The Relationship between the Organizational Culture Levels of Nurses in a Private Hospital and Their Perceptions of Organizational Silence

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ABSTRACT: *While organizational culture creates organizational habits, rules, attitudes, and beliefs; Organizational silence is being indifferent to the problems of the institution for both employer and employee. Nurses are the health workers that have the biggest workload. For this reason, their organizational culture levels and organizational silence perceptions are important for the healthcare institution.*
The research was carried out to express whether there is a relationship between the organizational culture and organizational silence perceptions of the nurses working in the health sector.
Methods: It is a cross-sectional and descriptive quantitative study. It was carried out on 81 nurses in December 2019 at a private hospital located in Istanbul. Questionnaire scales were used for organizational culture and perception of organizational silence. SPSS 22.0 Mann Whitney U, Kruskal Wallis H and Spearman Correlation Analysis were used to evaluate the data.
In the research, a significant difference was found between organizational culture and education level. There was a significant difference between the perception of organizational silence and the period for how long they have been working in the institution. While the average score on the organizational culture scale was 3.19; the average score on the organizational silence perception scale is 2.82. There was a very weak and positive relationship between organizational culture and organizational silence perception at the level of 15.4%.
Organizational culture is considered as a concept that can cover the perception of organizational silence. In addition, individual and organizational factors are elements affecting both organizational culture and organizational silence. As the level of organizational culture increases, the perception of organizational silence increases, suggesting the decrease in expectations and that acceptance will prevail on the employee basis..
KEYWORDS: *Organizational silence, organizational culture, nurses, relation between organizational culture and organizational silence.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Organizations are communities today that can survive only by obtaining a competitive advantage. In order to ensure sustainability and to eliminate external threats, there is a need for employees who are self-confident and who can serve operational goals with full efficiency and productivity. However, especially in recent years, organizations and especially their senior management have taken on a structure that conceals their information and ideas, road maps and have avoided sharing their strategic action plans with their employees. If this situation spreads throughout the organization, it becomes difficult to reach the organizational goals and it creates an uneasy environment. (Yeşil et al., 2016). The name of this situation in the science of organizational behavior is called organizational silence. The number of articles about silence started to increase in the 1970s with Hirschman's (1974) study called "Exit Voice and Royalty". With the new studies such as speech and silence, reporting problems, ability to oppose depending on the principles, complaining, and employee demands, in the period from the mid-1980s to the 2000s, the studies affecting organizational silence have increased. Organizational silence studies increased again at the end of 2000s with the study of Cohen, which stated that the silence in 1990 had a different meaning with the acceptance.

The concept of organizational culture came into prominence after the 1980s and according to some researchers; it was inspired by Hawthorne Research. As a concept, organizational culture was first named and defined by Peters and Waterman. The researchers who followed that, and who addressed the issue under the name Corporate Culture are Pascale and Athos. Schein, who stands out in organizational culture researches, stated that "The basic assumptions model created and developed during the organization's adaptation to the external environment and internal integration, and conveyed it as a way of true perceiving, thinking and feeling towards its new members". (Zhang and Li, 2016).

Nurses take the heaviest burden among healthcare workers in terms of workload in healthcare institutions. When it comes to the management of health institutions, the importance of the managers in determining the managerial decisions and policies is of utmost importance as well as that the actions of the employees in the operational department are in line with the corporate objectives. The health sector is a sector that has both unique features as it is different than the other sectors and has more social importance in terms of the service it produces is related to the health of people directly. Issues such as trust environment, social ties, collaboration that affects nurses' ability to do their jobs well emphasizes the importance of this study on organizational culture and organizational silence. (Henriksen, 2006).

Organizational Culture

Culture is the most important element that reflects the behaviors of organizations that exist in the social environment. For this reason, organizational culture consists of all of the ideas that differentiate an institution, reveal the ideas and perceptions of the employees of the institution, determine the harmony and environmental relations within the institution, reveal the management type of management and contain assumptions. (Cohen and Ehrlich, 2019).

An important feature of the concept of organizational culture is that it is in a symbolic structure. The employees that create the organization are representatives of value and culture. The behavior of these employees is effective in the long-term actions of the organization. Because the behavior and organizational functioning of employees is a phenomenon that will be transferred to the future(Yılmaz et al., 2020). Changing of the organizational culture requires a long period of time. This means that it has a stable structure feature. Although this is a situation that may have exceptions, it should also not be ignored that due to the weak flexibility in openness to innovation (Longman et al., 2018).

All permanent employees accept organizational culture. Because the concept of organizational culture arises from the interaction of individuals with each other. An important determinant of this interaction is senior management. The management, which has the decision mechanism, creates a common understanding as a result of the rules and the values it establishes. Employees inevitably shape their actions according to this understanding. This is the reason why organizations are different from each other. For example, even if an employee goes to another organization with the same duty and position, he or she will have to make changes in his or her behavior indispensably. Manojlovich and Ketefian, 2016).

