

# Employee Silence and Organizational Commitment in Nigeria: Does Perceived Organizational Support Plays a Mediating Role?

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## Abstract

This study investigated whether perceived organizational support plays a mediating role on the relationship between employee silence and organizational commitment in Nigeria. Survey research design was used and questionnaire was administered to one hundred and ninety-one (191) employees of oil and gas firms. Data obtained were analyzed using descriptive statistics (simple percentage, frequency counts, mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis, Karl Pearson correlation), post estimation statistics (variance inflation factor, Breuch-Pagan/Cook-Weisberg and Ramey RESET) and inferential statistics (structural equation modeling). Specifically, the structural equation modeling results established a positive and significant mediating effect of perceived organizational support on the relationship between employee silence and organizational commitment ( $\beta=0.942$ ,  $p=0.000$ ;  $\beta=0.847$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). The result implies that perceived organizational support plays a mediating role as well as a vital driver for enhancing organizational commitment and employees' silence. The study recommends that organization should encourage constant support to employees because when they perceived support from management, they become more and more committed to realizing the goals of the organization and those relating to them. Also, organization should as a matter of fact provide more motivational incentives aimed at boosting organizational commitment.

**Keywords:** Employee silence; Perceived organizational support; Organizational commitment; Motivational incentives; Employee perception

JEL Classifications: M12; M10

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## I. Introduction

In the management literature, it is a widely acknowledged that employees are one of the most vital human resources of any organization because they primarily determine the fortune of the organization. Thus, it is imperative that they are always motivated, unswerving and fervent in their job roles so as to obtain the best productive output for the organization, particularly for oil and gas companies. The roles performed by employees of oil and gas companies according to Asgari, Sepasi and Tavazo (2022), are characterized by work overload, strenuous activities, lack of recognition, motivation, justice and trust, which usually lead to the underperformance of the organization.

Employees have ideas and constructive means to improve work and organizational commitment. However, some of these employees express their ideas and share information while others remain silent and withhold their opinions, ideas, and information (Jalilian & Batmani, 2022). Evidently, expressing and withholding behaviours might appear to be polar opposite because silence implies not speaking up important issues and problems in the organization (Pourakbari, 2020; Premeaux & Bedeian, 2019). Employee silence is considered as employees' deliberate hiding of important ideas information, queries, concerns or views about matters related to their job position and organizations (Çakıcı, 2021). Park and Keil (2009) examined employee silence in three (3) dimensions; *first*, silence can be intentional (employees may remain silent even if they are aware of the problem and know of a better solution); *second*, silence can be a defense mechanism (employees can remain silent to protect their interests or not to contradict others openly); and *third*, silence can be a collective decision of employees (a collective reaction of not sharing ideas, thoughts, or knowledge with others).

Vakola and Bouradas (2020) observed that most of the key decision makers (leaders) remain unaware about the silence behaviours of employees and assume that employees are freely communicating upward without hesitation. Knoll, Hall and Weigelt (2019); Hawass (2016) asserted that there is evidence that employee

silence exists in many organizations and employees are often hesitant to engage in voice, particularly when they have information that is against leadership viewpoint. This deprivation of valuable knowledge results to negative consequences and wastage of valuable resources in the organization (see Erigüç, Özer, Turaç & Songur, 2020; Premeaux & Bedeian, 2019), hence organizational commitment (Seifzadeh & Ghaffari, 2016). Thus, organizations fail to learn due to employee silence behavior, which requires to be examined. Instead, as suggested by Bozorgnia and Enayati (2019), silence can be active, conscious, intentional, and purposeful.

Brinsfield (2013); Ciecuch, Davidov, Algesheimer and Schmidt (2018) showed that employee silence is pervasive, multi-dimensional, can reliably be measured, and is significantly linked to other important organizational behavioural occurrence such as perceived organizational support, organizational commitment, amid others. Perceived organizational support refers to employees' perception as regard extent to which organization values employees' contribution and cares about their wellbeing (Mokhtari, Seyyedin & Sattari, 2018). On the other hand, organizational commitment refers to a bond shared between employees and her organization.

