firm and working without expecting any gain for the betterment of the firm (Saygan, 2011). Secondly, continuous commitment which states that an employee stays with the firm due to the higher costs of disassociation (Mengenci, 2015). This can be lack of opportunities which are available or the cost associated with leaving the firm (Magotra, 2016). The employees who perceive the cost of leaving the firm is higher than staying in the organization. They remain with the firm as they do not have any other option (Malik & Naeem, 2011). Ultimately, employees stay with the firm due to the fear of losing job or unemployment. Lastly, normative commitment which focuses on employees feeling to maintain employment relation with the organization based on perceived obligation towards the organization (Deniz et al., 2013; Fard & Karimi, 2015 and Vangel, 2011).

The three-component model of commitment has been implied to predict significant employee outcomes such as: turnover, citizenship behaviors, job performance, absenteeism, and tardiness (Hussain et al., 2016). This study focuses on affective commitment, based on Meyer and Allen (1991) three-component model, as it particularly deals with one’s emotions and willingness to serve the organization. This study uses three component model of commitment to study affective commitment as the consequence of employee silence as well as the result of three organizational factors, hence this relation is discussed below in detail.
However, the association between employee silence and organizational commitment is an under researched area (Panahi et al., 2012). Though, a lot a research has been carried out on these two constructs individually, very few studies explore how they both are related to each other (Pinder & Harlos, 2001). Also, few studies regarding silence talks about the negative impact of employee silence associated with the low level of affective commitment (Vakola & Bouradas, 2005 and Ponnu & Chuah, 2010). Thus, this research work focuses on how particular dimension of silence i.e. defensive silence influences one’s level of affective commitment, particularly in the context of banking sector of KP, Pakistan.

**Affective Commitment as Consequence of Employee Silence**

This study focuses on affective commitment, based on Meyer and Allen (1991) three component model of commitment, as a negative consequence of employee silence. Affective commitment refers to one’s emotional affiliation with and willingness to retain membership with the firm (Sayğan, 2011). Affective commitment has been related to the positive consequences such as decreased absenteeism, turnover rates, increased motivation, devotion and citizenship behavior (Qazelvand & Shahtalebi, 2016), creative work, self-efficacy and reduction in error occurrence (Chughtai, 2013), high level of performance, superior job satisfaction along with greater employee involvement, increased organizational citizenship behavior and decreased turnover rate (Pelit, Dinçer, & Kılıç, 2015).
Similarly, Akbarian et al., (2015) state that employees with a higher level of affective commitment shows a strong willingness to involve in organizational activities and tend to be more dedicated to organizational goals attainment. Yet it is observed that in the prevalence silence climate employees’ affective commitment is affected negatively due to which employees are unwilling to participate in organizational tasks and towards firm’s better performance.

Moreover, evidence have been found in the previous studies about the negative effect of defensive silence on affective commitment (Deniz et al., 2013). Employees prefer not to voice their opinions and remain silent regarding many key matters at the workplace which results in some negative consequences for the organization as well as the employees (Laeeque & Bakhtawari, 2014). Similarly, Dedahanov et al., (2015) found a negative association between defensive silence and affective commitment. Furthermore, Saygon (2011) report defensive silence to be the strongest predictor of affective commitment, hence all the above studies prove a negative association between employee silence and organizational commitment.

**Expectancy Theory-Based Employee Silence Model**

This study is among those few studies which put in efforts to synergize the Expectancy Theory argument in the literature of employee silence behavior and presents an Expectancy Theory-based employee silence model.
By introducing the Vroom expectancy model (Vroom, 1964) into the silence behavior literature, this study suggests that the motivation of an employee to choose employee silence behavior is determined by their perception of the likelihood that the choice of employee silence behavior will lead to specific desired outcome (i.e. to avoid the risk of negative consequences caused due to three organizational factors), coupled with their perception of the attractiveness of this outcome (Dyne et al., 2003, Pinder & Harlos, 2001 and Vroom, 1964).

Moreover, this study aims at integrating the rational decision making aspects of Expectancy Theory perspective with the employee silence construct to demonstrate when and how employees exert their efforts to indulge in silence behavior, and how the elements of Expectancy Theory (expectancy, instrumentality and valence) are involved in step by step mental process of predicting the influences of three organizational factors on employees conscious decision to choose silence behavior as the best optimal choice. The steps involved in conscious and rational decision making process to engage in silence behavior are discussed below:
Steps Involved in Decision to Engage in Silence Behavior

Voice Opportunity Exists

When an employee has something important to share; this situation is called voice opportunity (Morrison, 2014). Now, employees have two alternative behavior choices, either to raise voice or to choose defensive silence behavior. The question of why workers speak up or remain silent when they hold potentially useful information is not easy to answer, as there are many factors that can impact this choice (Pinder & Harlos, 2001). The decision to either engage in voice or silence behavior depends on the influences of the motivational forces prevalent in the organizational environment as well as on one’s desired outcome (i.e. to avoid the risk of facing negative consequences) (Dyne et al., 2003 and Morrison, 2014).

Environmental Scanning: Assessing the influence of Organizational Factors and Resulting Desired Outcome

The choice to raise voice or to remain silent is driven by the assessment of the prevalent organizational factors during the conscious process of environmental scanning. Some of the past research work highlight the motivation of the employee silence behavior (Grant, 2013 and Parker & Collins, 2010) and state that one’s ability to make a rational decision is based on their perception of an organizational environment that comprises different organizational factors which act as motives behind silence behavior (Schlosser & Zolin, 2012).
Additionally, in the previous literature many evidences could be found focusing on expectancy like mental calculus used to estimate risk of voice behavior such as issue selling, whistle blowing etc. (Dutton et al., 1997; Dutton et al., 2002 and Withey & Cooper 1989). It was found in the literature of issue selling that before speaking up to the hierarchy, employees consciously scan the environment to cognitively assess the favorability and un-favorability of the context.

Moreover, according to the literature on employee silence, employees put their efforts and opt for those actions (i.e. either to raise voice or to remain silent) that results in the attainment of the desired outcome (Pilař et al., 2014 and Hassan et al., 2013). The desired outcome to protect oneself from the risk of facing negative consequences plays a vital role and influences one’s decision to intentionally engage in defensive silence behavior rather than to raise voice (Dyne et al., 2003).

Under favorable context, organizational factors influence positively in form of leader’s openness to voice, availability of open communication opportunity, and conducive and supportive norms of organizational culture. It in turn ensures the psychological safe environment to raise voice and hence employees consider it as favorable context to speak up.

However, under unfavorable context, where there is prevalence of these three organizational factors, it is expected by the employees that their effort to speak up will not be worthwhile as leader will not listen to problems and discourage information sharing (Detert & Edmondson, 2011).
Organization might discourage availability of open communication channel to openly and fairly exchange information with top management and colleagues (Cakici, 2010), and an organization might discourage speaking up due to prevailing climate of silence respectively (Morrison & Milliken, 2000 and Vakola & Bouradas, 2005), (high expectancy). In return, employee feel that there is a high probability of facing negative consequences (high instrumentality).

Keeping the desired outcome in mind that is to avoid the risk of negative consequences, an employee perceives it dangerous and futile to speak up (negative valence) and ultimately MF (motivational force) exerts pressure on their decision to choose defensive silence behavior as a response to voice opportunity (Prouska & Psychogios, 2016). This relationship is shown in fig.1 below.
As shown in fig. 2, in a situation where an employee decides to engage in silence behavior, he/she expects that their effort to increase level of commitment through voice behavior will not be worthwhile and develop the feeling of futility (high expectancy) (Laeque & Bakhtawari, 2014). In return, there is a high probability that an employee will develop disengaged behavior to avoid the risk of negative consequences (high instrumentality). Keeping the desired outcome in mind, employees do not like to have a risk of negative consequences, hence develop negative valence and ultimately form a motivational force (MF) that leads to low level of commitment (Whiteside & Barclay, 2013).
Figure No. 2, Decision to Engage in Silence Behavior Impact Organizational Commitment, Through the Elements of Expectancy Theory

Under the prevalence of these organizational factors, an employee expects that their effort to increase level of commitment through voice behavior will not be appreciated due to leader’s negative attitude towards voice (Mengenci, 2015), unavailability of open communication channel to openly and fairly exchange information with top management and colleagues (Ozkan et al., 2015), and defensive climate of silence (Magotra, 2016), (high expectancy). Ultimately, employee develop disengaged behavior to avoid the risk of negative consequences (high instrumentality). Keeping the desired outcome in mind an employee perceives it dangerous and futile to put in efforts to increase level of commitment through voice behavior (negative valence) and consequently his/her level of commitment decreases (Deniz et al., 2013 and Fard & Karimi, 2015). The impact of these organizational factors on organizational commitment is shown in fig. 3.
Figure No. 3, Organizational Factors impact Organizational Commitment, Through the Elements of Expectancy Theory
From the above discussion, the following conceptual model could be drawn showing the steps involved in decision making process, to engage in silence behavior.

**Figure No. 4, Theory Developed for Steps Involved in Decision Making Process to Engage in Silence Behavior**
Mediating Role of Employee Silence

Previous studies have determined the relationship among organizational factors, employee silence and commitment using the international contexts, (Amah & Okafor, 2008; Nikmaram et al., 2012 and Vakola & Bauradas, 2005); along with investigating the impact of organizational factors on defensive silence (Mengenci, 2015). Other studies focus on measuring the direct linkage between silence behavior and commitment, along with some other focusing on determining the effect of defensive silence on commitment level (Deniz et al., 2013). Moreover, Hussain et al., (2016) reported organizational silence as a vital antecedent of organizational commitment in the Pakistan’s educational context. Moreover, De Lara (2006) focus how employee silence intervenes association of organizational factors and organizational outcomes. Other studies reported that relationship between organizational trust and organizational commitment (Fard & Karimi, 2015) and between overall justice perceptions and emotional exhaustion is mediated by employee silence (Whiteside & Barclay, 2013). Yet, these studies lack to investigate how the association between these three organizational factors and organizational commitment is intervened by silence behavior.

Hence this study attempts to investigate the mediating role of a particular form of employee silence i.e., defensive silence between these organizational factors and a specific type of organizational commitment i.e., affective commitment. Moreover, this study aims at investigating this theoretical stance in the new empirical context of the banking sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, and to develop Expectancy Theory-based employee silence model for the banking sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.
It is found in the previous studies that democratic leaders who provokes employee involvement, influence employees’ commitment positively (Panahi et al., 2012), but lack of leader openness to voice negatively influence organizational commitment (Nikolaou et al., 2011) and results in employee silence (Detert & Edmondson, 2011). Hence, to avoid negative consequences, employees feel hesitant to participate actively in organization (Knoll & Dick, 2013).

Employee silence consequently leads to low level of commitment (Danish et al., 2013 and Ng. & Feldman, 2012). Thus, it is inferred that association of lack of leader openness to voice and commitment is mediated by employee silence.

Employees level of commitment rises in the workplace where employees are encouraged to express themselves through open and fair exchange of communication with top management and colleagues (Deniz et al., 2013). According to Karaca (2013) this kind of communication can also lead to diminishing the climate of silence among the employees and develop sense of ownership and belongingness (Cakici, 2010). Moreover, Vakola and Bouradas (2005) reported adverse linkage lack of open communication opportunity with organizational commitment. Additionally, Dedahanov et al., (2015) state that unavailability of communication channel adversely effects performance and participation of employees and motivates them to remain silent. It is also suggested that employees feel less valued when they perceive that they cannot openly express their viewpoints. Subsequently, when employees feel less valued and are silent, they will less likely to value, identify, trust, and commit to the organization (Whiteside & Barclay, 2013). Hence, it is assumed that employee silence mediates the association of lack of open communication opportunity and commitment (Nikolaou et al., 2011).
Additionally, Yildiz (2013) mentioned that in the organizations where defensive norms prevail, employees handle problems themselves and do not discuss them with the top management, and as a consequent develop feeling of dissatisfaction and reduced level of commitment (Vakola & Bouradas, 2005). Morrison and Milliken (2000) show that this climate of silence in-turn motivates employees to adopt silent behavior. They do not speak the truth in front of the leaders (Zehir & Erdogan, 2011). Ultimately, due to this silence behavior, they lose interest in their jobs and their level of commitment decreases (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). In this regard Whiteside and Barclay (2013) indicate that organizational silence act as a barrier to effectiveness, commitment and performance. Similarly, some other researchers also found a significant negative relationship between silence and commitment in organization (Nikolaou et al., 2011). Therefore, it is suggested that employee silence intervenes the association of defensive norms of organizational culture with organizational commitment (Zehir & Erdogan, 2011).

The conceptual model of mediation is presented below in fig 5, in which, employee silence mediates between organizational factors and organizational commitment.

![Figure No. 5, Mediated Model of Employee Silence](image-url)
Rationale of the Study

Previous research work on employee silence provides a good conceptual framework regarding the antecedents (underlying motives), consequences and nature of employee silence behavior (Akbarian et al., 2015; Çakici, 2010 and Eroglu et al., 2011). However, it is stated that different dimensions of employee silence (such as acquiescent, defensive and prosocial silence) must be investigated individually and empirically to get the deeper understanding of this phenomenon, its antecedents (underlying motives) and consequences (Brinsfield, 2013 and Dyne et al., 2003). Recently, the intentional form of silence, i.e., defensive silence is highlighted as the most critical dimension of silence based on fear of facing negative consequence. Hence, there is a need to investigate that under which circumstances employees intentionally remain silent to avoid the risk of negative consequences and which organizational factors influence this cognitive decision.

Numerous individual, organizational and social factors have been identified which act as underlying motives behind employee silence (Magotra, 2016; Muthusamy & Priyadarsini, 2015 and Ozkan et al., 2015). Yet, other studies put greater emphasis on above mentioned three of the organizational factors to be the strongest motivation of an employee to intentionally engage in silence behavior (Bogosian & Stefanchin, 2013; Dedahanov et al., 2015 and Mengenci, 2015). However, few studies attempted to empirically investigate the impact of these three organizational factors on particular dimensions of employee silence yet lacks to explain why and how these factors influence one’s step by step conscious decision to engage in intentional silence to avoid the risk of facing negative consequences.
It is also noted that in the literature, variety of negative consequences associated with employee silence are highlighted (Cakici, 2010), with organizational commitment to be one of the vital negative consequence (Khan & Zafar, 2013 and Laeeque & Bakhtawari, 2014). Moreover, previous studies attempted to investigate organizational commitment in general rather than measuring the impact of its three distinct dimensions i.e., normative commitment, continuous commitment and affective commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991) and particularly, little research work focuses on how employee silence influences employee’s level of affective commitment.

Other researchers reported the predictors of organizational commitment in Pakistan’s banking context and highlighted the importance of affective commitment however they lack to explain the effect of three above mentioned organizational factors along with defensive silence on affective commitment in the banking context (Laeeque & Bakhtawari, 2014 and Abdullah & Ramay, 2011).

The literature provides evidences that a lot of work has been done to investigate the motivation of employees to adopt voice behavior and the cognitive mechanism behind it, such as issue selling, whistle blowing, boat rocking and employee safety calculus (Near & Miceli, 2015). Yet these investigations lack exploration of how an individual goes through the cognitive decision process to intentionally engage in silence behavior, while considering the antecedents and the outcomes associated with this behavioral choice.
To answer the above theoretical gaps, this exploratory study focuses on investigating employee silence, the underlying motives, and the cognitive mechanism involved in this decision through the elements of Expectancy Theory, along with focusing on consequences of this decision. More precisely, this study focuses on the particular dimension of silence i.e., defensive silence, to get the deeper understanding of this phenomenon.

Moreover, this study incorporates the theoretical lens of Expectancy Theory on the phenomenon of employee silence to empirically investigate the mental calculus involved in employees’ cognitive decision of intentionally engaging in silence behavior. By incorporating the elements of Expectancy Theory (i.e., expectancy, instrumentality and valence) this study aims at empirically analyzing that how three of the organizational factors act as the underlying motives and influences ones’ conscious decision to intentionally engage in defensive silence behavior and how this decision consequently results in low level of affective commitment in the banking sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

Most of the studies have investigated the direct linkage among the organizational factors, employee silence and commitment in the international context (Amah & Okafor, 2008; Nikmaram et al., 2012 and Vakola & Bauradas, 2005). Moreover, Mengenci, (2015) provides evidence regarding the impact of organizational factors on defensive silence in the context of the developed countries. These studies focus on sectors such as police, hotels, hospitals, automobiles, IT, education etc. (Alparslan et al., 2015; Hussain et al., 2016; Karaca, 2013; Kilic et al., 2013 and Zehir & Erdogan, 2011). However, the banking sector has remained neglected and under investigated.
Hence, to fill this empirical gap the purpose of this study is to explore the said relationship in one of the developing countries, i.e., Pakistan. It researches the under investigated banking sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, due to the following reasons. First, the Expectancy Theory and theories supporting the study variables are general in nature and are expected to be generalized in broader perspective. Secondly, theme of this research/thesis is based on the established and verified theories in multi-cultural contexts (Lu & Xie, 2013; Mengenci, 2015 and Morrison & Milliken, 2000). Hence, it is argued that the findings of the study in Pakistan context will hopefully contribute in the same line. Thirdly, due to the entry of private and multinational banks in Pakistan, the banking sector of Pakistan is faced with competitive challenges (Hassan et al., 2013 and Hussain et al., 2016).