The formation of an organizational culture includes some elements. The primary of them is the values. Besides being the cornerstone of attitudes, values consist of generally adopted beliefs. While the rules that are not written here are applied by the employees, the success of the institution will be significantly affected by habits of the employees. If habits only form common values at the same time, it will bring success. Norms come into play when the rules are broken. This is the phenomenon that provides a separation between good and bad and is adorned with sanctions. The leaders who are responsible for the functioning of all these are the people who represent the organization. Their management style is one of the factors that form the organizational culture (Manafzadeh et al., 2018).

Another issue mentioned often about the concept of organizational culture is language. Language varies from country to country, as well as in different regions within a country. Institutional language is related to the ethnic origin, culture of the organization's employees, and various understandings that the organization depends on. Greetings, jokes and forms of communication are included in the institutional language. Another subject that is seen separately from language but close to the language is symbols. Symbols include elements such as emblems, uniforms, foundation year and anniversaries. Another subject that follows the symbols is ceremonies and events related to these ceremonies (Pope, 2019). The aims, values, and beliefs of the institution are reminded to its employees and accordingly, they are effective in spreading and reinforcing the institution culture. Various stories and fairy tales can perform the same function. For example, stories about how a well-established institution has come to these days and heroes take part in the permanence of organizational culture (Demirtas, 2018).

Organizational Silence

Bowen and Blackmoon (2003) created the simplest definition of organizational silence. According to them, organizational silence is that employees do not explain their opinions purposely. In this respect, employees take on organizational silence when they do not agree on the practices of the institution. In other words, employees do not present their thoughts and ideas about the things that the organization does. Çakıcı (2007) explained that the employees do not express their opinions, thoughts, or concerns on purpose and remain silent about the problems that the institution has and the facts that enable the development of the institution or about institutional events.

Employees of an institution are in an organizational silence for four reasons basically. These can be listed as follows (Çaylak and Altuntaş, 2017):
1.   They are afraid of the reaction they will receive when they share their thoughts.

2. They believe that sharing their thoughts will not be beneficial.
3. They want to avoid a possible conflict with other employees.
4. They avoid being a person that leads to a disturbance and that is inconsistent.

The concept of silence can vary from person to person as well as being organizational. For example, while some individuals do not talk about certain issues with their friends at their level, they may talk about these issues with their superiors, in some cases, the opposite may happen. Socio-demographic characteristics such as education level, age, gender, experience are the factors that affect silence (Boufounou and Avdi, 2016).

Employees of the institution can choose to remain silent due to their experience, norms and various reasons in the working environment(Ergül and Söyük, 2020). Factors such as managerial negligence and delays in responses, ineffectiveness in policies, uncertainties in the process of notifications, and unfairness becoming a culture are the organizational factors of silence (Manafzadeh et al.,   2018).

Apart from individual and organizational factors, factors directly related to management may also cause organizational silence. Managers do not want to face negative feedback while requesting something from their superiors. The fact that it is acknowledged by subordinates is also another bothersome point. Moreover, the rejection of a manager by his or her subordinates would extremely bother the manager. Because they accept it as a situation inconsistent with the hierarchy and they think that it is a breakdown in their authorities. This causes them to avoid negative feedback or they will attempt to cause it (Sholekar and Shoghi, 2017). Another issue that will cause silence of the executives is that they do not go under liability and take confident actions that they will remain safe. When this situation is combined with the perception that managers know the best and the belief that they are determining consensus, silence can be manifested(Söyük, 2020). On the other hand, a silence environment created by a dominant and threatening manager, who is powered by his or her legal power, does not always mean that the institution is functioning well (Singh et al., 2020).

II.   METHODOLOGY

The research was carried out to express whether there is a relationship between the organizational culture and organizational silence perceptions of the nurses working in the health sector.The research was carried out in a private hospital in Istanbul in December 2019.

The universe of the research was composed of 88 nurses in total, including outsourced operating room nurses. It was aimed to reach the entire universe without going to the sample account. The sample calculation was carried out with the Sample Size Calculator 2.0.4 program with a 5% error margin in the 95% confidence interval and it was concluded that 73 nurses were sufficient (Campbell, 2004). In line with this information, it was agreed that 81 nurses are sufficient. Sampling method was simple random sampling.

Limitations in research; the study is carried out in a private hospital, it takes place in December 2019 and is carried out on the nurses of that hospital. All nurses administrative duties, other supervisor nurses and nurses in this hospital are included in the scope of the research.