Regardless of the fact that employees' silence can be linked to organizational outcomes such as perceived organizational support and organizational commitment, no systematic attempts exist to integrate studies on whether perceived organizational support mediate the relationship between employee silence and organizational commitment. Thus there is knowledge gap on whether perceived organizational support plays a mediating role on the relationship between employee silence and organizational commitment, particularly as it concerns oil and gas companies in Nigeria.

## **II. Literature Review**

### **- Employee Silence**

The concept of employee silence has a long history in organizational science. Following the historical overview, the phases of employee silence concept are grouped in to three periods or waves: the initial wave (consists of research conducted in the 1970s to the mid-1980s); the second wave (consists of research conducted in the mid-1980s to 2000); and the current wave (consists research done in the 21<sup>st</sup> century). Employee silence takes on different meanings depending on its underlying motives. According to Yousefi and Mohammadian (2015), employee silence is seen as 'the withholding of any form genuine expression about the individuals behavioural, cognitive and/or affective evaluations of his or her organizational circumstance to persons who are perceived to be capable of effecting change or redress'.

Allard-Poesi and Hollet-Haudebert (2017) defined employee silence as the absence of voice as it has its own form of communication, involving a range of cognitions, emotions, or intentions such as objection or endorsement. Knoll, Wegge, Unterrainer, Silva and Jönsson (2016); Achieng (2014); Tulubas and Celep (2012); and Zarei, Taheri and Sayyar (2011) identified employee silence in two (2) forms: 'quiescence' and 'acquiescence'. In terms of quiescence, silence represents deliberate omission, while acquiescence silence is based on submission. Also, the literature about types of employee silence has classified it into major three (3) types, namely acquiescent, defensive, and pro-social silence (Connelly, Cerne, Dysvik & Skerlavaj, 2019; Gelfand, Aycan, Erez & Leung, 2017; and Gelfand, Aycan, Erez & Leung, 2017).

Dorfman, Javidan, Hanges, Dastmalchian and House (2012) envisaged acquiescent silence as withholding views, relevant idea, information, or opinions, based on resignation. Acquiescent silence advocates disengaged behavior; thus it is a passive behavior. In the case of acquiescent silence, employees commend the status quo and prefer not to speak up. They do not try to change organizational circumstances. This is a voluntary behavior that the employees choose when they believe that speaking up will not make any difference (Gelfand, Erez & Aycan, 2017; George, Howard-Grenville, Joshi & Tihanyi, 2016).

Defensive silence is the feeling of fear; one of the common reasons for individuals to remain silent (Chamberlin, Newton & LePine, 2018). Defensive silence is seen as withholding relevant ideas, information, or opinions as a form of self-protection, based on fear. It is an intentional behaviour with the aim of protecting one's self from external threats. Asparouhov and Muthén (2019) used the term quiescent silence to describe deliberate omission based on personal fear of the consequences of speaking up. Pro-social silence is withholding work-related ideas, information, or opinions with the goal of benefiting other people or the organization, based on altruism or cooperative motives (Salimi, 2015; Taleghani, Tanaomi, Farhangi & Zarrinnegar, 2011).

Pro-social silence is intentional and proactive. Unlike defensive silence, pro-social silence is others oriented, rather than fear of negative personal consequences of speaking up (Taleghani, *et al*, 2011). Employee silence is associated with many virtues: modesty, respect for others, prudence, decorum. Employees silence themselves to avoid embarrassment, confrontation and other perceived dangers (Asgari, *et al*, 2022). But, employee silence can convey approval and sharing or disfavour and opposition, thus becoming a pressure mechanism for both individuals and organization (Jalilian & Batmani, 2022). Early definitions of employee silence equated it with "loyalty" and the assumption that nothing was wrong if concerns were not being voiced.

But numerous researchers today have shown that a climate of silence can work against desired organizational outcomes (Knoll, *et al*, 2021).