Under such context, employees in the banking sector are mostly confronted with the uncertain and stressful environment that motivates them to develop a fear of facing negative consequences. This context points out towards defensive silence (based on motive to avoid the risk of facing negative consequences) rather than acquiescent or pro-social silence that are based on the underlying motives of resignation and cooperation, respectively. Hence, this condition make it more conducive to study how these organizational factors motivate defensive silence among bank employees. Similarly, it is argued that the environment in private banks is more challenging and stressful than public banks due to certain factors such as job insecurity, work overload, customer interaction and expanded business operations (Abdullah & Ramay, 2011; Hassan et al., 2013; Hussain et al., 2016 and Khan & Zafar, 2013). Therefore, it is evident that employee silence dominates more in private banks as compared to public banks.
Moreover, past studies (Abdullah & Ramay, 2011 and Khan & Zafar, 2013) focus on the significance of affective commitment in the banking context of Pakistan, for sustaining skillful and committed workers who can provide innovative ideas and relevant information for the betterment of the firm. However, these aforementioned-studies lacks to investigate the effect of above-mentioned three organizational factors on affective commitment.

Additionally, studies have been conducted (Deniz et al., 2013 and Laeeque & Bakhtawari, 2014) to determine the direct linkage as well as few focusing on investigating the association between defensive silence and affective commitment. Similarly, some other researches aims to investigate that how employee silence intervenes the linkage between organizational factors and organizational outcomes. Amongst these studies, Chehraghi et al., (2016) investigated the intervening role of silence behaviour between ethical leadership and employee performance, whereas Nikolaou et al., (2011) reported that the relationship between organizational trust, organizational commitment and job satisfaction is mediated by employee silence. Besides, Whiteside and Barclay, (2013) investigated the intervening role of employee silence between physical withdrawal, and employee performance. However, these research studies lack to determine how defensive silence plays a mediating role in organizational factors and affective commitment.
Besides, it is observed that most of the studies conducted in the past focused on exploring the direct relationship between the study variables through quantitative research method (Abdullah & Ramay, 2012; Brinsfield, 2013 and Nikmaram et al., 2012), while few more focused on qualitative method and interviewed the respondents to investigate employee silence, its antecedents and consequences (Milliken et al., 2003 and Ozkan et al., 2015). These studies lack mixed method approach of investigation of study variables to provide explanation for how and why certain relationship exist among the study variables.

To answer this methodological gap, this study adopts the mixed method sequential explanatory approach which comprises detailed analysis of the study variable through quantitative phase, followed by the qualitative phase. The quantitative phase aims at investigating the direct and mediation analysis, whereas the qualitative phase aimed at further explaining the reasons behind the significant and insignificant findings of the quantitative analysis through developing a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative analysis. Through this triangulation of data, the qualitative phase of the current study, as opposed to previous qualitative studies (Milliken et al., 2003 and Ozkan et al., 2015), contributes to the existing body of knowledge by putting efforts to synergize the Expectancy Theory argument in the literature of employee silence behavior and presents an Expectancy Theory based - employee silence model particularly for the banking sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This Expectancy Theory based model provides deep explanation for why certain organizational factors act as an underlying motive and how they influence one’s cognitive decision to engage in defensive silence.
This empirical and theoretical contribution make this study distinct than the previous studies. It provides valuable insights for bank management, policy makers and HR managers in identifying the areas that need their attention. Thus, all these factors make this research work significant and timely.

**Schematic Diagram**

Based on the above review of literature, the schematic diagram of the current study is given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Mediating Variable</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational Factors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of Leader Openness to Voice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of Open Communication Opportunity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Defensive Norms of Organizational Culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Silence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Commitment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure No. 6, Conceptual Model of the Study**
Hypotheses

Based on the above literature review, the following hypotheses are drawn for the investigation of this study.

H₁: Lack of leader openness to voice negatively impacts organizational commitment.

H₂: Lack of open communication opportunity leads to low level of organizational commitment.

H₃: There is a negative association between Defensive norms of an organizational culture and organizational commitment.

H₄: A positive relationship exists between Lack of leader openness to voice and employee silence.

H₅: Lack of open communication opportunity positively predicts employee silence.

H₆: Defensive norms of an organizational culture influences employee silence positively.

H₇: Employee silence and organizational commitment are negatively related.

H₈: Employee silence mediates the relationship between lack of leader openness to voice and organizational commitment.

H₉: Employee silence intervenes the association between lack of open communication opportunity and organizational commitment.

H₁₀: The relationship between defensive norms of an organizational culture and organizational commitment is mediated by employee silence.
This chapter focused on in-depth review of literature about the nature of employee silence, its dimensions, determinants and consequences. Moreover, the detailed literature review is provided about the conscious decision making process to engage in employee silence from Expectancy Theory perspective and conceptual model of Expectancy Theory based employee silence is provided. The chapter also highlights the mediating role of employee silence and presented the conceptual framework along with the hypotheses of the study. The next chapter highlights the methodology and research design of this study.
Chapter 3

Research Methodology

This research work uses research methodology/ approach based on Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009) “Research Onion”. The various stages covered during the development of an efficient research methodology are illustrated through this approach. According to this approach the whole process of research is presented as an onion consisting of different layers, which are: research philosophy, research approaches, research strategies choices, time horizons and the data collection method (Saunders et al., 2009). Besides adopting the research onion to explain the methodological model of this study, reliability, validity and ethical consideration elements are added to this model of research onion.

Based on the research questions and the desire to test hypotheses, the pragmatism paradigm is selected for this research work (Saunders et al., 2009). To deeply explore what is the impact or organizational factors on employee silence and organizational commitment as well as how this influence takes place, triangulation of data was provided through pragmatic philosophy where mixed method approach was incorporated and data was collected in two phases. In the first phase relationship between the variables was explored through hypothesis testing whereas in the second phase the reasons for this relationship to exist were explored by elaborating the significant, insignificant and outlier results of the quantitative phase, hence, eliminating the drawbacks of the other paradigms and providing valid results (Creswell, 2003).
To answer the research questions and in alignment with pragmatism paradigm, this research adopted both deductive and inductive approaches. As data was collected in two phases, in the first phase deductive approach was used to test hypothesis whereas inductive approach was adopted to explain the initial finding of deductive approach as no initial framework existed at this point.

Survey strategy was used to collect data in two phases. In phase 1 quantitative data was collected through structured questionnaire, whereas in phase 2 qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews.

Mixed methods approach is adopted to address the aims and objectives of the research work (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Sequential Explanatory design (follow up explanations model) is selected under the mixed method design. This type of design enables the qualitative data to be built upon the results of the quantitative approach (Creswell, 2003). With the help of this design, important and substantial results regarding the quantitative data such as significant, insignificant and outlier results are further explored through qualitative analysis (Creswell & Clark, 2011 and Morse, 1991).

Moreover, this study is cross sectional in nature (Saunders et al., 2009) as the focus of the study is to explore the causal relationship between the study variables. Moreover, keeping in mind the time and cost of the research, this study adopted cross sectional approach. Before discussing the data collection tools, analysis and procedures, the population and sampling techniques for this study are also mentioned.
Population

According to the annual report of State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) (2015) there are different types of banks, which include public commercial, Islamic, specialized, domestic private, and foreign banks. There were 11,716 branches of these banks in Pakistan as of June, 2015, out of which the branches of Public sector banks were 2,685, commercial bank branches 2,101, specialized bank branches 584, domestic private bank branches 9,020 and foreign bank branches 11 (SBP, 2015). This proves that there exists a sturdy competition amongst the banks of Pakistan.

The setting of the current study is the banking sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Pakistan. According to the official website of the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, KP is ranked as the third largest Province based on population and covers an area of 74,521 km\(^2\) (28,773 sq mi). As per the census of 1998, the estimated population of KP was 30 million (30523371), which comprises 52% of male and 48% female. The density of population is 187 per km\(^2\) and comprises of 26 districts (Geography, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). KP has almost all public and private commercial banks across a high geographic coverage. Moreover, the banking sector operating in KP consists of several banks classified according to their types. These include 9 public banks, out of which 5 are commercial banks whereas the remaining 4 are specialized banks. Domestic private banks are 21 and no foreign bank operates in the province (SBP, 2015).
For this study, only commercial banks of KP were taken into investigation and hence the specialized banks were not considered as the part of total population. Moreover, there are no foreign banks operating in KP. In conclusion, the total 26 commercial banks operating in 25 districts of KP, out of which 5 were public and 21 were private banks, formed the total population of the study. According to Annual Report of SBP (2015) these commercial banks have a province-wide branch network of more than 1000 branches in KP province of Pakistan. The total number of branches were located from the official website of each bank and were counter checked by the regional manager of each bank and are shown in Table 2.
## Table 2

**Total Number of Branches of All Commercial Banks in KP Pakistan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbottabad Bannu</th>
<th>Batagram Buner</th>
<th>Charsada Chitral</th>
<th>D.I.K</th>
<th>Haripur Karak</th>
<th>Kohat Kohistan</th>
<th>Lakmarw. Lower Dir</th>
<th>Malakand Mansehra Mardan Noshera Peshawar Shangla</th>
<th>Swabi Swat Tank UD TOTAL</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>1 1 3 1 7 1 6</td>
<td>2 1 3 7 13 6 39</td>
<td>7 7 1 2 10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>askari</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1 4 1 1 12 1 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1 2</td>
<td>1 1 1 9</td>
<td>1 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2 1 2</td>
<td>1 3 1 1 5 1 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>3 1 1 1 2 1</td>
<td>2 2</td>
<td>3 2 4 20 1 2 4 1 2 6 3</td>
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<td>1 1 8</td>
<td>1 14</td>
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<td>Burj Bank</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dubaiislami</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1 1 7</td>
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<td>Faysal Bank</td>
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<td>1 1 1 1 9</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>17 14 5 138</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Meezan</td>
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<td>1 2 30</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>3 23 11 11 21 1 13 19 3 4 204</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCB</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3 1 5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>soneri</td>
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<td>1 3 2 9</td>
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<td>1 11</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>UBL</td>
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<td>1 8 16 4 29</td>
<td>11 13 1 137</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Sampling Technique for Quantitative Phase

Keeping in view the distinct geographical location of all public and private commercial banks along with the huge number of branches, it was decided to include only those districts that comprised of more population and density, as populated districts are more conducive business hubs. Additionally, it was decided to select only those commercial banks which have bigger branch network in the selected districts of KP.

As the population is needed to be divided into different strata (i.e., based on population and density and substantial branch network), a two-step stratified proportionate random sampling was most appropriate for this study. A large sample of 258 branches was selected through a two-step stratified proportionate random sampling using the following procedure.

Firstly, to obtain an immense illustration of the whole population, 12 districts of KP were selected based on their population and density. As mentioned in the official website of KP, under “demographics”, the area coverage and population density, of these selected 12 districts make 60% of the KP geographical area and population respectively (Demographics, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa).

Secondly, out of total 26 commercial banks, those commercial banks were identified which have substantial branch network in the above mentioned 12 selected districts of KP. According to annual report of SBP (2015) the “Big Five” banks with wide spread branch network are National Bank of Pakistan (NBP), Habib Bank Limited (HBL), United Bank Limited (UBL), Allied Bank Limited (ABL) and Muslim Commercial Bank (MCB) thus these 5 banks were selected. Moreover, after the thorough analysis of all
commercial banks branch network, provincial bank i.e., Bank of Khyber (BOK) was added to the list due to substantial branch network. It was noted that these “Big Five” along with BOK only include public banks, hence, to get representation of private banks all 21 banks were analyzed and two of the private banks i.e., Alfalah and Meezan bank were selected based on substantial branch network. These 8 banks made total 736 branches in the selected 12 districts. The total number of branches of these 8 selected banks in the selected 12 districts was obtained from the official website of each bank (Alfalah Bank, Allied Bank Limited, Bank of Khyber, Habib Bank Limited, Meezan Bank, Muslim Commercial Bank, National Bank of Pakistan, United Bank Limited) and was verified by the reginal branch manager, which is shown in Table 3.
Table 3

*Total number of Branches of 8 selected banks in 12 selected Districts*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Abbt</th>
<th>Bannu</th>
<th>Charsada</th>
<th>DIK</th>
<th>Haripur</th>
<th>Kohat</th>
<th>Mansehra</th>
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<th>Noshera</th>
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<th>Swabi</th>
<th>Swat</th>
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<td>NBP</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>HBL</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hence, the accessible population was $N=736$ branches of 8 selected banks, including both public and private banks in 12 districts of KP.

Next, to calculate the sample size, stratified sample formula was used. The confidence level of the sample size was 95% and the margin for error was calculated to be 5%. The values were calculated using the Cochran (1977) formula:

$$n = \frac{N (Z\alpha/2)^2 \sigma^2}{(N - 1)\varepsilon^2 + (Z\alpha/2)^2 \sigma^2}$$

(N is total population size, $(Z\alpha/2)^2$ is standard normal, $\sigma^2$ is variance of dependent variable, and $\varepsilon^2$, $\varepsilon^2$ is error term.)

$N = 736$, $(Z\alpha/2)^2 = 1.96$, $\sigma^2 = 0.334$, $\varepsilon^2 = 0.05$.

Sample Size obtained was $n = 258$ branches of 8 selected banks, in 12 selected districts of KP. However, it was decided to include main branch of each bank, in each selected district besides rest of the branches as it is main business hub.

Second, to find the proportionate participation of each sample branch, of 8 selected banks in each of the 12 districts, the following formula was used.

$$n_h = \left(\frac{N_h}{N}\right) \times n$$

($n_h$ = sample size for each stratum, $N_h$ = population size for each stratum, $N$ = total population, and $n$ = total sample size). The sample size for number of branches of 8 selected bank in each of 2 district, is shown in Table 4 as follows:
Table 4

Sample Number of Branches of Each Selected Banks in 12 Selected Districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Abbt</th>
<th>Bannu</th>
<th>Charsada</th>
<th>DIK</th>
<th>Hari</th>
<th>Kohat</th>
<th>Mans</th>
<th>Mardan</th>
<th>Noshera</th>
<th>Pesh</th>
<th>Swabi</th>
<th>Swat</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NBP</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HBL</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UBL</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABL</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCB</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOK</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfalah</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meezan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Furthermore, to collect data from the employees of the selected bank branches, only managerial and officers level employees were consulted. As the managerial and officers level employees working at the branch level are directly influenced by the organizational factors. Therefore, these respondents are in a better position to provide accurate information about the impact of organizational factors on employee silence and organizational commitment. Thus, it was decided to collect data from all types of managers and officers available in the branch, belonging to all types of operation of the banks. As per the structure of the banks, there are two types of operations of the bank, i.e., cash and credit and there are three levels of officers, i.e., OG1, OG2, OG3. OG 1 category includes Branch and Operational manager, whereas OG2 and OG3 are cash and credit officers.

In the next stage, the total number of employees (which include only managerial and officers level, i.e., OG1, OG2, OG3) in each branch of selected banks were obtained from the regional branch manager of each bank that was again verified during the collection of the data from the branch manager of the concerned branch. In these 258 branches, the total number of employees were 1243, which formed the sample frame of the study. All 1243 employees were considered for data collection.

The roles and responsibilities of all officer cadre employees are designed by the State Bank of Pakistan and is applicable to all banks. The branches of the selected banks are highly similar in terms of size, technology, and organizational structure. Additionally, each branch offers identical services to both consumers and business clients. Hence, these features provide solid base for the generalizability of the research findings to the banking sector of Pakistan.
**Sampling Technique for Qualitative Phase**

The interview sample was drawn from the 12 districts of KP Pakistan. To enhance the diversity within the sample, the strategy of stratified purposive sampling was selected (Patton, 2002). The sample size of the target was set as at least of 24 managers and officers category employees, including 2 interviewees from each district. Potential informants were identified from the researcher’s network of contacts with the bank employees who showed their consent to participate in the qualitative phase. To obtain favorable results; the interviews were held during weekdays as well as weekends, offering the informants a choice.

