Impact of Social Conformity on Organisational Silence: A Conceptual Model

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The present study aims to explore how social conformity arises in organisation and how it leads to organisational silence.

Design/ Methodology/Approach: The primary method used to answer how social conformity arises in organisation and how it creates a climate of silence is literature review. Broad review of social conformity literature through multidisciplinary search in the field of organisational behaviour and social psychology and human resource development was conducted.

Findings: The findings of the study suggests that social conformity forces people to change or suppress their views leading to silence behaviour and influences their job related attitudes. Previous studies on organisational silence focussed on how organisational factors & individual factors affect organisational silence but there is lack of research as to how perception of people in the organisation affects one's ability to share opinion & information. The existing organisational silence literature underestimated the impact of social conformity on human behaviour and why people get influenced by majority opinion while sharing their views and concerns. People act as an important source of information. They influence others in turn get influence by them. This social conformity has long term negative consequences therefore it is imperative for organisation to overcome conformity behaviour as it will impede the organisation in making informed decisions by preventing employees to hide their true opinion, information. This study contributes to existing organisational silence literature by considering social conformity as an antecedent of organisational silence.

Originality/Value: The topic of social conformity has received little research attention, particularly in work environment. The existing organisational silence studies underestimated the impact of social conformity on human behaviour in work environment and why people get influenced by majority opinion while sharing their views and concerns. This study bridge the gap in the existing organisational silence literature by proposing social conformity as an antecedent of organisational silence.

Paper Type: Theme Based Paper.

KEYWORDS: Organisational silence | Organisational factors | Individual factors | Social conformity

Introduction

People are powerful source of influence. They influence, educate and strengthen us and at the same time they weaken us. The way people express their opinion is largely affected by other people's perception in the organisation. The perception of other's in the organisation is a function of change in one's attitude, behaviour & expression of opinion. (Scheufele & Moy, 2000). Individuals' perception affects other's behaviour & attitude forcing them to change their behaviour leading to conformity in organisation. Studies conducted by conformity researchers stressed on the fact that conformity behaviour makes people to change or supress their views and adopt majority views, which prevent people to share their views. Similarly in past research on organisational silence, researchers mainly focussed on how individual factors such as fear, lack of experience and organisational factors such as organisations support, supervisory support, organisational justice, organisational culture affects employee's silence behaviour but there is dearth of research as to how other's perception in the organisation affects employees tendency to speak up.

Objective of the Study:

The study aims to achieve two fold objectives. First to assess how social conformity arises in the organisations and secondly how does conformity behaviour impact employees silence behaviour.

Review of Literature

Conformity

Conformity may be defined as influence of people which leads to change in the belief or behaviour of other in order to fit in a group. People often influenced by others in order to be a part of a group, which may result from actual or imaginary group pressure. Such group pressure may also be defined as majority influence (Leod, 2016). The concept of conformity was initially studied by a Psychologist "Jenness "in 1932. He studied conformity behaviour with the help of an experiment wherein he created an ambiguous situation by filling a glass bottle with some beans and asked participants to count the beans individually, the same participants were put in a room & asked to count beans again & provide group estimate and lastly every participant interviewed individually to ascertain whether they want to change to their initial estimate or want to stay with the group estimate. The experiment revealed that almost every participant changed his/her initial estimate in order to fit with the group estimate. Conformity forces people to agree with majority opinion, even when the group estimate is wrong. Such feeling arouse from the desire to be accepted & liked by others. Jenness experiment revealed that people do conform to be accepted and liked by others but Asch, (1951) with the help of his famous conformity experiment discussed that people usually conform to the group belief or opinion ,or estimate publicly but in reality they don't agree with their views, they negate their views.