Çakıcı (2021) sees employee silence as absence of voice as it has its own form of communication, involving a range of cognitions, emotions or intentions like objection or endorsement. Erigüç, Özer, Turaç and Songur (2020) believed that employee silence reflects a bifurcated means of knowing employee's concerns in essentially a simple binary manner. That is, the organizations either acknowledged employee dissatisfaction by voice when employees express themselves by speaking up or by exit as expressed when employees leave the organization.

- Organizational Support

In the academic literature, there is a plethora of diverse definitions about organizational commitment. The common theme of all those definitions is that organizational commitment is some sort of a bond shared between the employee and his/her organization (Abdulla, 2019). Employees committed with the organization have a serious urge to make a significant contribution to the workplace and go beyond the standard job obligations (Bozorgnia & Enayati, 2019). Organizational commitment is a binding force that attracts employees towards their organization (Connelly, *et al*, 2019). Organizational commitment determines the extent of an employee's inclination of being a part of the organization in the future (Knoll, *et al*, 2019).

Broadly speaking, organizational commitment is reflected in an employee's confidence in the organizational goals and intentions, readiness to exert an extra effort for their achievement, and keenness to maintain their employment (Premeaux & Bedeian, 2019). Those employees who have stayed in an organization for a longer period of time, have achieved professional accomplishments, and work with a group of committed employees, are more likely to develop stronger organizational commitment as compared to others (Beugelsdijk & Welzel, 2018; Chamberlin, *et al*, 2018).

Furthermore, it has been widely accepted that the construct of organizational commitment is multifaceted and is composed of three elements (Meyer & Allen, 1991). The first is affective commitment which determines how well an employee emotionally attaches to, identifies with, and engages in the organization. Employees strongly exhibiting this type of commitment stay with their firm just because they desire to. The second is continuance commitment which signifies an employee's assessment of the supposed costs of departing the firm and the perceived opportunities for employment elsewhere.

Employees strongly exhibiting this type of commitment stay with their firm just because they don't have any other choice. The last is normative commitment which is referred as an employee's compulsion to stay with the firm due to household or cultural pressures (Ciecuch, *et al*, 2018; Mokhtari, *et al*, 2018). Such employees feel that it is their moral responsibility to serve the organization. Employees strongly exhibit this type of commitment with their firm just because they are compelled to do so.

- Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived organizational support is an employee perception that the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Mokhtari, *et al*, 2018). While Eisenberger proposed the concept of perceived organizational support, subsequent scholars mainly focused on the development of measurement scale, factors affecting perceived organizational support, and the positive impact of perceived organizational support on employees and organizations commitment via empirical studies.

On the basis of organizational support theory, three general forms of perceived organizational support treatment received from organization (fairness, supervisor support, and organizational rewards and job conditions) should increase perceived organizational support (Nazem, 2017). Although most studies had assessed the relationship of employees' perceptions of favorable treatment and perceived organizational support, few studies had focused on the mediating effect of it in the relationship between employee silence and organizational commitment. The three (3) broad types of perceived organizational support are briefly discussed as follows:

First, *supervisor support*: just as employees form global perceptions concerning their valuation by the organization, they develop general views concerning the degree to which supervisors value their contributions and care about their well-being (i.e., perceived supervisor support). Because supervisors act as agents of the organization, having task for directing and evaluating subordinates performance. Employees view their supervisor's favorable or unfavorable orientation toward them as indicative of the organization's support. Support from supervisors has also been assessed with related measures involving leader-member exchange (Seifzadeh & Ghaffari, 2016).

Second, *fairness*: procedural justice concerns the fairness of the ways used to determine the distribution of resources among employees (Tulubas & Celep 2012). Yousefi and Mohammadian (2015) suggested that repeated instances of fairness in decisions concerning resource distribution should have a strong cumulative effect on perceived organizational support by indicating a concern for employees' welfare. George, *et al*, (2016)

distinguished between structural and social aspects of procedural justice. Structural determinants involve formal rules and policies concerning decisions that affect employees, including adequate notice before decisions are implemented, receipt of accurate information, and voice (i.e., employee input in the decision process).