**Data Collection Methods for Quantitative Phase**

Primary data was collected for this study in two phases. Having justified the application of the ‘Explanatory Sequential Model’ and considered the data collection methods available, the methods of the quantitative and qualitative strands were selected.

In the first quantitative phase, for the data collection, questionnaire, with Five-point Likert-type scales ranging from ‘1’ = Strongly agree, to ‘5’ = Strongly Disagree, was used. The questionnaire consist of items associated to independent variables (lack of leader openness to voice, open communication opportunity and defensive norms of organizational culture), mediating variable (employee silence) and dependent variable (organizational commitment).
Operational Definitions

Being the subjective concept these variables need to be operationally defined. The operational definitions of all variables involved are as follows.

Organizational Factors

Following the conceptualization of Morrison and Milliken (2000) organizational factors are the factors prevailing in the organization and develop the climate of silence due to which employees perceive speaking up as dangerous or futile. Three of the critical organizational factors adopted for this study are operationalized below.

Lack of Leader Openness to Voice

The concept of lack of leader’s openness to voice was operationalized based on Vakola and Bouradas (2005) definition of lack of leader openness to voice as “leader’s negative attitudes towards openness to voice in terms of not listening to the employee problem, their suggestions towards organizational issues and discouraging them to share information and innovative ideas for better performance of the firm”.

Lack of Open Communication Opportunity

The construct of Lack of open communication opportunity is adopted from the study of Vakola and Bouradas (2005) and refers to the lack opportunity to fairly and freely exchange information with the managers and colleagues.

Defensive Norms of Organizational Silence

This study defines defensive norms of organizational culture as defined by Cooke & Rousseau (1988) according to which, defensive norms of culture reflects the passive culture of the organization. When passive culture is prevailing in the organization, the main motive of the employee is to please the superiors and make their position safe and secure.
in the organization. In such a culture, employees unhappily adhere to the guidelines and follow the rules and regulations just to save their job. The following characteristics of passive culture are adopted in the present study.

- **Approval:** In such a culture employees, cannot take decisions on their own. They need to take their boss’s approval before implementing any idea.

- **Conventional:** Employees are bound by rules and regulations of the organization and act according to the prescribed standards only.

- **Dependent:** In such a culture, the performance of the employees is dependent on the superior’s decisions and they blindly follow their boss’s orders.

- **Avoidance:** Employees tend to avoid their own personal interests, satisfaction and simply act according to the company’s policies.

**Employee Silence**

Employee silence is operationalized based on one of its dimension as defensive silence, which is defined as intentionally not speaking up when one has a suggestion, concern, information about a problem, or a divergent point of view that could be useful or relevant to share, due to fear of facing negative consequences (Brinsfield et al., 2009).

**Organizational Commitment**

Three Component Model of Commitment by Meyer and Allen (1991) is used to operationalize the definition of affective commitment as one’s emotional attachment and a strong sense of identification with the firm.
Instrument and Measurement

The data was gathered by using a questionnaire technique, comprised of the items related to study variables and are discussed below.

**Lack of Leader Openness to Voice**

Five items related to lack of leader openness to voice were adopted from the scale developed by Vakola and Bouradas (2005) which were measured using five point Likert scale.

**Lack of Open Communication Opportunity**

The concept of lack of open communication opportunity was measured with five items adopted from the instrument developed by Vakola and Bouradas (2005). All the five items were rated using five-point Likert’s scale from Strongly agree to Strongly disagree.

**Defensive Norms of Organizational Culture**

The Organizational Culture Inventory (OCI) developed by Cooke and Rousseau (1988), was used to measure the construct of defensive norms of organizational culture through four items, while using five point Likert’s scale.

**Employee Silence**

Dyne et al., (2003) instrument of employee silence which is comprised of five items was used on five point Likert’s scale.
Organizational Commitment

Instrument developed by Meyer and Allen (1991) was used to measure affective commitment which comprised of eight items and rated through five point Likert’s scale.

These measurement items were selected as they were the most appropriate to measure the variables under consideration and establish reliability and validity of these instruments.

Summary of Measurement

Table. 5 summarizes the instrument and measurement used in the study

Table 5

*Measurement / Instrument (Items and Scores)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>No. of Items</th>
<th>Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Employee Silence</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Dyne et al., (2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lack of Leader’s Openness to Voice</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Vakola and Bouradas (2005).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Defensive Norms of Organizational Culture</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Cooke and Rousseau (1988)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Organizational Commitment</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Meyer and Allen (1991)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Data Collection Procedure**

The selected branches were surveyed during November to December 2015. Data was collected by the researcher from district Peshawar whereas professional ruminators were hired to collect data from rest of the districts. Before going to the field, a group workshop was conducted to explain the instrument to these ruminators. (See appendix A, for list of the ruminators).

The survey was conducted with the help of branch and operational managers of each branch. Branch managers were personally contacted and prior appointments were taken from the branch managers for administering the survey. At the start of survey, employees were given short briefings about the study and instructions on how to fill-in the survey. A covering letter was attached with the survey explaining the objectives of the study and assurance to respondents about confidentiality of their responses (See Appendix B). The survey was administered in English language to managers and employees in 258 branches. 1243 questionnaires were distributed among employees in 258 sample branches. Respondents were asked to respond voluntarily and were given substantial time to complete the survey. The filled-in questionnaires were collected on the day of appointment and in some cases, on the following day when respondents filled in the questionnaires at home. The return rate of questionnaire was above 80% and out of 1243 questionnaires 1236 were returned.
Reliability and Validity of Instruments

This research work does not directly develop the measuring instrument but adopt it from the previous studies. However, the reliability of the study was checked through Cronbach Alpha whereas validity of the instrument was checked through Confirmatory Factor Analysis.

Data Collection Methods for Qualitative Phase

In the second phase of data collection, semi-structured interviews were conducted. During the quantitative phase, the researcher developed a rapport with the respondents who showed interest in the study and obtained their consent to participate in the second phase of qualitative analysis to explain the significant, insignificant and outlier results obtained from the quantitative phase. Later, during the qualitative phase it was easy for researcher to select interviewees by contacting those respondents of the first phase who showed their willingness to participate in further study.

Prior to taking part in the interview, the informants were required to give their formal consent. The outline of the questions was provided to the participants and the research topic was properly introduced during the start of the interview. Various questions were put forward to the client and the findings were shown for participant’s comments. As the participants were not willing for the recording of the interview thus the information and responses were noted down. The interview lasted for 60–90 minutes. A background questionnaire was also completed by the informant which contained questions regarding the demographics of the informants (See Appendix C). Both English and Urdu were used as mediums during the interviews. The researcher took care of the convenience of the informants. They were not disturbed during prayer time and routine breaks.
Quantitative Data Analysis

SPSS 21.0 was used for analysis of the quantitative data. Inter-correlation analysis was conducted for investigating the relationship among variables. However, regression analysis suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986) was used to test mediation whereas Sobel test presented by Preacher and Hayes (2004) was incorporated to confirm the mediation. Moreover, structure equation modeling was applied to further explore the model fit indices and path diagram.

Regression Analysis: Test of Mediation

Mediation was tested through multiple regression analysis suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986) as three necessary conditions for presences of mediation, i.e., $X \rightarrow Y$ (c), $X \rightarrow M$ (a), and $M \rightarrow Y$ (b), and $X \rightarrow Y$ (c’) in presences of M. Warner (2013) has discussed the procedure for testing mediation through regression which is shown in Table 6 as follows:

**Table 6**

*Steps of Regression Analysis*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Visual Depiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1</strong> Conduct a simple regression analysis with X predicting Y to test for path c alone, $Y = B_{0} + B_{1}X + e$</td>
<td>![Diagram 1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2</strong> Conduct a simple regression analysis with X predicting M to test for path a, $M = B_{0} + B_{1}X + e.$</td>
<td>![Diagram 2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 3</strong> Conduct a simple regression analysis with M predicting Y to test the significance of path b alone, $Y = B_{0} + B_{2}M + e.$</td>
<td>![Diagram 3]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 4</strong> Conduct a multiple regression analysis with X and M predicting Y, $Y = B_{0} + B_{1}X + B_{2}M + e$</td>
<td>![Diagram 4]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure No. 7, Steps for Mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986)

The effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable in the presence of mediating variable should be zero to establish full mediation. Whereas the diminishing effect suggests that mediating variable partially mediates the association between exogenous variable and outcome variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

However, this research does not consider the demographic characteristics such as: organizational sized, gender, age, education, work experience etc., as control variables while testing the mediation due to the following reasons. First, considering the demographic characteristics as a controlled variable was not the area of study for this research. Secondly, these demographics were collected to build a profile of the respondents and to help in the interpretation of the results.

**Mediated Effects**

Mediated Effect is calculated to know if the mediator conducts influence on the relationship between independent and the dependent variable. To test the mediated effect, two analyses are conducted i.e., Calculation of mediating effect and Exploring the significance of the mediating effect through Sobel’s Test (Warner, 2013).
**Calculation of Mediating Effect**

The mediated effect is calculated by product of path a and b, where ‘a’ is the path from exogenous variable (X) to mediator (M) ‘b’ is the path from the mediator (M) to the outcome variable (Y). In research reports, the standardized coefficients are focused for calculating mediated effect rather than unstandardized regression coefficients that may not be very informative (Warner, 2013).

**Sobel’s Test**

The products a x b (both coefficients’ product) is tested for the sake of assessing the mediated effects’ significance. This is one of the parts of approach of casual-steps by Baron and Kenny (1986). The null hypothesis for this is ab =0. The ab product’s standard error estimate is needed for obtaining the statistic of z test. The product is important in terms of statistics if z has a lesser value than -1.96 or greater than +1.96. This test has been used in the approach of casual steps by Baron and Kenny (1986) and did it without reporting other steps that were causal. An online calculator of Preacher and Hayes (2008) is used for calculating this test. This calculator works by computing the z test statistics that are given in two ways: either the t ratios for ab coefficients or the coefficients un-standardized regressions.

**Structural Equation Modeling**

Structural equation modeling is considered one of the best techniques used for holding test mediations; depends whether they are partial or full (Weston & Gore, 2006). Structural equation modeling checks mediation on the actual figures whereas hierarchical regression uses average values to regress the relationship between the variables. Moreover, structural equation modeling provides the diagrammatic presentation of the mediating
models through path diagram which is not provided by hierarchical regression. In addition, structural equation modeling provides the indicators to check the model fitness and prove the acceptability of the models which is not done by the hierarchical regression.

To confirm the model fitness, several indices are used and discussed here. The chi-squares are very important statistics and are recommended for reporting (Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008 and Kline, 2011), in addition to the degree of freedom and p-values. However, the model is always rejected whenever the size of sample is small (Kenny & McCoach, 2003) because of sensitivity towards the size of sample. The least condition for fitness of model cannot be met because the p-value should always be insignificant and the chi-square is supposed to be greater than or as low as 2. Yet, all this is because of the Chi-square’s restrictedness that might be a source of misinterpretation regarding the model and make it a misfit, while the real model can be the data’s close in fitting (Hooper et al., 2008 and Lei & Wu, 2007).

Root mean square residual (RMR) is another index that helps in indicating a good model fit which works and has a smaller value (Hooper et al., 2008). The RMR should have a value lesser than .08 for indicating the acceptability of the model (Mathieu & Taylor, 2006).

Goodness of fit index (GFI) is one another index that is supposed to have a value more than or equals .90 for the indication of acceptability of model. Comparative Fit index (CFI) is another index and cannot be affected by the size of the sample. The modified form of NFI is CFI. (Hooper et al., 2008 and Mathieu & Taylor, 2006).
Qualitative Data Analysis

Data Preparation and Organization

The following steps (incorporating data preparation and organization) were followed for analyzing the qualitative data.

- Listening carefully to the large amount of recorded information obtained from the interviews.
- Preparing the transcriptions
- Thoroughly reading the transcribed data to obtain general sense of data.
- Placing the data under relevant themes (which incorporated organization of data in the form of tables developed).
- Coding the data
- Writing data description.

In the section below, step 4 and 5 are explained in detail.

Thematic Coding

The data have been reduced by categorization, which is grouping data collected into predetermined categories/themes obtained from existing theory (Saunders et al., 2009). Within these broad themes, data was further segmented and coded to make sense of the data obtained. This represents thematic analysis which is a process of seeing and coding the qualitative data, and within which descriptive and interpretive coding have been obtained which further leads to overarching themes (King & Christine, 2010). In the present study, the following steps were taken during thematic analysis.
Overarching themes: Key themes grouping the interpretive codes.

Interpretive coding: It constituted group of descriptive codes.

Descriptive coding: The following steps were followed:

- Carefully read all the transcribed data.
- The relevant material was highlighted.
- Descriptive codes were defined.
- Same procedure was repeated for each transcript.

**Causal Network**

Causal networks have been used to analyze questions related to relationship among organizational factors, employee silence and organizational commitment. Miles and Huberman (1994), and Weick (1979) have recommended to utilize causal networks to analyze relationships between variables.

In causal network, dependent and the independent variables are displayed by the boxes, whereas the lines/arrows linking these boxes represent the relationship between the variables and the plot of these relationships is directional (Yin, 2003).

**Ethics of the Research**

While conducting a research, certain ethical consideration must be met. These are particularly important as the researcher involves participants in the study and gathers personal details about them both from questionnaires and during interviews. As suggested by Bell (2014) informed consent was obtained from the participants before distributing the questionnaires and before taking the interview. This was achieved by providing potential respondents/informants with a study information sheet describing: the purpose of the study; what the questionnaire/ interview process entails; how the data will be used; and details of
the researcher. Informants were first asked to read the study information sheet and were given the opportunity to ask any questions about the study. They were asked to provide written consent that their participation is voluntary. They were ensured that the data provided will be kept confidential and will be used only for academic purpose. respondents were also ensured about the confidentiality of the data provided.

This chapter discussed the methodology and research design of the study. The data collection tools and techniques along with the issues of reliability/validity, and ethics are also discussed. The next chapter focuses on the result and analysis of the study.
Chapter 4
Results and Analysis

The major objective of the study was to examine the mediating role of employee silence between organizational factors and organizational commitment and to further explore the reason behind such relation in the banking sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. As this study adopted the mixed method approach, the result of the study for both quantitative and qualitative phase is presented in this chapter.

Result of Quantitative Phase I

The result of the quantitative phase I includes reliability and validity test. Descriptive analysis includes demographics of sample respondents and analysis of main variables including Mean, Standard Deviation and Inter-correlation. Moreover, regression analysis and Sobel test were conducted to test and confirm mediation respectively. For this analysis SPSS version 21 was used. Structural equation modeling (AMOS 18), was used to calculate the model fitness as well as to get the path diagram.

Reliability of Instruments

Cronbach alpha was used to measure the consistency of the variables involved in the study. Items that were negatively worded were reversed for reliability analysis. The coefficient values for each scale are approximately equal to or more than the recommended level of 0.7 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 7 provides the reliability analysis results for the organizational factors, employee silence and organizational commitment scales respectively.
Table 7

*Cronbach Alpha Coefficients for The Study Variables (N=1236)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>No. of Item</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Leader Openness to Voice</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Open Communication Opportunity</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defensive Norms of Organizational Culture</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Silence</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Commitment</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.785</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Validity of Instruments**

To measure construct validity, both convergent and discriminant validity were established through confirmatory factor analysis using structural equation modeling. In confirmatory factor analysis, convergent and discriminant validity examine the extent to which measures of a latent variable shared their variance and how they were different from the others. According to Alarcón and Sánchez (2015), convergent validity is the degree of confidence that a variable is well measured by its items whereas discriminant validity is the degree to which measures of different variables are unrelated. As per Fornell and Larcker (1981) convergent validity can be measured through Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR). AVE calculates the level of variance asserted by a construct as compare to the level of variance presented by measurement error. 0.7 represents very good, whereas, 0.5 depicts acceptable level of AVE. However, the acceptable range for CR is 0.7 and above. Table 8 depicts that convergent validity was established for all the study variables as their value of AVE and CR is greater than the recommended value of .5 and .7 respectively (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).
On the other hand, to establish discriminant validity, the value of squared correlation between all the latent variables must be less than the value of AVE of each variable measured (Walsh, Beatty, & Shiu, 2009). Table 9 shows that to calculate the discriminant validity, first the squared correlation between all the variables were calculated and then compared with the AVE value of each variable. The result provides support for the discriminant validity as the AVE were greater than the squared correlation of the study variables.