Levitan and Verhulst, (2015) in their study assessed the impact of other's view on attitude change and discussed that social influence force people to alter their own behaviour, opinion to fit in the group even if they are correct. Further study conducted by Stallen and Sanfey, (2015) also asserted that social influence plays an important role as it help in shaping the attitude and beliefs and also affects the decision making ability. Change in attitude arises when people become part of a group and make use of information and expertise borrowed from group or people around themselves. Similarly. another study by Leng, (2018) on conformity in the workplace, explained conformity behaviour as the tendency to match one's opinion, views and behaviour with others due to social pressure. The author further stressed that such behaviour is common among employees as they believe that voicing opposing opinion or a concerns might displease or hurt others or they may have the belief that raising voice or speaking up is a futile exercise. This prompts people to align their opinion, views and beliefs with the majority to avoid fear of exclusion & create a sense of team. Though conformity helps in gaining acceptance but it supresses the creativity & innovation among employees ultimately affecting organisational change and overall functioning of the organisation.

Why Do People Choose to Conform?

Noelle-Nuemann's study (1974) proposed a theory "Spiral of Silence" which explained that social influence plays an important role on human behaviour, particularly on opinion expression. According to spiral of silence theory people are more willing to express a popular opinion or which is supported by majority people. Moreover, expressing unpopular opinion carries the risk of social exclusion or social isolation and fear of being rejected. So people feel safer to express majority opinion even if they negate it privately as they do not want to be a victim of social exclusion. This fear of social exclusion arises from the fear of receiving negative feedback for the divergent viewpoint. When people receive negative feedback for their divergent viewpoints, their views are being pushed towards less and less visibility. That is why the theory was termed as spiral of silence. Fear of isolation forces people to go with majority opinion and suppress or change their own opinion as it is safe to do leading to conformity.

The feeling of conformity may arouse from the desire to "fit in the group", to be accepted and liked by others. Tartaglione, (2017) study stressed that human being follow group opinion blindly even when the group provides wrong answer, just to be accepted and liked by others. Similarly an experimental study conducted by Mallison and Hatemi in 2018 on 58 students treated as control groups revealed that social pressure plays role in opinion change. Further there is

tendency among individuals to change their opinion when faced with peer pressure just to be liked and accepted by others even if the individuals don't accept the majority opinion or belief. People usually practice conformity behaviour when they lack clarity or when they are not aware about correct behaviour or because of anxiety about fitting in the group or fear of isolation. Conformity behaviour increases with increase in opposing voice. This fear of criticism makes individuals to become conformist. Other than fear of criticism, culture also plays role in influencing conformity behaviour. Countries in which collectivist culture is followed, people believe in interdependency rather than independency. Focus is more on achieving group goals & harmony between members. (Cialdini & Trost, 1998).

Similarly individuals seeking approval from peers & who are high in self-monitoring accept group judgement. Such social approval make conformist to adopt majority opinion even when he/ she privately negate it. Desire of receiving social rewards also pushes people towards conformity. According to Leod, (2016) people conform in different ways such as compliance which involve people accepting majority influence in order to receive favourable outcome or to receive favourable reaction from the others. Similarly, internalisation involves accepting group opinion publicly as well as privately. Other form of conformity is identification which is the desire to maintain relationship with group. Lastly integratiational conformity which makes people to follow others because of some rewards attached with it or to be seen as favourable. Moreover Forsyth, (2012) asserted with the help of Solomon Asch's experiment that people conform to group in order to avoid negative consequences which is also known as normative conformity which is other form of compliance conformity similarly when people uses others response as a source of information it leads to informational conformity as there is attached lack of information & ambiguity. People make use of conformity behaviour just to avoid argument especially with superiors. On the contrary as employees grow old and gain more experience in the organisation they tend to become non - conformist which is the desire to remain independent and not getting influenced by others (Tourish, 2007). Further conforming to others belief and opinion also help people in enhancing and protecting their self-esteem but those focus more on self-worth are less likely to conform to others belief, behaviour and opinion.(Cialdini & Stein, 2004) According to Neumann, (1991) fear of being isolated pushes people towards practicing conformity which affects them psychologically. Fear of isolation makes people to accept other's opinion. Employees engage in conformity behaviour just to avoid being considered as different from majority, in order to be accepted by others at workplace (Leng, 2018).