Third, *rewards and job conditions*: Asgari *et al*, (2022) suggested that human resource practices showing recognition of employees' contributions should be positively related to perceived organizational support. A variety of rewards and job conditions dynamics (e.g. pay, job security, recognition, promotion, role autonomy, role stressors and training, etc.) have been studied as measures management can employ to promote organizational support. According to organizational support theory, favourable opportunities for rewards serve to communicate a positive valuation of employees' input and thus contribute to perceived organizational support. By role autonomy, we mean employees' perceived control over how they carry out their job tasks, including scheduling and work procedures (Jalilian & Batmani, 2022; Knoll, *et al*, 2021).

- Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the constructive/destructive theory (CET) by Van Dyne, Soon and Botero (2003). The theory considers the motivation behind employee silence as the driving force towards organizational commitment. Van Dyne, et al. (2003) focused on three(3) employee motives(disengaged, self-protective, and other-oriented) and three types of employee (acquiescent, defensive, and pro-social). CET can be used to buttress why employees react in a specific way, both verbally and non-verbally. CET hinges on the point that employee silence are not opposites, but simply multi-dimensional. Acquiescent employee silence involves the verbal expression of information based on an employee's attitude that they cannot make a difference in the organization; defensive employee silence is the verbal expression of information based on fear and protecting the self.

Pro-social employee silence consists of verbally expressing information based on cooperative motives. CET dimensions are similar to three types of employee silence: *Acquiescent silence* entails passive withholding of information due to a feeling of being unable to make a difference; *defensive silence*, withholding of verbal information due to a personal fear of the organizational consequences of speaking out; and *pro-social silence* which involves the withholding of information based purely on altruistic motives with the goal of benefiting the organization. On the basis of the conceptual and theoretical review, a conceptual model explaining the mediating role of perceived organizational support on the relationship between employee silence and organizational commitment was developed (see figure 1):

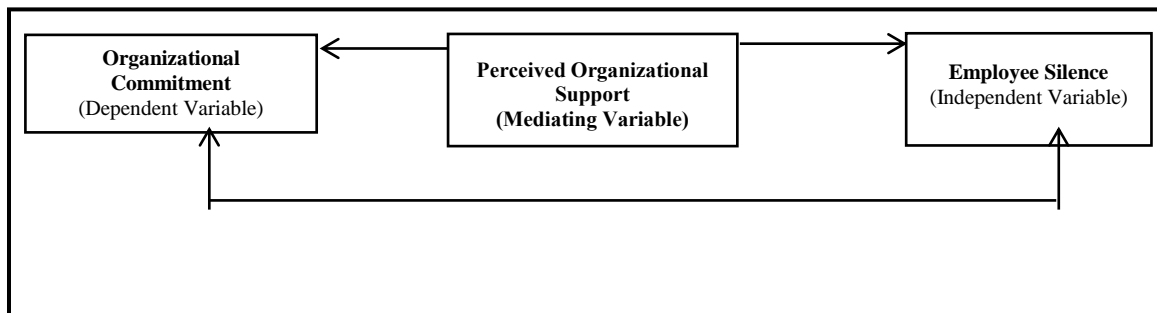


Fig. 2.1: Conceptual Model of the Study  
Source: Conceptualized by the Researcher (2022)

**III. Methods**

This study used survey design; choice of design enabled the researchers to collect and analyze quantitative data on mediating the role of perceived organizational support on the relationship between employee silence and organizational commitment as well as unfolding shared characteristics among the study sample. The study population comprised of the workforce of three (3) oil and gas servicing companies in Nigeria, out of which one hundred and ninety-one (191) were sampled. The major instrument of data collection was the questionnaire which was divided in four(4) sections: demographic variables of the respondents; employee silence; perceived organizational support and organizational commitment.