Table 8

(Continued on next page)

**Convergent Validity (N=1236)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Convergent Validity</th>
<th>Lack of Leader Openness to Voice</th>
<th>Lack of Open Communication Opportunity</th>
<th>Defensive Norms of Organizational Culture</th>
<th>Employee Silence</th>
<th>Organizational Commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AVE</td>
<td>.715</td>
<td>.822</td>
<td>.632</td>
<td>.759</td>
<td>.865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>.873</td>
<td>.924</td>
<td>.791</td>
<td>.866</td>
<td>.829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convergent Validity</td>
<td>Established</td>
<td>Established</td>
<td>Established</td>
<td>Established</td>
<td>Established</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued on next page)
Table 9

Discriminant Validity (N=1236)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discriminant Validity</th>
<th>Factor Correlation</th>
<th>Correlation Squared</th>
<th>AVE 1</th>
<th>AVE2</th>
<th>Discriminant Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LLV ↔ LCO</td>
<td>.453</td>
<td>.205</td>
<td>.715</td>
<td>.822</td>
<td>Established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLV ↔ DNO</td>
<td>.459</td>
<td>.210</td>
<td>.715</td>
<td>.632</td>
<td>Established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLV ↔ ES</td>
<td>.468</td>
<td>.219</td>
<td>.715</td>
<td>.759</td>
<td>Established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLV ↔ OC</td>
<td>-.487</td>
<td>.237</td>
<td>.715</td>
<td>.865</td>
<td>Established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCO ↔ DNO</td>
<td>.339</td>
<td>.114</td>
<td>.822</td>
<td>.632</td>
<td>Established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCO ↔ ES</td>
<td>.419</td>
<td>.175</td>
<td>.822</td>
<td>.759</td>
<td>Established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCO ↔ OC</td>
<td>-.286</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>.822</td>
<td>.865</td>
<td>Established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNO ↔ ES</td>
<td>.371</td>
<td>.137</td>
<td>.632</td>
<td>.759</td>
<td>Established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNO ↔ OC</td>
<td>-.421</td>
<td>.177</td>
<td>.632</td>
<td>.865</td>
<td>Established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ES ↔ OC</td>
<td>-.373</td>
<td>.139</td>
<td>.759</td>
<td>.865</td>
<td>Established</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: LLV= Lack of Leader Openness to Voice, LCO= Lack of Open Communication Opportunity, DNO= Defensive Norms of organizational Culture, ES= Employee silence, OC =Organizational commitment
Descriptive Statistics of Sample Respondents

This research study does not consider the demographic characteristics of the respondents as control variables while testing the mediation because of the following reasons. First, considering the demographic characteristics as a controlled variable was not the area of study for this research. Secondly, these demographics were collected to build a profile of the respondents and to help in the interpretation of the results.

The sample characteristics of the respondents in terms of bank type, management level, nature of job, gender, age, academic qualification, overall experience with the bank and year of experience within the same bank are given below:

**Descriptive of Respondents in Public and Private Banks**

The result in Table 10 depicts that most of the respondents (68%) belong to private banks as compared to public banks i.e., 32%. The respondents in public banks were mostly reluctant and refused to participate than private banks. Perhaps they did not trust the researcher that this data would be used only for the academic research purpose. Thus, response rate from public banks was less than the private banks.

**Table 10**

*Descriptive of Respondents in Public and Private Banks (N=1236)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1236</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Management Level Descriptive

The result of Table 11 shows that most of the respondents belong to non-managerial level (54%) which comprises officers belonging to operation, cash and credit. However, 46% of the respondents represent OG1, which comprises branch and operational manager.

Table 11

Management Level Descriptive (N=1236)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management level</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>46.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-managerial</td>
<td>665</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>61.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1236</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Descriptive of Respondent’s Job Nature

Table 12 depicts that most of the respondents (60%) have contractual jobs rather than permanent (40%). Most of the respondents belong to private banks where contractual jobs are frequently announced as compared to permanent jobs.

Table 12

Descriptive of Respondent’s Job Nature (N=1236)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of job</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permanent</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractual</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1236</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Descriptive of Gender of Respondents

Table 13 provides the summary of the respondents’ gender. Result found that males are more dominant in the banking sector as compared to the females. The male respondents represent 81% whereas female respondents comprise the remaining 19%.

Table 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>996</td>
<td>80.6</td>
<td>80.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1236</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age Wise Distribution

An overview of respondents’ age in Table 14 depicts that majority of the respondents are young professionals as 60% of them falls in the age group of 21 to 30 years. Moreover, a big chunk of respondents 23% belongs to age group of 31 – 40. However, rest of the respondents’ age range from 41- 50 (8%) and 51 – 60 (9%).

Table 14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>738</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>59.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>82.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>91.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1236</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Distribution of Respondents Based on Qualification

As shown in Table 15, the qualification level of 75% respondents is Masters, and (21%) Bachelors. The remaining (3%) belongs to other levels of qualification. The overall result shows that majority of the respondents hold Masters Degree (75%) rather than Bachelors Degree (21%). Hence, banks are giving high consideration to the hiring of well qualified professionals.

Table 15

Distribution of Respondents Based on Qualification (N=1236)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>936</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>97.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1236</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall Experience in Banking Sector

Table 16 suggests that more than half (68%) of the respondents have less than 10 years of overall experience in the banking sector. Also, a big chunk of respondents (17%) have an experience of 11-20. However very few have 21 to 30 years (10%) and 31 to 40 years of experience (4%). This finding shows that in the banking sector mostly young professionals are working.
Table 16

*Overall Experience in Banking Sector (N=1236)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Experience</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>843</td>
<td>68.2</td>
<td>68.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>85.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>95.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1236</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Year of Experience in Same Bank

Table 17 represents the distribution of respondents according to year of experience in the same bank. Most of the respondents (72%) spend 1 to 10 years and 11-20 years (17%) in the same bank, respectively. However, only 9% of the respondents have more than 21-30 years and 3% have more than 31-40 years of service within the same bank. As stated in the literature there is a high competition among public and private banks which result in downsizing, reengineering and restructuring. To be competitive, banks are focusing more on young professionals. As shown in the table below, majority of the respondents i.e., 88% have less than 20 years of experience whereas only 12% have more than 20 years of experience with the same bank.

Table 17

*Year of Experience in Same Bank (N=1236)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Experience in The Same Bank</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>892</td>
<td>72.2</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>88.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>97.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1236</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables**

Table 18 reveals that among organizational factors, lack of leader openness to voice shows the highest mean value of 3.77 (SD = 0.74) followed by lack of open communication opportunity 3.39 (SD = 0.71) while defensive norms of organizational culture report the lowest value of 2.40 (SD = 0.60). Additionally, the mean value of employee silence is reported as 3.13 (SD = 0.82) whereas organizational commitment is 2.70 (SD = 0.64) out of a possible score of 5.

**Table 18**

*Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables (N=1236)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Leader Openness to Voice</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Open Communication Opportunity</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defensive Norms of Organizational culture</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Silence</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Commitment</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Inter-Correlation Matrix**

Inter-correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between the three organizational factors and organizational commitment (i.e., to test hypothesis 1, 2 and 3); among all the three organizational factors and employee silence (i.e., hypothesis 4, 5 and 6) and between employee silence and organizational commitment (i.e., hypothesis 7). Table 19 reports the inter-correlations for the organizational factors, employee silence and organizational commitment.
Table 19

Inter-Correlation Matrix of Study Variable (N=1236)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Leader openness to voice</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Open Communication Opportunity</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defensive Norms of Organizational Culture</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee silence</td>
<td></td>
<td>.41**</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational commitment</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.44**</td>
<td>-.48**</td>
<td>-.23**</td>
<td>-.39**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p<.01

Result depicts the highest negative correlation between lack of open communication opportunity and organizational commitment (r = -0.48, p < 0.01, N = 1236) as compared to lack of leader openness to voice (r = -0.44, p < 0.01, N = 1236) and defensive norms of organizational culture (r = -0.23, p < 0.01, N = 1236). Hence, hypothesis 1, 2 and 3 were accepted. On the other hand, among the three organizational factors, lack of leader openness to voice report the highest positive correlation (r = 0.41, p < 0.01, N = 1236) with employee silence, followed by lack of open communication opportunity (r = 0.30, p < 0.01, N = 1236). Thus, results provide full support for hypothesis 4 and 5.
However, the correlation between employee silence and defensive norms of organizational culture is insignificant ($r = 0.03$, $p > 0.01$, $N = 1236$), hence rejecting hypothesis 6. Additionally, hypothesis 7 was supported by the results as a negative correlation between employee silence and organizational commitment is revealed ($r = -0.39$, $p < 0.01$, $N = 1236$). Similarly, correlation analysis among the three organizational factors shows that there is a significant positive correlation between them.

**Mediation Analysis**

The result of the mediation analysis is summarized in Table 20, 21 and 22. To assess the mediating role of employee silence between the organizational factors and organizational commitment, Baron and Kenny (1986) four steps of mediation were used. To test hypothesis 8, 9 and 10, three mediation models are presented below.

**Mediating Role of Employee Silence Between Lack of Leader Openness to Voice and Organizational Commitment**

**Model I:** To fulfill the first condition of mediation i.e., $X \rightarrow Y$, organizational commitment was regressed on lack of leader openness to voice. The data analysis in Table 20 shows that the respective model accounted for 19% of the variation in organizational commitment ($R^2 = .19$, $F = 304.74$, $p < 0.001$). As can be seen from the data in Table 20 that lack of leader openness to voice was negatively and significantly related to organizational commitment ($\beta = -0.44$, $p < 0.001$). The coefficient of -0.44 suggests that, at the mean level of organizational commitment, one unit change in lack of leader openness to voice would correspond to 0.44 unit decrease in organizational commitment. Hence, first condition of mediation was fully supported.
**Model II:** Next, to test the second condition of mediation i.e., $X \rightarrow M$, employee silence was regressed on lack of leader openness to voice. The data analysis shows a positive support for the second condition of mediation and depicts that the respective model accounted for approximately 17% of the variation in employee silence ($R^2 = .17, F = 252.63, p < 0.001$). The result in Table 20 depicts that lack of leader openness to voice positively and significantly relates to employee silence ($\beta = 0.41, p < 0.001$). The coefficient of 0.41 suggests that, at the mean level of employee silence, one unit change in lack of leader openness to voice would correspond to 0.41 unit increase in employee silence.

**Model III:** According to Baron and Kenny (1986) the third condition of mediation is $M \rightarrow Y$, i.e., organizational commitment was regressed on employee silence. The data analysis in Table 20 shows that the respective model accounts for 15% of the variation in organizational commitment ($R^2 = .15, F = 228.45, p < 0.001$). Moreover, the data depicts that employee silence is negatively and significantly related to organizational commitment ($\beta = -0.39, p < 0.001$). The coefficient of -0.39 suggests that, at the mean level of organizational commitment, one unit change in employee silence corresponds to 0.39 unit decrease in organizational commitment. Hence, providing sufficient support for the third condition of mediation.

**Model IV:** To fulfill the last mediation condition i.e., $X \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y$ organizational commitment is regressed together on lack of leader openness to voice and employee silence. this is done to investigate whether partial or full mediation exists. If $\beta$ value in model I decreases in model IV and becomes insignificant from significant, then full mediation takes place. However, if $\beta$ value in model IV is decreased but remain significant partial mediation occurs.
As shown in Table 20, the β value is reduced in Model IV as compared to Model I, but the significance levels remain unchanged, therefore, it explains partial mediation. The table also shows that when mediator enters in model IV, the variance explained in organizational commitment in model I, is substantially increased ($R^2 = 0.19$ to $R^2 = 0.25$).

Furthermore, mediated effect was calculated ($a \times b = 0.41 \times (-0.39) \times 100 = -16\%$) and was found to be 16% and its significance was tested through the Sobel test where $p < 0.001$. Therefore, data analysis depicts a positive support for hypothesis 8 i.e., employee silence acts as a partial mediator between lack of leader openness to voice and organizational commitment.

**Table 20**

*Mediating Role of Employee Silence Between Lack of Leader Openness to Voice and Organizational Commitment (N=1236)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>S.E</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>$\Delta R^2$</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model I: LLV $\rightarrow$ OC</td>
<td>-.39</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.44</td>
<td>-17.45**</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>304.74**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model II: LLV $\rightarrow$ ES</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>15.89**</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>252.63**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model III: ES $\rightarrow$ OC</td>
<td>-.39</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.39</td>
<td>-15.11**</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>228.45**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model IV: ES $\rightarrow$ OC</td>
<td>-.29</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.34</td>
<td>-12.57**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLV $\rightarrow$ OC</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.25</td>
<td>-9.43**</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>207.77**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p<.01

*Note:* LLV= Lack of Leader Openness to Voice, OC= Organizational Commitment ES= Employee Silence
Mediating Role of Employee Silence Between Lack of Open Communication Opportunity and Organizational Commitment

Model I: As per the first condition of mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986) X→Y, Table 21 shows the regression results of the lack of open communication opportunity with organizational commitment. The data analysis shows that the respective model accounts for approximately 23% of the variation in organizational commitment ($R^2 = .23$, $F = 385.42$, $p < 0.001$). Results also demonstrate that lack of open communication opportunity is negatively but significantly related to organizational commitment ($\beta = -0.48$, $p < 0.001$). The coefficient of -0.48 suggests that, at the mean level of organizational commitment, one unit change in lack of open communication opportunity corresponds to approximately 0.48 unit decrease in organizational commitment. Hence, the first condition of mediation is successfully met.

Model II: Moreover, second condition of mediation suggests that lack of open communication opportunity predicts employee silence X→M. Table 21 shows that lack of open communication opportunity accounted for approximately 9% of the variation in employee silence ($R^2 = .09$, $F = 122.11$, $p < 0.001$) and is positively as well as significantly related to employee silence ($\beta = 0.30$, $p < 0.001$). The coefficient of 0.30 suggests that, at the mean level of employee silence, one unit change in lack of open communication opportunity corresponds to a .30 unit increase in employee silence. Hence, second condition of mediation is also supported by the results.
Model III: Table 21 shows the regression results of the employee silence with organizational commitment as the third condition of mediation (M → Y). The data analysis shows that the respective model accounts for 15% of the variation in organizational commitment ($R^2 = .15$, $F = 228.45$, $p < 0.001$). Moreover, data analysis depicts a positive support for this third condition of mediation. Table 21 shows that employee silence is negatively and significantly related to organizational commitment ($\beta = -0.39$, $p < 0.001$). The coefficient of -0.39 suggests that, at the mean level of organizational commitment, one unit change in employee silence would correspond to 0.39 unit decrease in organizational commitment.

Model IV: Lastly, the mediating role of employee silence between lack of open communication opportunity and organizational commitment is also assessed (X → M → Y). The result in Table 21 shows that the $\beta$ value is reduced in Model IV as compared to Model I but the significance levels remain unchanged, therefore it explains partial mediation. Table 21 also shows that when mediator is entered in model IV, the variance explained in organizational commitment in model I was substantially increased ($R^2 = 0.23$ to $R^2 = 0.30$).

Therefore, data analysis depicts a positive support for hypothesis 9 i.e., employee silence acts as a partial mediator between lack of open communication opportunity and organizational commitment and is verified by calculating mediated effect ($a \times b = 0.30 \times (-0.39) \times 100 = -12\%$ approximately). Moreover, the mediation is validated through the Sobel test where $p < 0.001$. 
Table 21

Mediating Role of Employee Silence Between Lack of Open Communication Opportunity and Organizational Commitment (N=1236)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>S.E</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>ΔR²</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model I: LOC → OC</td>
<td>-.44</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.48</td>
<td>-19.63**</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>385.42**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model II: LOC → ES</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>11.05**</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>122.11**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model III: ES → OC</td>
<td>-.39</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.39</td>
<td>-15.11**</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>228.45**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model IV: ES</td>
<td>-.36</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.40</td>
<td>-16.32**</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>228.45**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOC → OC</td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.27</td>
<td>-11.00**</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>272.08**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p<.01

Note: LCO= Lack of Open Communication Opportunity, OC= Organizational Commitment, ES= Employee Silence

Mediating Role of Employee Silence Between Defensive Norms of Organizational Culture and Organizational Commitment

Model I: To meet the first condition of mediation, organizational commitment is regressed on defensive norms of organizational culture (X → Y). The data analysis shows that the respective model accounts for 5% of the variation in organizational commitment (R²=.05 F = 72.30, p < 0.001). Table 22 shows that the defensive norms of organizational culture is negatively and significantly related to organizational commitment (β = -0.23, p < 0.001). The coefficient of -0.23 suggests that, at the mean level of organizational commitment, one unit change in defensive norms of organizational culture would correspond to .23 unit decrease in organizational commitment.