Conformity also arises through social learning when individual require more information about correct action. Lazzaro et al. 2019 conducted an experimental study on 22 autistic participants and 22 neurotypical controls and revealed that both autistic and neurotypical groups altered their previous judgement to match with the false memory of the group in 2 out of 3 experiments. Such behaviour of the group reflects change in opinion due to social influence. If people opt not to conform or avoid conformity then it affects their learning from the social environment as individuals learn from each other while working in social environment. Apart from social learning, gaining social approval also

makes people to follow conformity. Similarly, people while conforming uses other's behaviour as referent point for taking any decision. Further people while practising conformity compare the pay offs & choices of others which is known as conformity through strategic complementarity (Zafar, 2009). Ambiguous and complicated situations make people to base their behaviour on the basis of others. Likewise group cohesiveness makes members to conform; the more cohesive a group is the more likely members are to conform. Further Wijenayake et al. (2020) conducted an experimental study by deploying online quiz with subjective and objective multiple choice questions on small sample of 50 participants to investigate the impact of contextual and personal determinants on online social conformity, the study concluded that as far as contextual factors are concerned as group size increases, participants are more likely to conform. Large majority influence people to move towards conformity. Secondly the authors used model which established that self-reported confidence level of participants negatively correlate with conformity. Which indicate that individuals who are highly confident with their answers are less likely to be influenced. Furthermore on the basis of neuroticism scores of participants the study asserted that participants who are less emotionally stable are more likely to conform to majority opinion. Table 1 shows major studies conducted on social conformity and factors causing conformity behaviour

Table 1: Antecedents of Social Conformity

Source	Study type	Antecedents of social conformity
Noelle Neumann (1991)	Conceptual	Fear of isolation, social influence, lack of confidence & embarrassment
Bond & Smith (1996)	Meta-Analysis	Culture, desire of being accepted
Cialdini & Trost (1998)	Conceptual	Fear of criticism, social approval, desire to receive social rewards & Culture
Scheufele & Moy (2000)	Conceptual	Fear of isolation, Reference group & Culture
Pech (2001)	Conceptual	Organisational culture
Bowen & Blackmon (2003)	Conceptual	Fear of isolation
Cialdini & Goldstein (2004)	Literature Review	Perception of being rewarded, Gaining social approval, maintaining positive social concept
Zafar (2009)	Experimental	Social interaction & social interdependence
Stallen et al. (2013)	Experimental	Peer pressure
Levitan & Verhulst (2015)	Experimental	Social influence
Stallen & Sanfey (2015)	Conceptual	Social influence
Tartaglione (2017)	Conceptual	Desire to belong to a group, Lack of self esteem
Mallinson & Hatemi (2018)	Experimental	Social pressure
Wijenayaka et al. (2020)	Experimental	Size of majority group and self confidence

Previous studies suggested that people do conform for number of reasons, therefore factors affecting social conformity can be categorised as contextual and personal factors. Figure 1 explains the contextual and personal factors that lead to social conformity.
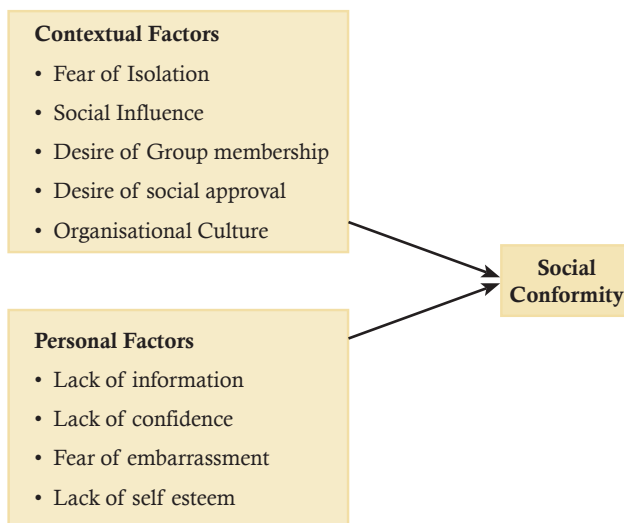
Contextual Factors
• Fear of Isolation
• Social Influence
• Desire of Group membership
• Desire of social approval
• Organisational Culture