The research instrument shows a long tradition of employee silence, perceived organizational support and organizational commitment and those used in prior studies(Knoll, *et al* 2021; Abdulla, *et al* 2019; Kim, Cao, Wang & Nguyen,2017; and Kirrane, O'Shea, Buckley, Grazi & Prout, 2017). The instrument was designed on a reversed 5-point Likert scale of strongly disagree (SD-1), disagree (D-2), undecided (D-3), agree (A-4) and

strongly agree (SA-5). The Cronbach Alpha reliability test was done to ascertain the internal consistency of the instrument (see Table 1)

**Table 1: Reliability Results Obtained via Cronbach Alpha**

Variables	Cronbach Alpha Index (CAI)
Employee Silence	0.871
Perceived Organizational Support	0.840
Organizational Commitment	0.805

Source: Compiled by the Researcher's via STATA 13.0 version

In this study, the dependent variable is organizational commitment; perceived organizational support is the mediating variable while organizational commitment is the independent variable. On the basis of the above, the empirical model was specified to assess the mediating effect of perceived organizational support on the relationship between employee silence and organizational commitment as follows:

$$Orgcom = f(Empsil, Perosup) \quad - eq. 1$$

Equations 1 is the implicit form of the equation; however, equation 2 is the explicit model:

$$Orgcom = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 Empsil + \beta_2 Perosup + \mu_t \quad - eq. 2$$

Where:  $\beta_1, \beta_2 > 0$ ; *Orgcom* = organizational commitment; *Empsil* = Employee silence; *Perosup* = Perceived organizational supports;  $\mu_t$  = Error term; *B* = Intercept;  $\beta_1$ - $\beta_2$  = coefficient of the variables. The analysis comprise descriptive (mean, variance, standard deviation, minimum and maximum value, skewness, kurtosis and Pearson correlation), diagnostic (variance inflation factor), and inferential (structural equation modeling) statistical tools.

#### IV. Results

**Table 2: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

Parameters	Frequency(N)=191	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	123	64.40
Female	68	35.60
Total	191	100.0
<b>Age</b>		
20-29 Years	2	1.05
30-39 Years	159	83.25
40-49 Years	15	7.85
Above 50 Years	15	7.85
Total	191	100.0
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	97	50.79
Married	86	45.03
Separated	5	2.62
Widowed	3	1.57
Total	191	100.0
<b>Highest Educational Qualification</b>		
Below Bachelor Degree	10	5.24
Bachelor Degree	176	92.15
Postgraduate Degree	5	2.62
Total	191	100.0
<b>Years of Experience</b>		
< 1 Year	19	9.95
1 – 3 Years	29	15.18
3 – 5 Years	107	56.02
5 Years & Above	36	18.85
Total	191	100.0
<b>Company</b>		
Seplat Energy	94	49.21
Delta Marine Oil	48	25.13
Chrome Oil	49	25.65

Total	191	100.0
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Source: Researcher’s Computation (STATA 13.0)

Table 2 showed the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of their gender, age, marital status, highest educational level, years of experience in service, and the category of the oil and gas firms. *First*, Table 2 revealed that majority of the respondents were males (N =123, 64.4%), while females were 68(35.6%). *Second*, in terms of distribution of age of the respondents, it was shown that 2(1.05%) of the respondents were between 20-29 years, 159(83.25%) were between 30-39 years, 15(7.85%) were between 40-49 years, while 15(7.85%) were above 50 years. *Third*, it was found that 97(50.79%) of the respondents indicated that they were single, 86(45.03%) were married, 5(2.62%) separated while 3(1.57%) indicated they were widowed.

Furthermore, in terms of highest educational qualification obtained by the respondents, 10 (5.24%) indicated that they had obtained O’L/OND/NCE as their highest certificate; the respondents that had obtained Bachelor and Postgraduate degrees were 176(92.15%) and 5(2.62%) respectively. Finally, in terms of the duration that respondent has worked for their organization (years of experience), 19(9.95%) indicated between less than 1year, 29(15.18%) indicated 1-3 years, 107(56.02%) indicated 3-5 years, while only 23(4%) indicated above 5 years and above respectively.