Model II: For second condition of mediation, employee silence is regressed on defensive norms of organizational culture (X → M), Table 22 shows that defensive norms of organizational culture is insignificantly related to employee silence (β = 0.03, p = 0.18 > 0.05). For the presence of mediation, there are (Baron & Kenny, 1986) four necessary
conditions that must exist, i.e., \( X \rightarrow Y, X \rightarrow M, M \rightarrow Y \) and \( X \rightarrow Y \) in presence of \( M \). If any one of the condition is not met, mediation could not take place. The result in Table 22 depicts that the second condition of mediation (i.e., \( X \rightarrow M \)) is not met due to the insignificant relationship between the variables involved. Hence, hypothesis 10 is not supported. However, to further verify whether mediation exists or not, the two steps of mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986) are followed as well as mediated effect is calculated along with Sobel’s Test.

**Model III:** Table 22 shows the regression results of the employee silence with organizational commitment as the third condition of mediation (\( M \rightarrow Y \)). The data analysis shows that the respective model accounts for 15% of the variation in organizational commitment (\( R^2 = .15, F = 228.45, p < 0.001 \)). Table 22 shows that employee silence is negatively and significantly related to organizational commitment (\( \beta = -0.39, p < 0.001 \)). The coefficient of -0.39 suggests that, at the mean level of organizational commitment, one unit change in employee silence would correspond to .39 unit decrease in organizational commitment.

**Model IV:** Lastly, the mediating role of employee silence between defensive norms of organizational culture and organizational commitment is also assessed (\( X \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y \)). The result in Table 22 shows that the beta value does not reduce in Model IV as compared to Model I, hence no mediation exists.
To further confirm the mediation, mediated effect was calculated \((a \times b = .03 \times (-.39)) \times 100 = 1\%\), and the mediation was validated through the Sobel test where \(p = .096\) which is > .001. Hence, in support of Baron and Kenny Condition of mediation, Sobel test confirms that employee silence does not mediate the relationship between defensive norms of organizational culture and organizational commitment and rejects hypothesis 10.

**Table 22**

*Mediating Role of Employee Silence Between Defensive Norms of Organizational Culture and Organizational Commitment (N=1236)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>S.E</th>
<th>(\beta)</th>
<th>(T)</th>
<th>(R^2)</th>
<th>(\Delta R^2)</th>
<th>(F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model I:  DNO (\rightarrow) OC</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.23</td>
<td>8.50**</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>72.30**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model II: DNO (\rightarrow) ES</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>1.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model III: ES (\rightarrow) OC</td>
<td>-.39</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.39</td>
<td>15.11**</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>228.45**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model IV: ES DNO (\rightarrow) OC</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>9.95**</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>172.86**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p<.01

Note: DNO = Defensive norms of organizational culture, OC = Organizational Commitment, ES = Employee Silence

**Structural Equation Modeling**

To further validate the mediating effect of employee silence between lack of leader openness to voice and organizational commitment as well as between lack of open communication opportunity and organizational commitment, structure equation modeling was used.

The regression standardized estimates and significance level of the relationship between the variables obtained from SEM (Structural Equation Modeling) is shown in Table 23. The direct as well as indirect relationship (through employee silence) between
lack of leader openness to voice and organizational commitment is established in model 1. The direct and indirect relationship (through employee silence) between lack of open communication opportunity and organizational commitment is established in model 2. However, as there is an insignificant correlation between defensive norms of organizational culture and employee silence, as well as no mediation of employee silence exist between defensive norms of organizational culture and organizational commitment, that is why no mediation model is developed hence, hypothesis 10 is rejected in this study.

While depicting the results of Model 1, Table 23 demonstrates that lack of leader openness to voice has significant positive effect on employee silence, that is when lack of leader openness to voice goes up by 1 unit employee silence goes up by 0.35 units, whereas the significance of this relationship is indicated by p-value (0.00). Next, employee silence has a significant negative effect on organizational commitment that is when employee silence goes up by 1 unit organizational commitment goes down by 0.43 units, whereas p-value (0.00) indicates the significance of this relationship. Furthermore, lack of leader openness to voice has significant negative effect on organizational commitment, that is when lack of leader openness to voice goes up by 1 unit organizational commitment goes down by 0.410 units, indicated by significant p-value (0.00). The standardized indirect effect in Model 1 shows the mediated effect of employee silence between lack of leader openness to voice and organizational commitment is -.152. this relationship is shown in fig. 8.
The results of Model 2 under Table 23 reflect that lack of open communication opportunity has significant positive effect on employee silence, i.e., when lack of open communication opportunity goes up by 1 unit, employee silence goes up by 0.35 units, whereas the significance of this relationship is indicated by p-value (0.00). Next, employee silence has a significant negative effect on organizational commitment that is when employee silence goes up by 1 unit organizational commitment goes down by 0.14 units, whereas p-value (0.00) indicated the significance of this relationship. Furthermore, lack of open communication opportunity has significant negative effect on organizational
commitment, i.e., when lack of open communication opportunity goes up by 1 unit, organizational commitment goes down by 0.61 units, indicated by significant p-value (0.00). The standardized indirect effect in Model 2 shows the mediated effect of employee silence between lack of open communication opportunity and organizational commitment (-0.050), this relationship is shown in fig. 9.

**Figure No. 9**, Mediating Relationship of Employee Silence Between Lack of Open Communication Opportunity and Organizational Commitment
Table 23

*Regression Weights (Paths of Structural Equation Modeling) (N=1236)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Paths</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>C.R.</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ES</td>
<td>LLV</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>10.348</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 1 (H8)</td>
<td>OC</td>
<td>LLV</td>
<td>-.41</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>-9.501</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OC</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>-.43</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>-8.949</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIE</td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>LCO</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>8.626</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 2 (H9)</td>
<td>OC</td>
<td>LCO</td>
<td>-.61</td>
<td>.090</td>
<td>-0.932</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OC</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>.044</td>
<td>-4.686</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIE</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: ES = Employee Silence, OC = Organizational Commitment, SIE = Standardized Indirect Effect, LLV = Lack of Leader Openness to Voice, LCO = Lack of Open Communication Opportunity*

**Model Fit Indices**

In the present study, a range of model fit indices are used to assess the model fitness, which are as follows: Chi-Square (CMIN), along with Degrees of Freedom (DF) and level of significance (P), Root Mean Square Residual (RMR), Goodness-of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted-Goodness-of Fit Index (AGFI), Comparative-Fit Index (CFI) and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), obtained by AMOS output, indicated by Table 24.
Table 24

Model Fit Indices (N=1236)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>CMIN</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>CMIN/DF</th>
<th>RMR</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>AGFI</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>1727.496</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>17.628</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>.878</td>
<td>.786</td>
<td>.963</td>
<td>.0116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td>1870.079</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>18.156</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.860</td>
<td>.767</td>
<td>.997</td>
<td>.118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: CMIN= Chi-square, DF= degrees of freedom, P= level of significance, Root Mean Square Residual= RMR, GFI= Goodness of Fit Index, AGFI, Adjusted goodness of Fit Index, CFI= Comparative Fit Index, RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation.

Chi-square statistic holds statistical significance, yet it is sensitive to sample size and always rejects the model when sample size is either large (Bentler & Bonnet, 1980 and Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993) or small (Kenny & McCoach, 2003). This indicates restrictiveness of the Model Chi-Square and therefore alternative indices are sought by the researchers to assess the fitness of the model (Hooper et al., 2008). Although there are problems associated with Chi-square, it is recommended by the researchers (Hayduk, Cummings, Boadu, Robinson, & Boulianne, 2007 and Kline, 2011) to report Chi-square, degrees of freedom and associated p-value. Table 22 shows that the value of Chi-square is 1727.49 and 1870.079; degrees of freedom is 98 and 103; whereas p-value is .000 for model 1 and 2 respectively. The result depicts that both modles does not meet the minimum condition for the model fitness as p-value should be insignificant (p > 0.05) and chi-square should be either greater than 2 or as low as 2.0 (Wheaton, Muthen, Alwin, & Summers, 1977). These values could be due to the large sample size of the study, as chi-square is adversely affected by the sample size. As per Lei and Wu (2007) chi-square may refer
model to be misfit but it might be close fit to the data. Hence, it is important to consider other indices before rejecting fitness of model 1 and 2.

The next fit index is root mean square residual (RMR), whose value should be smaller for indicating better model fit (Hooper et al., 2008). RMR is immediately interpretable measure of the discrepancies (Weston & Gore, 2006). According to Browne and Cudeck (1993) and Mathieu and Taylor (2006), RMR should be less than .08 for model to be acceptable. Table 24 shows that in the case of model 1, RMR is .074 which is less than .08, considering the model as acceptable. On the other hand, RMR for model 2 is .016 which is less than .08, considering the model as acceptable.

Goodness of fit index (GFI) is another fitness measure and its value should be equal to or greater than .90, for the model to be acceptable (Hooper et al., 2008). Moreover, another related index is adjusted goodness of Fit index (AGFI) which a variant of GFI and which adjusts value of index for the number of parameters in the model. AGFI will be closer to GFI, depending on fewer number of parameters in the model relative to the number of data points. The value of AGFI lies between 0 and 1, whereas the model is a fit if AGFI is 0.90 or greater. Although GFI and AGFI hold historical significance and are reported, they are adversely affected by sample size (Wuensch, 2012). It is shown in the Table 24 that GFI for model 1 and 2 is .878 and .860 respectively and AGFI is .786 and .767 respectively. Although the values of GFI and AGFI are not high, yet for rejecting the model their values should not be considered as they are negatively affected by the sample size (Marsh, Hau & Wen, 2004).
Another criterion used by the researchers is Comparative Fit index (CFI), which is a modified form of Normed Fit Index (NFI). As per Mathieu and Taylor, (2006) CFI should be either $\geq .90$ for predicting moderate/acceptable or good fit respectively. CFI is viewed as a good index that is least affected by sample size (Wuensch, 2012). Moreover, CFI is one of the most popular reported fit index and is recommended by Boomsma (2000) and MacCallum and Austin (2000) to use CFI. Table 24 shows that CFI for model 1 and 2 is .963 and .997 respectively which shows both models are acceptable.

Lastly, MacCallum and Austin (2000) recommend to use Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) fit index, which is recently regarded as one of the most informative indices of model fit as it is sensitive to the number of estimated parameters in the model (Hu & Bentler, 1999). RMSEA value should be below .08 to have a good fit of the model (McDonald & Ho, 2002), whereas value of 0.08 to 0.10 indicates a mediocre/acceptable fit (Browne & Cudeck, 1993 and Weston & Gore, 2006). It is shown in Table 24 that the value of RMSEA for model 1 is .01 and for model 2 is .118 which indicates that the models exhibit acceptable/mediocre fit.

Thus, based on the above discussion the model 1 and 2 of the present study are regarded as models exhibiting acceptable/mediocre model fitness, indicating that these a-priori models moderately fit the empirical data (McDonald & Ho, 2002). Mathieu and Taylor (2006) state that accepted models mean that empirical data failed to reject the hypothesized model, which is not inconsistent with the data in such case. In other words, this fundamentally indicates the moderate fitness of theory to the empirical data.
The models which are accepted, represents the following theory: Model 1: lack of leader openness to voice has influence on employee silence, which also has influence on organizational commitment, whereas partial mediation is exhibited by employee silence. Model 2: lack of open communication opportunity has influence on employee silence, which also has influence on organizational commitment, whereas partial mediation is exhibited by employee silence.

**Summary of Hypotheses**

Based on the above discussion, the following table is drawn to which depicts the acceptance and rejections of the hypotheses of the this study.

**Table 25**

*Hypotheses Verification*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Accepted/Rejected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lack of leader openness to voice negatively impacts organizational commitment.</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lack of open communication opportunity negatively influences organizational commitment.</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Defensive norms of an organizational culture relate negatively with organizational commitment.</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>There is a positive relationship between Lack of leader openness to voice and employee silence.</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Positive relationship exists among Lack of open communication opportunity and employee silence.</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Defensive norms of an organizational culture is positively associated with employee silence.  

Employee silence negatively relates to organizational commitment.  

Employee silence mediates the relationship between lack of leader openness to voice and organizational commitment.  

Employee silence intervenes the association between lack of open communication opportunity and organizational commitment.  

The relationship between defensive norms of an organizational culture and organizational commitment is mediated by employee silence.

---

**Result of Qualitative Phase II**

**Intermediate Phase of Connecting the Quantitative and Qualitative Phases**

The purpose of the intermediate stage was to identify significant, insignificant and outlier findings from the quantitative phase of the study to be further explored in the succeeding qualitative phase of the study. This section presents the criteria on which these quantitative findings were selected, a detailed summary of each key finding, and a series of questions for further consideration in the qualitative phase of the study are discussed in detail.
It was found that the quantitative study had some important significant and insignificant findings in terms of: lack of leader openness to voice act as the strongest predictor of employee silence in the banking sector of KP Pakistan whereas lack of communication opportunity act as the weakest predictor. However insignificant relationship was found between defensive norms of the organizational culture and employee silence in the banking context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

The findings from the quantitative phase also highlight lack of open communication opportunity to be the strongest predictor of organizational commitment and defensive norms of organizational culture was pointed as the weakest predictor of organizational commitment in the banking context of KP Pakistan. All these important findings were selected to further explain as to how and why this relationship exists in the banks of KP Pakistan.

**Identification of Quantitative Findings for Further Qualitative Exploration**

The findings were chosen by focusing on the strongest (most significant) and weakest (less significant) predictors of employee silence and organizational commitment. Accordingly, the findings pertaining to the above criteria were selected as the focus for the qualitative phase of the study, and are explained below:

- **Predictors of Employee Silence**
  - Significant strongest predictor
  - Significant weakest predictor
  - Insignificant Predictor
• Predictors of Organizational Commitment
  o Significant strongest predictor
  o Significant weakest predictor

Development of the Qualitative Phase Protocol

To facilitate an in-depth exploration of quantitative findings in the qualitative phase of the study, two group of findings presented above were selected for further exploration. To gain an understanding as to how and why these specific relations might arise in the banking sector of KP Pakistan, a series of questions were developed to inform the design of the qualitative phase protocol.

Before the development of questions, an interview guide was designed to organize the research questions in semi-structured interviews. Bryman (2012) suggests that an interview guide for semi-structured interviews should be a brief list of questions that address the research problem. This study follows Gilbert (2008) in designing the interview guide following three steps. The first step is to determine the framework of the interview guide, which is derived from the significant finding of the quantitative phase. The guide is designed to clearly identify the themes to be used in analyzing the interview data. The qualitative analysis consists of two main sections, including: (i) predictors of employee silence and (ii) predictors of organizational commitment. These two sections were used as a basis to formulate the resulting interview questions.

The second step is formulating the interview questions. Several considerations were considered when formulating the questions. First, the researcher formulated interview questions in a way that helped elicit more accurate answers (Bryman & Bell, 2004). Second, the questions were designed not to be too narrow, because that may limit follow-
up questions or clarifications of the main issue during interviews (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Third, the questions were ordered, to ensure a reasonable flow so that the research issue could be discussed properly. Fourth, as this study employs a mixed-methods approach, the questions were designed to help achieve integration between quantitative and qualitative approaches (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

The third step was to review the proposed interview guide (Gilbert, 2008). Thus, the constructed guide in this study was reviewed by the researcher’s supervisor and discussed with colleagues in doctoral colloquium conferences. Their reviews helped identify issues that had not previously been considered. Also, their reviews were useful in ensuring the validity and reliability of the interview data. After the review process, the proposed amendments were considered, and the final list of interview questions were drawn, as shown below.

- **Exploring the Relationship of Lack of Leader Openness to Voice, Lack of Open Communication Opportunity and Defensive Norms of Organizational Culture with Employee silence**

To understand the strongest and weakest predictors of employee silence in the context of banking sector of KP Pakistan, the following two questions were raised for further consideration:
- What are the reasons for lack of leader openness to voice to act as the strongest predictor of employee silence in the banks of KP, Pakistan?

- What are the reasons for lack of open communication opportunity to be the weakest predictor of employee silence in the banks of KP, Pakistan?

- What are the reasons for insignificant relationship between defensive norms of organizational culture and employee silence in the banks of KP, Pakistan?