Social Conformity

Personal Factors
• Lack of information
• Lack of confidence
• Fear of embarrassment
• Lack of self esteem

Figure 1: Antecedents of Social Conformity

Impact of Social Conformity on Organisational Silence

Social conformity plays a very prominent role in shaping one's behaviour, opinion & belief and affects the decision making ability of a person. People before taking decision ask others and if they believe that more people share their views, then they are more likely to be correct or make correct decision making. On the other hand if their views differ with others then they are more likely to remain silent. Such silence behaviour is difficult to observe and cause of concern for any organisation because to run and manage an organisation in a competitive business environment, management require novel ideas, creative solutions, information, and suggestions from the human resource. Quite often the employees who are considered to be one of the most important of all the assets hesitate in sharing their views and concerns. An organisation can face changes in the business environment only when its employees provide suggestions, ideas or share their views without any hesitation. If employees are provided with the voice opportunities then their voice will help the organisation in getting valuable inputs in the form of creative solutions. The hesitation of employees to share their opinion, concerns, information & ideas leads to a silence climate in the organisation. The concept of silence came from the concept of voice which was first discussed by Hirschman in 1970 in his theory of "Exit, Voice & Loyalty". This theory was explained in context of consumers to discuss why customers stay with a product even when they are dissatisfied rather than switching to a new product. His theory explained that loyal customers express their discontent by voicing instead of exiting or switching to a new product. Later the argument of his theory was extended by other researchers to study voice

behaviour of employees in organisations. Which further throw light on the fact that loyal employees would speak up instead of leaving or exiting the organisation. If employees don't have option to exit then they would remain silent.

In year 1974 Noelle and Neumann discussed the concept of silence in her study " spiral of silence" which results from the belief that one's opinion , behaviour and attitude gets affected by others perception. Public opinion plays an important role in opinion expression as individuals' work in an environment which influences their attitude and behaviour in response to others views. If any discrepancy or difference exists between people's opinion, then the awareness of that discrepancy makes the individual stay away from discussing that topic and makes individual to prefer silence in order to avoid conflict. But it was Morrison and Milliken, (2000) who defined organisational silence as something which results from the intentional withholding or failure to communicate important inputs, ideas, suggestions, information (Morrison, 2014). Silence doesn't mean that one lack idea, information or suggestions. But it also means not speaking up when one is having important information, concern about a problem or opposing viewpoint which should be shared. Similarly Dyne, Ang et al. (2003) described silence as absence of sound and speech which could be understood clearly by others. Such behaviour is difficult to understand by the management as opposed to voice behaviour and prevent management from receiving any new idea. Perlow & William, (2003) in their Harvard business review asserted that silence often occurs when people are holding divergent viewpoint. Which is absolutely normal as people differs in terms of their attitude and behaviour. But one should recognise this difference.

Similarly, Bowen and Blackmon conducted a conceptual study in 2003 to assess the dynamic effect of diversity on organisational voice and the study revealed that employees in organisations won't hesitate in sharing their concerns, ideas and suggestions when they believe that their ideas, concerns & inputs are supported by others on the other hand if they believe that they are not supported they will remain silent. Similarly horizontal pressure and fear of isolation forces employees to remain silent. The silence behaviour of employees makes the content of the information weaker and affects the capacity of the employee to analyse the available information critically thereby making the dominant opinion to be perceived as correct. Such silence behaviour of employees in the organisation leads to herding behaviour which forces employees to follow the dominant opinion just to avoid being considered as trouble maker. The term herding behaviour while explaining change of behaviour was initially used by French sociologist Le Bon in 1895 & later by political economist Veblen in 1899. Their research was based on herding behaviour and psychology of crowd. But Noelle & Neumann's study "Spiral of Silence" asserted that in organisational settings employees prefer to hold or follow majority opinion even if they disagree with that just to avoid any kind of conflict & fear of isolation. Levitan and Verhulst in their study on 54 undergraduate participants conducted in