In the research, the scale named "Organizational Culture Inventory" developed by Lafferty and Cooke (1987), which was adapted by the European Community International Economic Relations Research and Application Center, was used. Confirmatory factor analysis and reliability for the validity of the scale were performed in 2013. The scale is single-factor and consists of 12 questions, 5 of which are Likert type. KMO and Bartlett's Test score was 0.881 and the average score of that single factor is 0.753. The higher the score, the more the result is that the individual adopts the organizational culture. Reliability analysis was investigated with the Cronbach Alpha coefficient and was found to be highly reliable by finding 0.902.

Another scale used is the Organizational Silence Perception scale. The Turkish adaption of the scale developed by Knoll and Nick (2013) was carried out by Çavuşoğlu and Köse (2019). Confirmatory factor analysis and reliability for the validity of the scale were performed in 2013. KMO and Bartlett's Test score was 0.921. There are 3 factor structures: Acceptable and Passive Silence, opportunistic silence, silence for the benefit of the organization. CR values are the following: 0.915 0.805 0.717. Cronbach Alpha value is 0.911. The scale was evaluated based on its general score and the higher the average score, the higher the perception of organizational silence. It is a 5-point Likert type scale. In this work, reliability analysis was investigated with the Cronbach Alpha coefficient and was found to be sufficiently reliable by finding 0.734.

The research was carried out in Turkish and a scale adapted in Turkish was used.

Research data were analyzed with SPSS 22.0 program. Before the hypothesis tests, normal distribution was examined with the Kolmogrov Smirnov test and it was determined that no normal distribution was seen for both scales (Organizational culture: $p = 0.01 < 0.05$; Organizational silence perception: $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). Accordingly, the data were subjected to Mann Whitney U, Kruskal Wallis H and spearman correlation analysis. The results were evaluated by a 95% confidence interval and a 5% margin of error.

Participants participating in the study were explained and the purpose of the study was explained and care was taken to be volunteers and willing. Approval decision was taken from a foundation university ethics committee to conduct the study (No: 124).

III. DISCUSSION

In the literature, although the number of studies on organizational culture and organizational silence is high, the studies that examine these two areas together are few. In the study that Çavuşoğlu and Köse (2016) carried out on the academicians at the universities and that they investigated the effect of organizational culture on organizational silence behavior, it was revealed that while the organizational silence decreased in organizations with a participatory structure, it increased with the result-oriented behaviors. Although there are no sub-dimensions in terms of the scales used in our study and the subject we investigated, the relationship was investigated. Strengths of the study is that there is little work on nurses on this issue. However, nursing is the profession with the heaviest workload in the health sector. By eliminating organizational silence and strengthening the organizational culture, the negativities experienced by nurses will be eliminated, and accordingly, this research will shed light on studies for developing optimum solutions by sharing nurses' knowledge, ideas and thoughts on issues such as solving problems or improving processes. The weakness of the study is that it covers only nurses in a private hospital for time and financial reasons.

In the study of Alpaslan (2010) on teaching assistants, the average of organizational silence score was 2.71, while in our study it was 2.82. They are close to each other. Atilla's study (2017) is closely related to our research subject. In a study about the relationship between organizational silence and organizational culture carried out on Yalova Public Hospital nurses with the participation of 164 nurses, the relationship between organizational culture and organizational silence was found to be positive but insignificant. In our study, it was concluded that there is a very weak and positive relationship between them at the level of 15.4. In the study carried out by Yalçınsoy (2016) on healthcare professionals, it was seen that there was a positive and significant relationship between organizational culture and organizational silence at the level of 28%. This situation indicates the need for more studies on the subject.

In Atilla's (2017) study, the organizational culture of the employees with 11-15 years of working period was higher than organizational culture of the employees with a shorter working period, and in our study, the organizational culture score of the employees with 6 years of working period is higher than the ones with a shorter period and it indicates that similar results were concluded. It can be inferred that the perception of organizational culture has been established over the years. Organizational culture is not a flexible concept. It takes time for its change and development.

In his study, Çakıcı (2007) concluded that cultural norms can be effective on managerial emotions that improve both employee silence and the silence climate in organizations. In our study, it was concluded that there was a significant relationship between educational level and organizational culture, while no significant difference was found between organizational silence and educational level. In terms of age and gender, there was no significant difference between the scores of different ages or genders for organizational culture and organizational silence scores.

Demir (2010) claimed in his study that organizational silence is a part of organizational culture. Vakola and Bouradas (2005) stated that organizational culture is effective in the emergence of organizational silence. In his study, he showed that there were differences in organizational silence between various demographic data, and he explained this with the conclusion that individual and organizational factors are effective in organizational silence.