- **Exploring the Relationship of Lack of Open Communication Opportunity, and Defensive Norms of Organizational Culture with Organizational Commitment**

  To understand the strongest and weakest predictors of organizational commitment in the context of banking sector of KP Pakistan, the following two questions were raised for further consideration:

- What are the reasons for lack of open communication opportunity to act as the strongest predictor of organizational commitment in the banks of KP, Pakistan?

- What are the reasons for defensive norms of organizational culture to be the weakest predictor of organizational commitment in the banks of KP, Pakistan?

  The intermediate phase of bridging quantitative and qualitative phase ends with the development of interview guide. Next data was collected for qualitative phase and the findings are given below:
Findings of Qualitative Phase

The findings from the qualitative analysis of the interview data are presented below as a series of themes organized under the following key topics:

- The relationship of lack of leader openness to voice, lack of open communication opportunity and defensive norms of organizational culture with employee silence.
- The relationship of lack of open communication opportunity and defensive norms of organizational culture with organizational commitment.

Relationship Between Lack of Leader Openness to Voice and Employee silence

The first of the quantitative findings to be explored in the interviews was the relationship of lack of leader openness to voice with employee silence. As illustrated in Figure 10 (derived from result of quantitative analysis), lack of leader openness to voice positively correlates with employee silence. The informant’s explanations as to how and why this patterning in banks might arise drew on the following key themes: authority of branch manager, Performance assessment, branch manager self-interest, and favoritism. These themes are elaborated below based on the informant’s responses.

Leader Misuse Authority

Informants report that supreme authority lies with the branch manager, as he/she is the one who assign roles, responsibilities and job rotation. Head office and regional branch empower branch manager to run the operations of the branch and gives low control to employees to suggest any idea for work improvement or innovation. Branch manager acts in more authoritative way and sometimes it leads to unequal distribution of work and duties.
Subjective Performance Appraisal

Branch managers are held responsible for performance evaluation of the employees of their branch. Mostly it is influenced by one’s relation with the manager. Informants state that we must do whatever manager say in terms of extra work, long working hours due to fear of getting negative performance appraisal.

Favoritism

Informants reveal that branch managers do favoritism in terms of giving more favor to other colleagues who are in relation/ friendship with them, and he/she is not fair enough to treat all employees equally. Mostly managers give more favors in term of half day leave, less work load, few job rotation, easy transfer to those branches where workload is less etc. to those having friendly relations with them.

Political Appointment

Informants expose the reality that political influence play vital role in banking sector. Most of the appointments, specifically, in public banks are done on political basis. Those employees who have political background get more favors from managers. Mostly political appointees are not competent enough to deal with their work well. They create more political pressure on managers to facilitate them and managers do accordingly.

Self-Interest Decision by Manager

The respondents that report that due to “Human Error”, work overload mistake occurs during voucher posting or counter checking all voucher postings. In such case managers take disciplinary action against employees and report it to top management to save his/her neck. The manager takes care of his/her self-interest and take decisions even if it is against the employees’ interest.
**Feeling of Insecurity**

Informants state that they hesitate to discuss their issues regarding work overload, stressful environment, monotonous of work etc. due the fear that manager will feel that employees do not want to work and are lazy by nature and will negatively evaluate their performance.

**Incompetency of Leader**

Informant discovered that sometimes branch managers discourage innovative and new ideas of doing the job due to their own incompetency. They do not want to reveal the fact that they are not good in adopting new technology that is suggested by the employees as they lack these skills that are required to adopt that technology. The themes derived from the informants’ feedback are presented in the visual model in fig. 10.
Figure No. 10, Expectancy Theory- Based Model of Relationship Between Lack of Leader Openness to Voice and Employee Silence: Banking Sector of KP Pakistan

As shown on the left side of the model, authority of branch manager, Performance assessment, branch manager self-interest, political appointments and favoritism were the key explanation given for lack of leader openness to voice to be the strongest predictor of employee silence. Elements of Expectancy Theory (expectancy, instrumentality and valence) help to understand how these themes motivate employees in the banking sector of KP Pakistan to engage in employee silence due to lack of leader openness to voice. Expectancy (E), Instrumentality (I) and Valence (V) are discussed below.
E: Lack of leader openness to voice impacts the feeling of the employee, that Leader: misuse authority, do subjective performance appraisal, do favoritism, encourage Political appointment, take decision in favor of self-interest, do not listen to employee problem and create feeling of insecurity, do not encourage innovative ideas due to their own incompetency.

I: Employee considers that if leader do above mentioned activities, it will lead to a risk of facing negative consequences in form of negative performance evaluation or disciplinary action.

V: Employee does not like to have a risk of negative consequences.

MF: Employee decides to choose employee silence.

**Relationship Between Lack of Open Communication Opportunity and Employee Silence**

The second quantitative findings to be explored in the interviews was the relationship of lack of open communication opportunity with employee silence. As illustrated in fig. 11 (derived from result of quantitative analysis), lack of open communication opportunity positively correlates with employee silence. The informants’ explanations as to how and why lack of open communication opportunity is the weakest predictor of employee silence as compared to lack of leader openness to voice, leads to following themes, that informants consider to be influential but not as strong as the themes derived from lack of leader openness to voice. These themes are: centralized decision process, slow career path, leg pulling by coworkers, professional jealousy and lack of trust. These themes are elaborated below based on informants’ responses.
Centralized Decision Process

Informants report that in the banking sector there is centralized decision system and decision are imposed by the head office and they are not even informed before implementing any decision. On branch level, while making any decision, branch manager listens to their ideas and suggestions for improvement but never incorporate them in the final decision.

Slow Career Path

There is lack of appreciation by the top management, and promotion process is very slow. They cannot communicate and negotiate with top management about their good performance, and it’s all in the hands of branch manager as whatever performance evaluation in forwarded by the branch manager, top management consider it as final.

Leg Pulling by Coworkers

Informants reveal that in banks co-workers do not cooperate and due to lack of open communication system, they find indirect means to communicate negative information about their colleagues to the top management. On the other hand, top management do not verify it and considers it as authentic information.

Professional Jealousy

Informants report that senior colleagues and managers do not appreciate good performance as they cannot see others progressing and thus create professional jealousy. Neither they want to work hard nor encourage the others to do so. They create hurdles for good performers. They claim that it all happens due to lack of acknowledgement by the top management. They suggest that if top management builds a mechanism of appreciation, it will create a competitive environment and everyone will be encouraged to work hard.
Lack of Trust

Informants state that they cannot discuss their problems and issues with the top management and other colleagues due to lack of trust, as they can exaggerate their issues and may interpret them as not in favor of the management hence may consider them as trouble maker. The themes derived from the informants’ feedback are presented in the visual model in fig. 11.

Figure No. 11, Expectancy Theory- Based Model of Relationship Between Lack of Open Communication Opportunity and Employee Silence: Banking Sector of KP Pakistan.
As shown on the left side of the model, centralized decision process, slow career path, leg pulling by coworkers, professional jealousy and lack of trust were the key explanation given for lack of open communication opportunity to be the weakest predictor of employee silence. Elements of Expectancy Theory (expectancy, instrumentality and valence) help to understand how these themes motivates employees in the banking sector of KP Pakistan to engage in employee silence due to lack of open communication opportunity. Expectancy (E), Instrumentality (I) and Valence (V) are discussed below.

E: Lack of leader open communication opportunity impacts the feeling of the employee, that there will be a centralized decision process, slow career path, leg pulling by coworkers, professional jealousy and lack of trust.

I: Employee considers that if above mentioned activities take place due to lack of open communication opportunity, it will lead to a risk of facing negative consequences in form of negative performance evaluation or disciplinary action.

V: Employee does not like to have a risk of negative consequences.

MF: Employee decides to choose employee silence.

**Insignificant Relationship Between Defensive Norms of Organizational Culture and Employee Silence**

The fourth of the quantitative findings to be explored in the interviews was the insignificant relationship of defensive norms of organizational culture with employee silence. As depicted from the findings of the quantitative phase defensive norms of organizational culture insignificantly correlates with employee silence.
The informant’s explanations as to how and why this patterning in banks might arise drew on the following key themes: self-centered attitude of coworkers, lack of trust among colleagues, lack of sharing and cooperation, blame game personality type, permanency and seniority of job and public bank. These themes are elaborated below based on informant’s responses.

**Self-Centered Attitude of Coworkers**

In the banking culture, it is commonly noticed that everyone thinks about self-benefit and none is concerned about group members interest. They work on individual level and do not take interest in collective level benefits of the whole team.

**Lack of Trust Among Colleagues**

In the banking environment, a lack of trust is a norm to be followed, hence everyone keeps their secrets and tries to find out other ways to fix their problems rather than seeking help from the colleagues. They have a fear that for the sake of self-interest a colleague may speak up their secret and will put them in trouble.

**Lack of Sharing and Cooperation**

In the banks of KP, Pakistan, everyone is concerned about their own work and there is lack of sharing and cooperation.

**Blame Game**

Due to work overload, there is a high rate of mistakes and human error in the banks. But when an employee commits a mistake, instead of taking corrective action he starts blaming others for that mistake and hence weakens the friendly environment in the bank.
**Personality Types**

Some of the respondents report that they are not influenced by the prevailing norms of the bank and do whatever they think is right. They consider themselves so courageous that they can dare speak up about wrongdoings even if all the other colleagues feel it to be dangerous. They are not being influenced by other but think for themselves.

**Permanency and Seniority of Job**

Most of the permanent employees report that they can dare speak up about anything that they feel is right or wrong due to the permanent nature of their jobs. Mostly permanent employees and even those who are on senior position dare raise voice irrespective of defensive norms followed by others.

**Public Banks**

Mostly the employees in the public banks report that defensive norms cannot influence their decision to speak up or to remain silent as they do not have job insecurity. They are well aware that they will leave the bank once get retired, nobody can fire them. If they speak up, and it goes against them, in the worst scenario their annual increment may decrease and that too at a negligible level.

**Tenure of Branch Manager**

Most of the informant report that defensive norms do not affect their decision to speak up as they know that the branch manager is on this designation for a specified period of three years and after that he/she will be replaced so branch manager cannot harm their long-term career.
Relationship Between Lack of Open Communication Opportunity and Organizational Commitment

The fourth of the quantitative findings to be explored in the interviews was the relationship of lack of open communication opportunity with organizational commitment. As illustrated in fig. 12 (derived from result of quantitative analysis), a lack of open communication opportunity negatively correlates with organizational commitment. The informant’s explanations as to how and why this patterning in banks might arise drew on the following key themes: lack of contact with higher ups, chain of command, lack of appreciation and reward system, Routine work with strict procedures, feeling of futility and fear of punishment. These themes are elaborated below based on informant’s responses.

Lack of Contact with Higher Ups

Here informants again emphasize on need for formal upward communication and state that in banks it is very difficult to communicate with top management. Email mechanism to report any issue exists but as a formality only. Very rarely top management replies to these emails, and if so they copy it to the branch manager, hence we feel no point to discuss any issue with the top management.

Chain of Command

Informants mentioned that they are not able to communicate upward due to chain of command. In the banks, formal communication takes place through emails. Top management does not entertain any emails if immediate manager is not in Cc, or if email is not sent through immediate boss.
Lack of Appreciation and Reward System

Informants mention that there is lack of appreciation from the head office for their hard work. Sometimes they are assigned with tough targets but when achieved no fringe benefits are given and they are treated same as those who just meet the targets. There is no reward system for those who show extra role behavior.

Routine Work with Strict Procedures

Informants state that due to lack of communication opportunity, they must bear routine work with strict procedure, which leads to low level of organizational commitment. Due to monotonous work routine, employees get bored and feel frustrated. On the other hand, they are not allowed to amend any work procedure that contribute to their feeling of hopelessness and thus reduces their level of organizational commitment.

Feeling of Futility

Most of the informants stated that their decisions to remain silent is influenced by the belief that even if they speak up to the hierarchy, it will not make any difference or elicit a response. When there is lack of open communication opportunity employees develop a feeling of futility and hence results in low level of organizational commitment.

Fear of Punishment

Fear of punishment was raised by most of the informants. They state that they remain silent due to fear of losing promotion opportunity, getting tough assignments and get treated unjustly. The themes derived from the informant’s feedback are presented in the visual model in fig. 12.
Figure No. 12, Expectancy Theory- Based Model of Relationship Between Lack of Open Communication Opportunity and Organizational Commitment: Banking Sector of KP Pakistan

As shown on the left side of the model, lack of contact with higher ups, chain of command, lack of appreciation and reward system, Routine work with strict procedures, feeling of futility and fear of punishment were the key explanation given for lack of open communication opportunity to be the strongest predictor of organizational commitment. Elements of Expectancy Theory (expectancy, instrumentality and valence) help to
understand how these themes, in the banking sector of KP Pakistan, lead to low level of organizational commitment due to lack of open communication opportunity. Expectancy (E), Instrumentality (I) and Valence (V) are discussed below.

E: Lack of leader open communication opportunity impacts the feeling of the employee, that there will be lack of contact with higher ups, chain of command, lack of appreciation and reward system, Routine work with strict procedures, feeling of futility and fear of punishment.

I: Employee considers that if above mentioned activities take place due to lack of open communication opportunity, it will lead to Lack of sense of belongingness, Lack of involvement in and attachment with organizacional goals.

V: Employee does not like to have these undesirable outcomes, but they exist.

MF: It leads to low level of organizational commitment.

**Relationship Between Defensive Norms of Organizational Culture and Organizational Commitment**

The fourth quantitative finding explored in the interviews was the relationship of defensive norms of organizational culture with organizational commitment. As illustrated in fig. 13 (derived from result of quantitative analysis), a defensive norm of organizational culture negatively correlates with organizational commitment. The informant’s explanations as to how and why defensive norms of organizational culture is the weakest predictor of organizational commitment as compared to lack of open communication opportunity leads to the following themes. The informants’ themes about the impact of defensive norms of organizational culture on organizational commitment are influential but not as strong as the themes derived from lack of open communication opportunity.
These themes are: incompetency of colleagues, negative experience of the senior colleagues, lack of leader consultation attitude, social boycott, avoiding conflicts and group think. These themes are elaborated below based on the informants’ responses.

**Incompetency of Colleagues**

The informants could not raise voice against the under-performance or incompetency of other colleagues or managers. They pointed out that to accomplish assigned task they needed teamwork, but faced many hurdles due to incompetency of co-workers and based on defensive norms and fear of social rejection they remain silent which adversely effects their level of organizational commitment.

**Negative Experience of Colleagues**

Informants also report that their decision to raise voice or to remain silent depends upon what other colleagues expect from them and how they respond towards particular issues. When seniors share their negative experience and frustration about non-responsive attitude of managers and top management, they automatically develop silence attitude towards their issues or concerns and do not talk to the managers about them.

**Lack of Leader Consultation Attitude**

Informants report that due to prevailing defensive norms, managers consider their silence as consent and unconsciously start imposing their decisions on the employees. This lack of manager’s cooperation and consultation leads to low level of organizational commitment hence they cannot suggest any improvement or innovative ideas.
Social Boycott

Informants mention that there are some issues that they cannot discuss with others which include incompatibility with organizational rules and practices, issues related to one’s personal growth in terms career path and work conflict with colleagues. Mostly employees do not report fraud cases by the other colleagues due to risk of damaging their own image. They emphasize that if they talk about these problems with managers or other colleagues, they will face social boycott.

Avoiding Conflicts

Informants share their fear about losing good relations with colleagues if they talk about conflicting views. They express that if they speak they will come in a conflicting state with their colleagues and will be viewed as negative minded. They said it may affect their promotion and appraisals adversely.

Groupthink

Most of the informants indicated that there are certain issues that are not discussed at all. It is noticed that other colleagues also know about it but no one dare to raise their voice about it, hence they also develop a perception that to remaining silent is the best option. The themes derived from the informant’s feedback are presented in the visual model in fig. 13.
As shown on the left side of the model, incompetency of the colleagues, negative experience of colleagues, lack of leader consultation attitude, social boycott, avoiding conflicts and group think were the key explanation given for defensive norms of organizational culture to be the weakest predictor of organizational commitment. Here Elements of Expectancy Theory (expectancy, instrumentality and valence) help to
understand how these themes, in the banking sector of KP Pakistan, leads to low level of organizational commitment due to lack of open communication opportunity. Expectancy (E), Instrumentality (I) and Valence (V) are discussed below.

E: Defensive norms of organizational culture impacts the feeling of the employee, that it will lead to Incompetency of colleagues, negative experience of colleagues, Lack of leader consultation, Social boycott, avoiding conflicts, Group think.

I: Employee considers that if above mentioned activities take place due to defensive norms of organizational culture, it will lead to lack of sense of belongingness, lack of involvement in and attachment with organizacional goals.