2015 discussed that people before taking decision ask others if they believe that more people share their views then they are more likely to be correct or make correct decision. So other's act as a reference point for taking decision. Similarly, if their views differs with others, then they are more likely to feel uncomfortable, which forces them to change their attitude and to fit in group. Perception of others largely forces one towards conformity & affects ability to speak up. Noelle-Neumann's "spiral of silence" is the only theory which helps in explaining how people's expression of opinion gets affected by other people perception in group. This theory explained how majority people's opinion affects an individual willingness to express his/her opinion. Also there is tendency among individuals to scan their social environment before expressing their views. Besides this, fear of social isolation also play role in ensuring conformity behaviour. Individuals will express their views, opinion publicly only when they perceive that their opinion & views to be dominant one. On the contrary if they find that their opinion lies with minority they tend to remain silent.

Conformity behaviour can be observed in employees in the organisations as they believe that voicing opinion, concerns might affect others sentiments or they may have the fear or belief that raising voice or speaking up is a futile exercise. This prompts people to align their belief or opinion with the majority to avoid fear of exclusion & create a sense of team. According to Macro and Thomas, (2015) people will share their feeling, ideas & views when they believe that they are sharing majority opinion as opposed to people with minority opinion making them fearful in expressing their concern & opinion. Apart from fear of isolation which pushes people towards conformity but it is the reference group also which helps in deciding whether to express the opinion or withhold. The role of the reference group cannot be ignored. Further people conform more to in group members than to out-group members because of strong association between behaviour of in group members and experience of positive effect and social inclusion & rewards. (Stallen et al. 2013)

Moreover culture in organisation also play role in speaking up behaviour. In some organisations individualistic culture is practiced which require consistency between self - image & public self - image, where in people prefer straight talk & doesn't care much about what other people think of their opinion. Whereas in some organisations collectivist culture is practiced where in people lay more emphasis on social environment & social interaction. Such people prefer conformity in opinion than individualistic culture. (Scheufele & Moy, 2000). Conformists are cause of concern for the organisation as they change their views believing that they are different from others and being different might not be accepted in the organisation. The conformity behaviour makes people in the organisation either to change or to suppress their creative ideas because of fear of challenging higher authority in the organisation. Moreover this fear gets increased when people share their voice with minority, which forces them to remain silent because of fear of being wrong & considered as fool (Tartaglione, 2017). Furthermore the social influence which makes people in organisation to depend on one another to seek more information or validate their views, quite often leads to suppression of their own ideas and leading to silence behaviour. *Organisational silence not only means withholding of ideas, opinion, expression and concern but it also mean conforming to others views by suppressing or changing own views.* The aspect of conformity and its impact on speaking up behaviour of employees didn't receive much research attention by previous organisational silence researchers. Figure 2 explains the social conformity leads to organisational silence.

The Conceptual Model of the Study

Figure 2: The Conceptual Model of the Study

Social Conformity – When it is Functional and When it is Not?

Social conformity is the tendency among people to change or modify their behaviour, views, opinion to match with others opinion & behaviour. Tendency to change behaviour is common among people to avoid feeling of displeasing others and fear of social exclusion. A certain level of conformity is essential among people as it helps in maintaining social exchange. Bowen & Blackmon (2003) in their study discussed that people fear in revealing their true identity as it can affect their social exchange with other people in the organisation and if they hide it may lead to silence behaviour. Conformity pushes people towards agreeing with others opinion desire to bring rewards. So desire to maintain social relationship and achieve some rewards are the prime factors behind conformity behaviour as it helps in gaining social acceptance. Moreover conforming to group pressure enhances creativity of group members only when members lack creative talent. (Goncalo & Duguid, 2011). Similarly social conformity help people in collecting more information from their peers and reducing cost of collecting information. Apart from this, a certain level of conformity helps in reducing conflicts & avoiding arguments. Employees opt for opinion conformity just to play safe. This indicates that conformity to a certain extent helps employees in organisation by getting them fit in the organisation. Conformity behaviour on the part of employees reveals that employees believe in the culture of the organisation and it is good to be a part of organisational culture (Tourish, 2007).