IV. FINDINGS

Findings related to the research are given below.

	n	%
Gender		
Female	62	76.5
Male	19	23.4
Educational Level		
High School	6	7.4
Associate Degree	31	38.3
Bachelor's Degree	36	44.4
Postgraduate	8	9.9
Age Groups		
21-35	45	55.5
36-50	12	14.9
51 and above	24	29.6
Working Period in the Institution		
0-2 year(s)	44	54.3
3-5 years	26	32.1
6 years and above	11	13.6
Total	*81*	*100.0*

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants

When the demographic characteristics of the participants were examined, we see that 76.5% of them are women; 44.4% of them have bachelor's degree; 55.5% of them are between 21-35 years old; 54.3% of them have been working in the institution about 0-2 years (Table 1).

Scale	n	Mean	Standard Deviation
Organizational Culture	81	3.19	0.32
Organizational Silence Perception	81	2.82	0.54

Table 2: Average Scores of Participants' Organizational Culture and Organizational Silence Perception Scales

It was seen that the participants' scores from the Organizational Culture and Organizational Perception of Silence scales were 3.19 ± 0.32 and 2.82 ± 0.54, respectively (Table 2).

	Educational Level	n	Mean±SD	X^2	p^{KW}	Significancy
Organizational Culture	High School	6	3.41±0.24	13.004	0.011*	High School Degree > Bachelor's Degree
	Associate Degree	31	3.24±0.41			
	Bachelor's Degree	36	3.09±0.36			
	Postgraduate	8	3.27±0.21			
	Total	81	3.19±0.32			
Organizational Silence Perception	High School	6	2.78±0.44	3.474	0.428	-
	Associate Degree	31	2.76±0.62			
	Bachelor's Degree	36	2.91±0.54			
	Postgraduate	8	2.74±0.32			
	Total	81	2.82±0.54			

^{KW}: *Kruskal Wallis H test*
*: *significancy value below 0.05*

Table 3: Average Scores of Participants' Organizational Culture and Organizational Silence Perception Scales

Organizational Culture and Organizational Silence Perception scales and the educational level of the participants were examined in Table 3. While there is a significant difference between education level and organizational culture scale; there was no significant difference between education level and organizational silence perception scale. When the source of the significant difference was investigated, it was seen that high school graduates had higher organizational culture scores than the ones that have bachelor's degree (Table 3).

	Working Period in the Institution	n	Mean±SD	X^2	p^{KW}	Significancy
Organizational Culture	0-2 year(s)	44	3.15±0.24	6.292	0.106	-
	3-5 years	26	3.22±0.41			
	6 years and above	11	3.28±0.36			
	Total	81	3.19±0.32			
Organizational	0-2 year(s)	44	2.74±0.34	10.165	0.039*	6 years and

Silence Perception	3-5 year	26	2.84±0.32			above > 0-2 year(s)
	6 years and above	11	2.92±0.26			
	Total	81	2.82±0.54			

ᴷᵂ: *Kruskal Wallis H test*
*: *significancy value below 0.05*

Table 4: Average Scores of Participants' Organizational Culture and Organizational Silence Perception Scales

The scores obtained by the participants from the scales of organizational culture and organizational silence perception and their working period in the institution were examined in Table 4. There was no significant difference between organizational culture and working period in the institution. There was a significant difference between the organizational silence perception and working period in the institution. When the source of the significant difference was examined, it was seen that the employees of 6 years and above experience had a higher organizational silence than the employees between 0-2 years.

Other findings regarding the hypothesis tests performed regarding the scores of the participants and the demographic data are as follows:

- There is no significant difference between organizational culture and organizational silence perception scales and gender *(Organizational Culture: U=-0.492; p=0.623; Organizational Silence Perception: U=-1.135; p=0.257).*
- There is no significant difference between organizational culture and organizational silence perception scales and age groups *(Organizational Culture: $X^2=1.246$; p=0.462; Organizational Silence Perception: $X^2=0.974$; p=0.683).*

Spearman Correlation		**Organizational Silence Perception**
Organizational Culture	r	0.154
	p	0.012*

*: *significancy value below 0.05*

Table 5: Average Scores of Participants' Organizational Culture and Organizational Silence Perception Scales

When the relationship between the scores that the participants got from the organizational culture scale and the scores they received from the organizational silence perception scales was examined, a significant relationship was found (r = 0.154; p = 0.012 <0.05). It was observed that there was a very weak and positive relationship between the scores obtained from the organizational silence perception and the organizational culture, at the level of 15.4% (Table 5).

V. CONCLUSION

In terms of education level, the issue of that high school graduates have a higher level of organizational culture than the people with bachelor's degree is an issue that should be examined. The difference between the expectations of the people with a bachelor's degree and the expectations of high school graduates is thought to be effective in accepting the organizational culture and being included in this culture. The fact that the perception of organizational silence is higher among long-term employees brings the belief that the belief in positive changes may happen in the institution is weak in mind. When the relationship between organizational culture and organizational silence perception is considered together with some sources in the literature; It can be interpreted that the perception of organizational silence indicates that it can be part of an organizational culture with individual, organizational, managerial, social and cultural factors.

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