V: Employee doesn’t like to have these undesirable outcomes, but they exist.

MF: Hence, there is low level of organizational commitment.

This chapters provided a detailed discussion about the results of the quantitative as well as qualitative phase of the study. Through the triangulation of the data, the qualitative phase of the study, based on the findings of the first quantitative phase of the study, presents an Expectancy Theory- based employee silence model for the banking sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan to provide explanation for how and why relationship exists between the study variables. The next chapter elaborates discussion and conclusion of the study.
Chapter 5
Discussion and Conclusion

The study aimed at investigating the direct and mediating relationship among organizational factors (lack of leader openness to voice, lack of open communication opportunity and defensive norms of organizational culture), employee silence and organizational commitment. Two-step stratified proportionate random sampling was used to draw the sample and data was gathered from 1236 respondents from 258 branches of the 8 selected commercial banks within 12 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Sequential explanatory mixed method approach was used which comprised of qualitative phase followed by the quantitative phase. Quantitative analysis was conducted in the first phase of the study to empirically measure the direct and mediating relationship among the variables of the study. To further elaborate the significant and insignificant findings of quantitative analysis, the qualitative analysis was conducted in the second phase which focused on exploring the reasons for such relationship to exist in banking sector of KP Pakistan and presented the Expectancy Theory- based employee silence models for the banking sector of KP, Pakistan.

The result of the first quantitative phase of the study showed full support for hypothesis 1, hypothesis 2 and hypothesis 3 and depicts that all of the three organizational factors act as the predictors of, and negatively correlates with, organizational commitment. Hypothesis 1 was accepted and it was found that lack of leader openness to voice negatively correlates with organizational commitment. This finding was consistent with the previous
studies which reported that lack of managers’ ability to respond to bad news, and seeking employee’s dissent decreases employees level of commitment (Nikmaram et al., 2012 and Vakola & Bouradas, 2005). Additionally, the results acknowledge the hypothesis 2 which state that lack of open communication opportunity leads to low level of organizational commitment. In support of this argument, it is found in the literature that when open communication opportunity is not provided to exchange information and ideas it reduces individual level of trust and sense of ownership, hence it leads to low level of employee commitment (Panahi et al., 2012). The results also accepted the third hypothesis that defensive norms of the organization create a collective environment of not to raise voice due to risk of getting undesirable outcomes, ultimately leading to low level of organizational commitment (Muthusamy & Kirupa, 2015 and Morrison, 2014).

Furthermore, the results depicted that lack of leader openness to voice significantly predicts employee silence, thus hypothesis 4 was accepted. This finding is similar to the results of previous researchers which concluded that supervisors’ negative attitude towards openness to voice is the strongest predictor of employees’ silence behavior (Schlosser & Zolin, 2012). Moreover, hypothesis 5 was fully supported by the result of the study and found that lack of open communication opportunity positively and significantly impacts employee silence. The past research work provides support to this argument as it mentioned that in the presence of voice opportunity, one’s decision to raise voice or to remain silent depends on whether open communication opportunity with the top management and colleagues is provided or not. If organization discourage free flow of information employees intentionally engage in silence behavior (Erigiç et al., 2014 and Mengenci, 2015). It is noted in the findings of the study that the lack of leader openness to voice acts
as the strongest predictor of employee silence followed by lack of open communication
opportunity. Similarly, previous studies have predicted the same relationship (Vakola &
Bouradas, 2005) and argued that when leaders show reluctance towards two-way
communication and do not include employees in decision making process by hindering
free flow of information, employees feel risk of facing negative consequences and hence
do not dare to raise voice (Karaca, 2013).

However, as opposed to the preceding research studies, hypothesis 6 was not
accepted by the results of the current study and reports that defensive norms of the
organizational culture have an insignificant relationship with the employee silence. This is
due to high competition in the banking sector because of a large number of public and
private commercial banks. One’s decision to raise voice or to remain silent is not influenced
by what other colleagues do or say but it is significantly influenced by the reaction of
branch manager and the head office (top management), as performance appraisal,
promotion, transfers and bonuses are the sole decision of branch manager and head office

Additionally, hypothesis 7 got full support by the findings of the former studies
which reports that employee silence negatively correlates with organizational commitment
and act as the predictor of affective commitment. This finding was consistent with the
previous studies which reported a negative correlation between employee silence and
organizational commitment (Deniz et al., 2013; Laeeque & Bakhtawari, 2014; Milliken et
al., 2003 and Nikolaou et al., 2011).
Besides, the result showed that the linkage between lack of leader openness to voice and affective commitment, as well as between lack of open communication opportunity and affective commitment is mediated by employee silence. Hence hypothesis 8 and hypothesis 9 was supported by the study. These findings are supported by the previous researchers (Detert & Edmondson, 2011; Ng. & Feldman, 2012 and Ponnu & Chuah, 2010) which reported that firms incur heavy costs because of lack of leader openness to voice in form of employee silence behavior which ultimately leads to low level of commitment. Moreover, past research work also indicated that lack of open communication opportunity encourages employees to intentionally adopt silence behavior and consequently employees level of commitment reduces (Karaca, 2013). However, hypothesis 10 was not supported by the result of the study as it was found that employee silence does not intervene the association between defensive norms of organizational culture and commitment. This finding contradicts the previous research work which documented the mediating role of employee silence between defensive norms of organizational culture and organizational commitment (Whiteside & Barclay, 2013).

In the next phase, qualitative analysis focused on further exploring the results of quantitative phase to get better understanding of reasons behind such relationship to exist. The qualitative phase aimed at finding the reasons behind lack of leader openness to voice to be the strongest predictor of employee silence whereas lack of open communication opportunity to be the weakest predictor in the banking sector of KP Pakistan.
Through qualitative study, it was discovered that the reasons for lack of leader openness to voice to act as an underlying motive behind employee silence in the banking sector of KP Pakistan were: Leader’s misuse of authority, subjective performance appraisal, favoritism, political appointment, self-interest decision by manager, feeling of insecurity, and incompetency of leader. In this study, most of the respondents reported that the main reasons to engage in employee silence, in the banking context, are derived from lack of leader openness to voice. They elaborated that their ignorance, being reluctant to, or intention to withhold relevant information is due to branch manager’s negative attitudes and behaviors towards openness. Moreover, the findings of this study are like the results of Çakici (2010) who concluded in his research that the most common reason to remain silent is hesitation of top management and immediate supervisor to voice.

Informants report that due to lack of leader openness to voice, they intentionally remain silent as it is expected that if they raise voice, leaders will misuse their authority by unequal distribution of work load and other responsibilities. Employee have low control to give suggestions and inputs to the managers hence, due to this fear of misuse of authority they intentionally remain silent. Similar evidence is found in the literature which state that manager’s use of power and dissimilarities between managers and subordinates make leader more reluctant towards openness to voice (Lu & Xie, 2013).

Moreover, the result of the study highlight that lack of leader openness to voice results in subjective performance appraisal, hence motivating employees to engage in defensive silence.
This finding is similar to the findings of previous research work. Defensive silence is often caused by unjust treatment of leaders (Detert & Treviño, 2010). Furthermore, it was proposed that procedural justice and objective performance appraisal are necessary to enhance organizational commitment as well as minimizing the risk of speaking up as perceived by employees.

Furthermore, informants report that lack of leader openness to voice makes leader more selective and employees feel that managers encourage favoritism. This finding is supported by the study of Sabbi (2015) which state that most of the time managers are selective while dealing with their subordinates and that such privileged behavior has influenced the way employees behave in the organization. The study of Tangirala and Ramanujam (2012) further suggest that manager often treat certain employees in a better way as compared to others, hence permitting superior influence of those employees over the rest of the group members (Akbarian et al., 2015). This feeling of favoritism and unequal treatment motivates them to intentionally engage in silence behavior.

More surprisingly, informants expose the reality that political influence play vital role in the banking sector. Most of the appointments, specifically, in public banks are done on political basis. Those employees who have political background get more favors from managers. Mostly political appointees are not competent enough to deal with their work well, hence create more political pressure on managers to facilitate them and managers do accordingly.
On the other hand, due to the fear of getting criticism from other subordinates and to cover the impact of this social and group pressures, managers do not give chance to other employees to speak up. Evidence is provided in the past research that political parties and social groups do have influence. Moreover, due to the fear of getting negative feedback, managers show reluctance towards openness to voice (Nikolaou et al., 2011).

The informants report that in case of any mistake at work, managers take decision in favor of self-interest even if employee’s job is at stake. This finding is similar to the previous literature which mentions that due to certain implicit beliefs of managers, they take decision which is mostly in favor of organization and their own self-interest rather than facilitating employees (Fritsch, 2010).

The findings show that mostly managers discourage employees to provide their input to hide their own incompetency. They do not want to reveal the fact that they are not good in adopting new technology which is suggested by the employees as they lack these skills which are required to adopt that technology. This finding is supported by the previous literature (Milliken et al., 2003). The informants mention feeling of insecurity as one of the reasons due to which employees intentionally remain silent. They argue that employees do not share any issues related to work overload or stressful environment as they are afraid that manager will perceive them as lazy and hence negatively evaluate their performance. This finding was supported by the previous research work (Dobre, 2013) which report that manager’s misperception about employees rely on Theory X, according to which managers feel that workers are lazy by nature and work only for their own self-interest not in the favor of the firm. This negative attitude of leader creates feeling of insecurity among employees and results in defensive silence.
Similarly, results predict that reasons for lack of open communication opportunity to be the weakest but significant predictor of defensive silence were: centralized decision process, slow career path, leg pulling by coworkers, professional jealousy and lack of trust.

Informants report that in the banking sector there is a centralized decision system and decisions are imposed by the head office and the employees are not taken on board before the implementation of decision. On branch level, while making any decision, branch manager listens to our ideas and suggestions for improvement but never incorporates them in the final decision. Similarly, previous studies found that due to lack of open communication opportunity, centralized organizational system takes place which forces employees to remain silent out of the fear of facing negative consequences (Lu & Xie, 2013).

Moreover, informants mention that lack of appreciation by the top management and slow career path are also the reasons behind international silence. Findings in the literature also support this argument and document that due of lack of open communication opportunity, employees cannot access top management and do not get the chance to talk about their performance evaluation, hence remain silent (Milliken et al., 2003 and Morrison, 2014).

Besides, informants reveal that in banks co-workers do not cooperate. Due to lack of open communication system, these co-workers find indirect means to communicate negative information about their colleagues to the top management and they in turn rely on that information.
Similarly, it is mentioned by the past research work that due to lack of confidence in senior management that they will not verify the information received and consider it as authentic. Employee remain silent as they believe that they can’t openly communicate with the top management (Alparslan et al., 2015; Cakici, 2010 and Nikolaou et al., 2011).

Informants also report that senior colleagues and managers do not appreciate good performance as they cannot see others progress and thus create professional jealousy. Neither they want to work hard nor encourage others to do that creates hurdles for good performers. They claim that it all happens due to lack of acknowledgement by the top management. Further they suggest that if top management builds a mechanism of appreciation, it will create a competitive environment and everyone will be encouraged to work hard. In support of this argument, evidences are found in the literature emphasizing that lack of appreciation and professional jealousy are the negative attitudes which has several unpleasant effects for both the organization and the employees (Othman et al., 2013).

Additionally, informants state that they intentionally remain silent because of lack of open communication opportunity, which further results in lack of trust between managers and subordinates as well as among colleagues. As mentioned in the literature, due to lack of open communication opportunity employees level of trust on management decreases and they deliberately adopt silence behavior (Hassan et al., 2013).
The fourth of the quantitative findings to be explored in the interviews was the insignificant relationship of defensive norms of organizational culture with employee silence. As depicted from the findings of the quantitative phase, defensive norms of organizational culture insignificantly correlates with employee silence. The informants’ explanations as to how and why this patterning in banks might arise drew on the following key themes: self-centered attitude of coworkers, lack of trust among colleagues, lack of sharing and cooperation, blame game personality type, permanency and seniority of job and public bank.

Informants mention that in the banking culture, it is commonly noticed that everyone thinks about self-benefit no one is concerned about group members’ interest. They work on individual level and lack interest in collective level benefits of whole team.

Informants mention that in the banking environment, a lack of trust is a norm to be followed, hence everyone keeps their secrets and try to find out other ways to fix their problems rather than seeking help from the colleagues. This argument is supported by the work of Haugen (2010) who state that employees’ self-interest creates lack of trust among the colleagues, hence everyone wants to work in isolation.

Additionally, it was reported that due to work overload there was a high rate of mistakes and human error in the banks. But when an employee commits a mistake, instead of taking corrective action, he starts blaming others for that mistake and hence weakens friendly environment in the bank. Employees intentionally adopt silence to avoid blame game (Dyne et al., 2003).
Some of the respondents reported that they were not influenced by the prevailing norms of the bank and did whatever they felt was right. They consider themselves so courageous that they can dare speak up about wrongdoings even if all other colleagues feel it to be dangerous. They are not being influenced by other but think on their own.

Furthermore, it was discovered from the interviews that the demographic characteristics also influenced one’s decision to intentionally engage in silence behavior. Such as, most of the permanent employees especially those on senior positions are more experienced (close to retirement). They report that seniors can dare speak up about anything that they feel is right or wrong irrespective of defensive norms followed by others. Likewise, employees in the public banks report that defensive norms cannot influence their decision to speak up or remain silent as they do not have job insecurity. Besides, most of the informant s reported that defensive norms do not affect their decision to speak up as they know that the branch manager is on this designation for a specified period of three years and after that he/she will be replaced so branch manager cannot harm them in long term career. Likewise, some previous researches report that irrespective of prevailing defensive norms of organizational culture, some employee do not adopt silence behavior as they are more influenced by their demographic characteristics such as gender, managerial level, nature of job etc. (Karaca, 2013; Malekpoor & Fakhreddini, 2015; Magotra, 2016 and Ozkan et al., 2015).
Moreover, qualitative study also focused on exploring the reasons for lack of open communication opportunity to be the strongest predictor of organizational commitment and found certain reasons as: lack of contact with higher ups, chain of command, lack of appreciation and reward system, routine work with strict procedures, feeling of futility and fear of punishment.

The findings of this study point out that the lack of open communication opportunity impact the reward system of the firm adversely and results in lack of appreciation from the top management. Employees are demotivated to provide innovative ideas to improve work setting and incorporate work simplification techniques. On contrary, Panahi et al., (2012) mention that appropriate reward system, effective training and development programs are mandatory for motivating employees to share creative ideas.

Moreover, the respondents of this study emphasize on the fear of punishment due to lack of open communication opportunity to be the cause of remaining silent. It was found that as upward flow of information was discouraged, employees were unable to clarify their position to the heads incase of any mistake or issue and hence developed a fear of punishment which acted as a motive behind intentional silence behavior. The literature also mention that due to fear of punishment and negative consequences, employee intentionally engage in silence behavior (Milliken et al., 2003).

Another outcome of this study that contributed to ones’ decisions to remain silent was the belief that even if they speak up to the hierarchy, it would not make a difference or elicit a response. It was found that when there is lack of open communication opportunity, employees develop a feeling of futility and hence results in low level of affective commitment. This finding is consistent with past literature which has suggested
that employees are more likely to voice concerns if they feel that by doing so necessary actions will be taken (Morrison, 2014 and Pacheco et al., 2015). It is also argued that even though problems may be critical, employees may still hesitate to speak up if they feel hopeless of any remedial action. Morrison and Milliken (2000) suggest that, if organizational silence reinforces employees’ feelings of futility, a state of learned helplessness may develop, leading to employee apathy and withdrawal and ultimately low level of affective commitment.

Informants further state that it is very difficult to communicate with top management to discuss any work-related issues or problems related to the branch manager due to chain of command. Email mechanism to report any issue exists but it is just a formality. Very rarely top management replies to these emails, and if so, they copy it to the branch manager, hence we feel no point to discuss any issues with the top management. This formal chain of command and lack of opportunity to directly communicate with higher-ups results in silence behavior. The review of the literature also point out that lack of formal upward communication act as a motive behind silence behavior (Vakola & Bouradas, 2005).

Informants also state that due to lack of communication opportunity, they must perform the routine work with strict procedure, which leads to low level of organizational commitment. Due to this monotonous work, employees get bored and feel frustrated.
On the other hand, they are not allowed to amend any work procedure that contributes to their feeling of hopelessness and thus reduces their level of organizational commitment. Similarly, literature finds that in the centralized organizations, employees are forced to do whatever management decides and must follow the line of action without amendments due to which employees feel speaking up to be risky and intentionally remain silent (Morrison & Milliken, 2000).