Though conformity benefits people as it helps them learning from others, it indicate a state of cooperation and selflessness but it also reduces generation of new ideas. Social conformity pressurises implementation of new ideas

but suppresses generation of new ideas. Conformity and creativity moves in opposite direction. People who don't practise conformity are likely to be more creative, suggest creative solutions to the problem, don't shy away in sharing their views. Pech, (2001) conducted a conceptual study to assess how conformity behaviour affects employee's creativity and innovation; the study concluded that over emphasis on conformity reduces the reasoning and judgement ability of employees in the organisation. Similarly organisational culture as discussed also has a role to play in making people conformist. A rigid organisational structure with planned procedures hardly accepts creative ideas of employees. Such organisations hardly accept individuality, forcing people to practise herding behaviour, where in people tend to confirm to the behaviour & attitude of others. When people tend to follow others they suppress their own views, which reduce their reasoning ability and move them towards silence. Further if people are forced to behave in a certain way, it surely affects their job satisfaction. Moreover suppressing emotions affects the effectiveness of employees (Leng, 2018).

How to overcome social conformity?

Conformity behaviour affects one ability to express views & opinion. It arises when people change their opinion, actions & judgement in response to others opinion behaviour. Such change in behaviour is hardly get noticed. For the organisation it is imperative to overcome such behaviour in employees as it makes them to hide their true opinion, information & affect the organisation's ability to make informed decision. Cuey and Frey, (2012) in their study conducted semi structured interview with practitioners in financial industry stressed that there exist a cost in speaking up which forces people towards conformity behaviour. Therefore, lowering the cost of speaking up will help in reducing conformity behaviour and also silence behaviour among employees. Further people learn from each other while working in group which enhances their creative skills and problem solving skills because of rich experience of group members. But it leads to conformity behaviour when group members lack creativity. So, one way to break conformity is by encouraging individual thinking by giving employees an opportunity to identify problems & suggest creative solutions. Similarly, to overcome the conformity behaviour some organisations believes in recruiting diverse category of employees as, such employees perform more effectively than homogeneous employees. From the organisation point of view culture play an important role in indicating conformity behaviour therefore organisations should strive to create a collectivist culture as against individualistic culture where people work for achieving group goal rather individual goals which helps in enhancing harmony between people. Furthermore management should bind the organisation around common vision or shared vision to overcome opinion conformity. According to Hewlin, (2003) organisations should create an environment where employees can openly share their views,

opinions & true values. Further problem of conformity can be overcome at the time of selection by the management by selecting employees who support voice & critical thinking

Discussion & Conclusion

This article reviewed the existing literature and examined the relationship between social conformity and organisational silence. The study throw light on the fact that past research underestimated the role of social conformity in explaining employees silence behaviour in organisations. The study has expanded our current knowledge base of organisational silence by articulating the impact of social conformity on organisational silence. Every employee in the organisation holds valuable input which may be beneficial for the organisation. It is in the interest of the organisation to make use of such valuable information for the benefit of the organisation else it may cost organisation. It is revealed with the help of previous studies that conformity behaviour of employees affects their intension to share their views, opinion and suggestions. Employees in the organisation will share their concern and viewpoints only when they believe that they are sharing majority viewpoint otherwise they opt to remain silent. Such change in behaviour arises from the desire to be accepted & liked by others, getting along with others, fear of being criticised, lack of knowledge of correct behaviour, fear of being isolated & fear of criticising higher authority. Similarly rigid organisational culture also prevents people to think differently and express their viewpoints. But fear of isolation & displeasing others and desire to be liked & accepted by others are prominent factors which forces people towards conformity. Further if people are forced to behave in such a way it will affect their creativity and effectiveness.

Though a certain level of conformity is necessary as it helps in avoiding conflicts and helps in maintaining harmony but it should not prevent employees in organisation to express themselves without any fear. The current study considered how behaviour of others affects the intension of employees to speak up as previous researchers only focused on role of organisational & individual factors in explaining silence behaviour in employees. One can conclude that organisational silence not only involves withholding important inputs, ideas, suggestion and viewpoints but it also involve not expressing or suppressing creative ideas, suggestions, opinion or conforming to others ideas, suggestions, opinions out of fear or in order to avoid criticism, desire to be accepted and liked by others or to take revenge from others. Social conformity cannot be eliminated from organisations as people act as a powerful source of influencer. People in organisations influence each other and in turn get influenced by them. But it can be reduced by encouraging constructive thinking and providing employees open environment which reduces their hesitation & reluctance and give them confidence to express themselves without being influenced by others.