The reason for defensive norms of organizational culture to be the weakest predictor of affective commitment were found to be: incompetency of colleagues, negative experience of colleagues, lack of leader consultation, social boycott, avoiding conflicts and group think.

One of the significant findings of the study point out that due to defensive norms of organizational culture, employees fear damaging relationships, thus they remain silent about the controversial issues. It decreases their level of affective commitment. Respondents also mention their concerns about negatively impacting others, such as exposing their fraud cases or reporting of work and sexual harassment (Deniz et al., 2013). These results were supported by previous studies which argue that silence is not just about discomfort of conveying bad news to the top management (Lu & Xie, 2013) but also about the social networking, that is fear of social boycott.
This study further explores that due to defensive norms, employees mostly behave as the way others are behaving in the organization. Similarly, Beheshtifar et al., (2012) indicate that due to the risk of loss of trust, dignity, social network and fear of damaging relationship, workers remain silent about the issues that may not be acceptable by the other team members. As no one wants to lose their social network and need cooperation and support of other team members to perform work-related activities. It is understood that without teamwork and cooperation it is not possible to accomplish given task, hence one forcefully does as others want them to do, which ultimately leads to low level of affective commitment (Deniz et al., 2013).

Another common issue mentioned by the informants was that, due to defensive norms and fear of social rejection they remain silent about the under-performance and incompetent team members or managers which adversely affect their level of organizational commitment. Similar findings are highlighted by the previous research work that fear of disassociation or rejection from group act as a pressure mechanism for the employees (Bogosian & Stefanchin, 2013 and Lu & Xie, 2013).

Informants also report that their decision to raise voice or to remain silent depends upon what other colleagues expect from them and how they respond towards a particular issue. When seniors share their negative experience and frustration about non-responsive attitude of managers and top management, they automatically develop silence attitude towards their issues or concerns and do not talk to the managers about them. This argument is supported by the work of Alparslan et al., (2015) who state that employees learn from the experiences of their senior colleagues as well and accordingly take intentional decision to remain silent.
Informants report that due to prevailing defensive norms, managers consider our silence as consent and unconsciously start imposing their decisions on us. This lack of manager’s cooperation and consultation leads to low level of organizational commitment hence, they cannot suggest any improvement or innovative ideas. Literature provides evidences in support of this finding by stating that due to defensive norms managers develop attitude of “no news is a good news” and this deaf ear attitude leads to low level of commitment (Vakola & Bouradas, 2005).

Informants also share their fear about losing good relation with colleagues if they talk about conflicting views. If they will speak, they will come in a conflicting state with their colleagues and will be viewed as negative minded. This may affect their promotion and appraisals adversely. Similarly, the theory of spiral of silence and group pressure emphasize that employees raise their voice if they perceive it to be accepted by the other group members (Beheshtifar et al., 2012).

Practical Implications

The results provides extension of the employee silence phenomenon and Expectancy to the banking context of KP, Pakistan and provides variety of practical implications for the practitioners to improve their current organizational policies and practices. The results show that the linkage between lack of leader openness to voice and affective commitment is intervened by defensive silence. This finding is sufficiently supported by the previous studies (Milliken et al., 2003; Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Panahi et al., 2012 and Vakola & Bouradas, 2005). Hence, this finding suggests that to keep employees committed, managers in the service sectors, such as banks, should encourage employees to express themselves openly and should provide positive feedback
in return to their ideas suggestions and complaints. Consequently, employees will perceive their manager to be more open and will feel safe to speak up, hence their level of commitment will increase. The results of the study also recommend that executives should develop a conducive organizational culture so that employees feeling of futility decrease and they perceive it safe to raise voice. Consequently, their level of affective commitment will increase.

The study results also depict that the linkage between lack of open communication opportunity and affective commitment is partially intervened by defensive silence. Similarly, past researchers (Fard & Karimi, 2015 and Karaca, 2013) argues that a lack of open communication opportunity leads to employee silence and ultimately causes low level of affective commitment. Hence, it is suggested that firms should provide open communication channels to the employees so that they may feel encouraged to exchange information with the top management and the coworkers with any hesitation. Ultimately, they will be motivated to adopt voice behavior and their level of commitment will increase.

Executives in the service industry such as banks should encourage voice behavior by providing open communication channels and showing positive attitude towards employees’ suggestions and ideas. In such context employees’ perceived risk of facing negative consequence will decrease and they will be willing to provide relevant information to the top management and co-workers for the sake of attaining organizational goals.
Theoretical Implications

Employee silence refers to withholding of relevant information and reluctance to speak up about organizational issues. It is recognized as multi-dimensional construct based on underlying motives such as: acquiescent silence, based on the motive of resignation; prosocial silence, based on the motive of cooperation and defensive silence based on the motive to avoid the risk of facing negative consequences (Dyne et al., 2003 and Pinder & Harlos, 2001). However, recently a particular form of silence i.e., defensive silence is recognized as most critical due to the conscious and intentional nature of decision to engage in silence behavior (Brinsfield, 2013). This intentionality and cognitive mechanism involved in this behavior make it more crucial to understand how defensive silence occurs and which factors, while acting as the underlying motives, influence this decision (Dyne et al., 2003).

This study is among those few studies which put in efforts to recognize employee silence as a multi-dimensional construct and focuses at a particular kind of silence — namely defensive silence that is a manifestation of an intentional reluctance to speak-up about an issue that is important, but perceived as too risky to speak about. It is found that defensive silence mostly occurs based on the desired outcome to avoid the risk/ fear of facing negative consequences based on prevalence of certain organizational factors that act as underlying motives behind this behavior. The current study is conducted in a banking sectors of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan which is faced by a highly competitive and stressful environment due to the globalization of banking sector. Under such circumstances employees face variety of job related issues but are reluctant to speak up about it due to perceived fear of confronting negative outcomes. This context points out towards defensive
silence (based on motive to avoid the risk of facing negative consequences) rather than acquiescent or pro-social silence that are based on the underlying motives of resignation and cooperation, respectively. Hence, this condition makes it more conducive to study how and why certain organizational factors influence conscious decision to engage defensive silence behavior, among bank employees.

Furthermore, to understand the cognitive mechanism behind the conscious decision to engage in employee silence, based on the influence of certain organizational factors, this study synergizes the Expectancy Theory argument in the literature of employee silence behavior and presents explanation for why and how these three organizational factors predicts silence behavior of employees and their commitment.

By integrating the rational decision making aspects of Expectancy Theory perspective with the employee silence construct this study theoretically contributes by explaining that how the elements of Expectancy Theory (expectancy, instrumentality and valence) are involved in step by step mental process of predicting the influences of three organizational factors on employee’s conscious decision to choose silence behavior as the best optimal choice, and in turn how this decision lead to low level of organizational commitment. According to the Expectancy Theory, motivational force (MF) is the function of expectancy (E), instrumentality (I) and valence (V).
Based on this assumption, the Expectancy Theory-based employees silence model, presents that if there is high expectancy to face negative consequences due to the unfavorable context and high instrumentality that such unfavorable context will not lead to the attainment of the desired outcome (i.e., to avoid the risk of negative outcomes) thus employee’s valence to raise voice gets negative. Hence the motivational force to engage in voice decreases and employees intentionally engage in defensive silence as the best optimal communicative behavior.

This model lays down the conceptual foundation to explain the step by step cognitive process and states that, at the first step of this conscious decision process employee have something important to share; this situation is called voice opportunity (Morrison, 2014). To deal with such situation, employees have two alternative behavioral choices i.e., either to raise voice or to choose defensive silence behavior. However, this decision is influenced by the organizational factors as well as desired outcomes (Dyne et al., 2003 and Morrison, 2014).

On the second step, employees scan the organizational environment and, through the elements of Expectancy Theory (i.e., expectancy, instrumentality and valence), cognitively assess the influence of the prevailing organizational factors and predicts the outcomes associated with each alternative behavior (Schlosser & Zolin, 2012). Lastly, they take the rational decision to opt for defensive silence as the optimal self-protective behavior.
To extend this theoretical stance, this study developed three conceptual models to provide conceptual explanations for relationship between organizational factors and employee silence, between employee silence and organizational commitment and between organizational factors and organizational commitment, through the elements of Expectancy Theory and detailed explanation for which is given in chapter 2.

To further validate these Expectancy Theory-based employee silence models and to provide empirical explanation for this theoretical stance, this study applied sequential explanatory mixed method, based on the quantitative phase followed by the qualitative phase. The quantitative phase of the study focuses on investigating the direct as well as mediating relationship among the study variables, whereas the second qualitative phase of the study provides immense theoretical contribution by providing themes for why and how these organizational factors lead to employee’s conscious decision to engage in silence behavior and low level of organizational commitment. Based on the triangulation of data from the findings of the study, the qualitative phase of the study attempts to develop four Expectancy Theory-based employee silence model to help researchers and academicians understand the new emerging themes that binds the relationship between these organizational factors and employee silence, as well as organizational commitment. This theoretical contribution also proved future research avenues to further validate these new emerging themes.
In the quantitative phase, the results reveal that lack of leader openness to voice and lack of open communication opportunity lead to employee silence in the banking context.

These findings add to the existing body of knowledge and offer the relevance with the findings of previous studies conducted in developed countries and other sectors. Hence it proves that these theories are general in nature and the findings could be generalized to other contexts. Furthermore, these findings are further elaborated in the qualitative phase of the study and provides explanation for how the step by step conscious decision making process takes place, and why these relationships exist in the banking sector, through the elements of Expectancy Theory.

However, the findings of the quantitative phase depict that as opposed to previous studies, defensive norms of organizational culture is insignificantly related to defensive silence. Further to elaborate why this relationship is insignificant in the banking context, the qualitative phase provides justification for and highlights the themes behind this relation and adds to the existing body of knowledge, hence provides avenue for the future research.

Moreover, in similarity with the previous studies, the quantitative phase presents that these organizational factors lead to low level of organizational commitment, where lack of open communication opportunity act as the strongest predictor and defensive norms of organizational culture act as the weakest predictor.
These relationships were further explained by qualitative phase which shows why such relationships exist. Through triangulation of data, the findings of this study add to the existing body of knowledge and these theoretical contributions provides valuable insights for bank management, policy makers and HR managers in identifying the areas that need their attention. Thus, all these factors make this research work significant and, also timely.

**Study Limitations**

Although this study offers significance and contribution, it also leads to certain limitations since a number of assumptions have limited its framework and model with respect to its scope and comprehensiveness. These limitations are as follows:

- This study has investigated only one dimension of silence behavior i.e., defensive silence whereas there are other dimensions of silence behavior as well.

- This study focuses on three specific organizational factors impacting employee silence. However, there can be other motives leading to silence such as ignorance, confusion, cynicism, anxiety, self-enhancement, anger, jealously, retribution, and revenge.

- This study has considered only organizational commitment as the consequence of employee silence. Whereas, other consequences of employee silence may include job stress, job satisfaction etc.

- Moreover, moderator(s) such as personality types and personal characteristics (e.g. extrovert and introvert personality, extra role behavior, self-esteem etc.); nature of information (such as good or bad news) and besides face to face communication other modes of communication (e.g. email, telephone etc.) were not added to the model of this study.
• This study does not investigate the impact of demographic characteristics of the respondents on one’s decision to remain silent.

• All respondents belong to the same sector. This limitation poses restriction of generalization of the result of this study. As different pattern of relationships might be found in other work contexts. Hence giving opportunity to conduct comparative analysis of different sectors.

• Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected cross-sectionally, however to ascertain the reciprocal relationship between variables over time, longitudinal or experimental research is required.

Future Research Guidelines

• The focus of the current study was on defensive silence however, other dimensions (quiescent, acquiescent and pro-social silence) could be added to conduct comparative analysis and to measure how organizational factors impacts these dimensions.

• Besides, measuring the effect of three organizational factors (i.e., lack of leader openness to voice, lack of open communication opportunity and defensive norms of organizational culture) other organizational, individual and social factors such as role of informal communication (grapevine); personality types and personal characteristics and cross cultural differences based on power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity-femininity could be investigated as the motives behind ones decision to engage in silence behavior. This represents one avenue for future research and may allow further extension of the Expectancy Theory- based employee silence model.
• In future, other variables such as job satisfaction, anxiety, job stress, depression, conflict among employees etc. could be added to the existing model as the consequences of silence behavior.

• The current study focuses on the intervening role of employee silence between organizational factors and organizational commitment. In future, moderating effect of other factors like, personality types, nature of information, mode of communication etc. could be incorporated for in-depth investigation of this relation.

• A comparative study could be conducted in future among the different employee groups to investigate the impact of different management level (top management, middle management or functional level employee), year of experience, nature of job (permanent or contractual job), type of bank (public or private) on one’s decision to engage in silence behavior. Also, other demographic characteristic could be added to the investigation such as gender, ethnicity, income level, and marital status.

• Another future research avenue could be provided by collecting data from different public and private sectors and a comparative study could be conducted which will allow the generalizability of data.

• Besides cross-sectional study, experimental or longitudinal study could be conducted for the in-depth exploration of the variables under changing circumstances.
Conclusion

Bearing in mind the nascent phase of the literature, it is not unexpected to find that, the step-by-step cognitive decision-making process one goes through while assessing the influence of organizational factors on one’s decision to engage in intentional silence remains unclear. Thus, the purpose of this study is to explore the influence of the organizational factors, using the elements of Expectancy Theory, on conscious decision of employees to indulge in silence and consequently organizational commitment.

This study explains the intentional silence as a defensive behavior, following the definition of Morrison and Milliken (2000). The definition explains the silence of the employees as the self-protected behavior and it is basically a response towards avoiding the risk of facing negative consequences (Dyne et al., 2003). Perceiving employee silence from the lens of intentional behavior based on underlying motives it is significant for variety of reasons. First, it broadens its scope as compared to viewing silence merely as absence of voice. Similarly, this conceptualization helps to realize that motives leading to employee silence are different from motives that cause voice or even absence of voice.

A key question that this research work poses is why employee often see things but keep that information to themselves. Answering this question requires a somewhat broader focus than has been seen in much of silence literature to date.
To enhance our understanding of this phenomenon, Vroom expectancy model (Vroom, 1964) is introduced into the silence behavior literature, and an Expectancy Theory-based employee silence model is presented. By the integration of these two domains, this research investigates when and how employee exert their efforts to indulge in silence behavior, and what are the steps involved in mental process of taking conscious decision to adopt silence behavior as the best optimal choice.

It also proposes that while keeping in mind the desired outcome, i.e., to avoid the risk of facing negative consequences, employees utilize their perception about the influence of certain organizational factors and are motivated to intentionally opt for silence behavior as the best alternative behavior while voice opportunity exists. Besides, this study also endeavors at determining, how employee silence adversely affects employee’s level of affective commitment as consequence of this choice. This study considers an individual as a unit of analysis and examines concept of employee silence as it is perceived by the employees.

Sequential explanatory mixed method design was used for this study. The hypotheses were tested quantitatively, in the first phase of the study, over a larger sample while the research questions pertaining to how and why these relationships exist in the banking sector of KP Pakistan were answered qualitatively in the second phase of the study.

The study result depicts consistency with the previous studies, hence, extending the employee silence and Expectancy theory to the emerging economy like Pakistan as well as in the service sectors like banks. Additionally, this study provide clarification about distinct nature of voice and silence behavior and consider them as alternative communicative behavior based on certain underlying motives.
While supporting the arguments of past literature, the findings of quantitative phase of this study suggest that the organizational factors such as lack of leader openness to voice and lack open communication opportunity act as the underlying motives and influence one’s decision to intentionally engage in silence behavior. However, on contrary to past research findings, this study reports an insignificant relation between defensive norms of organizational culture and employee silence. While supporting the findings of previous studies, this research work also finds that these three organizational factors along with the employee silence presents a negative but significant relation with level of organizational commitment.

Besides, it is evident from the result of this study that employee silence plays an intervening role between lack of leader openness to voice and commitment, as well as lack of open communication opportunity and organizational commitment whereas, it does not mediate the relationship between defensive norms of organizational culture and organizational commitment.

The second qualitative phase of the study provides immense theoretical contribution by providing four Expectancy Theory- based employee silence models for the banking sector of KP Pakistan, illustrating the reasons for:
• Lack of leader openness to voice to be the strongest predictor of employee silence.

• Lack of open communication opportunity to be the weakest predictor of employee silence.

• Insignificant relationship between defensive norms of organizational culture and employee silence.

• Lack of open communication opportunity to be the strongest predictor of organizational commitment.

• Defensive norms of organizational culture to be the weakest predictor of organizational commitment.