Implications of the Study and Direction for Future Research

People are more likely to conform when they adjust their views in order to tone down their disagreement with others and express views which are more acceptable. Such conformist behaviour is a cause of concern for the organisations because it prevents people to express their true opinion and suggestions. The review of literature on social conformity points to a few significant practical implications for HRD practitioners.

This study will help the management in the organisations to assess why people opts to conform to others views rather than choosing to express themselves which requires management to provide a climate which motivates employees to share their viewpoints. Organisations should provide support to employees who express divergent viewpoint. Secondly the impact of such conformity behaviour on employees silences behaviour. Conformity prevents generation of creative idea by forcing employees to accept others views which affects organisation's ability to cope with changing business environment by making use of creative ideas and suggestions of the employees. Employees when observe that their opinion differs from others and majority lies on other side then they prefer to change their views and suppress their views which is other form of silence. Silence not always means remaining silent rather it also results from modifying opinion in order to be accepted and liked by others. This form of silence is difficult to observe as it hard to find out why employees opt to change their attitude. Thirdly this study will also help to overcome conformity behaviour and reducing silence behaviour of employees.

Being a first literature review based study on how social conformity affects organisational silence, this study has significant theoretical implication and contribution to existing organisational silence literature but research of empirical nature will contribute much needed knowledge about the topic of conformity and advance our understanding how it is closely related to silence behaviour of employees in organisations as most of the current studies on social conformity are conceptual and experimental based research. Moreover, future research is needed to explore how conformity behaviour affects different dimensions of organisational silence.

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Annexure 16.1.3

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2.2 TBP2_Madhulika_ GJEIS Jan to Mar 2024. docx	madhulikap.sarkar@ignou.ac.in	Madhulika. P. Sarkar	02%

Reviewers Memorandum

Reviewer's Comment 1: Authors came up with the original concept Social conformity forces people to change or suppress their views leading to silence behaviour and influences their job related attitudes. The study is done by using the primary data to answer how social conformity arises in organisation and how it creates a climate of silence is literature review.The findings suggests that this study contributes to existing organisational silence literature by considering social conformity as an antecedent of organisational silence.

Reviewer's Comment 2: This paper analyzed the literature and explored the relationship between organisational silence and social conformity. By outlining how social conformity affects organizational silence, the study will add to the body of knowledge now available on the subject. Every employee working for the company has important ideas that could help the company. Utilizing such important information for the organization's advantage is in its best interest; otherwise, it could come at the expense of the organization.

Reviewer's Comment 3: Despite the paper's excellent organization, the author could have made the review of the literature section stronger. A look at recent research might also provide more background on the various aspects of organizational silence that are influenced by social conformity. This work adds significantly to the body of knowledge on organizational silence and has important theoretical implications.

Editorial Excerpt

The article has 2% of plagiarism which is the accepted percentage as per the norms and standards of the journal for publication. As per the editorial board's observations and blind reviewers' remarks the paper had some minor revisions which were communicated on a timely basis to the authors (Madhulika & Deepika), and accordingly, all the corrections had been incorporated as and when directed and required to do so. The comments related to this manuscript are noticeably related to the theme "**Impact of Social Conformity on Organisational Silence: A Conceptual Model**" both subject-wise and research-wise. This paper analyzed the literature and investigated the connection between organizational silence and social conformity. The study highlights the fact that earlier studies undervalued the contribution of social conformity to the explanation of employees' silent behavior within organizations. This study fills a vacuum in the literature on organizational silence by putting forward social conformity as a precondition for organizational silence. After comprehensive reviews and the editorial board's remarks, the manuscript has been categorized and decided to publish under the "**Theme Based Paper**" category.

Acknowledgement

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