Table 3: Participants Responses to Questionnaire Items on Organizational Commitment

Items (N = 191)	Mean	Std. Dev.
1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization	3.7	1.5
2. I really feel as if this organization’s problems are my own	3.7	1.5
3. I do not feel like ‘part of my family’ at this organization	4.4	1.0
4. I do not feel ‘emotionally attached’ to this organization	4.0	1.3
5. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me	4.3	1.4
6. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to this organization	3.7	1.5
7. It would be very hard for me to leave my job at this organization right now even if I wanted to	3.7	1.5
8. Too much of my life would be disrupted if I leave my organization	4.4	1.1
9. Right now, staying with my job at this organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire	4.0	1.3
10. I believe I have too few options to consider leaving this organization	4.3	1.4
11. One of the few negative consequences of leaving my job at this organization would be the scarcity of available alternative elsewhere	3.7	1.5
12. One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organization is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice	3.7	1.5
13. I do not feel any obligation to remain with my organization	4.4	1.1
14. Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave	4.0	1.3
15. I would feel guilty if I left this organization now	4.3	1.4
16. This organization deserves my loyalty	3.9	1.4
17. I would not leave my organization right now because of my sense of obligation to it	4.1	1.3
18. I owe a great deal to this organization	4.7	0.8

Source: Researcher’s Computation(STATA 13.0)

Table 3 showed the participants responses to questionnaire items on organizational commitment which was measured by eighteen (18) items, and the descriptive pattern of responses for this subscale is shown in Table 3. A mean threshold of 2.5 for all the items were established and the results revealed that all the eighteen (18) items beat the mean threshold of 2.5. This clearly indicates that the respondents showed a positive viewpoint of the role organizational commitment plays in their organizations. More importantly, the standard deviation range is from 0.8-1.5, which is not too far from each other; this implies that perceptions of the respondents on organizational commitment items were not too far from each other and most likely their views on the organizational commitment items are closely related.

Table 4: Participants Responses to Questionnaire Items on Employee Silence

Items (N = 191)	Mean	Std. Dev.
1. In this organization, employees are unwilling to speak up with suggestions for change because they are disengaged at work	4.4	1.2
2. In this organization, employees passively withhold ideas at work based on resignation	3.9	1.6
3. In this organization, employees passively keep ideas to themselves about solutions to problems at work	3.0	1.8
4. In this organization, employees keep ideas for improvement at work to themselves, because of lack of self-confidence to make a difference	4.3	0.7
5. in this organization, employees withhold ideas about how to improve the work around here, based on being disengaged.	3.2	1.6
6. In this organization, employees do not speak up and suggest ideas for change, based on fear	3.6	1.8
7. In this organization, employee withhold relevant information due to fear	3.4	1.7
8. In this organization, employees omit pertinent facts in order to protect themselves	4.3	0.7

9.	In this organization, employees avoid expressing ideas for improvements, due to self-protection	3.2	1.7
10.	In this organization, employees withhold solutions to problems because they are motivated	3.5	1.6
11.	In this organization, employees withhold confidential information based on cooperation	3.4	1.6
12.	In this organization, employees protect proprietary information in order to benefit the organization	3.4	1.7
13.	In this organization, employees withstand pressure from others to tell organizational secrets	3.6	1.5
14.	In this organization, employees refuse to divulge information that might harm the organization	3.4	1.8
15.	In this organization, employees protect confidential organizational information appropriately, based on concern for the organization	3.2	1.7

Source: Researcher’s Computation(STATA 13.0)

Table 4 showed participants response to questionnaire items on employee silence which was measured by fifteen (15) items, and the descriptive pattern of responses for this subscale is shown in Table 4. The results revealed that all the fifteen (15) items beat the mean threshold of 2.5. This clearly indicates that the respondents showed a positive viewpoint of the role employee silence plays in their organizations. More so, the standard deviation range from 0.7-1.8, which is not too far from each other, indicating that the perceptions of the respondents on employee silence items were not too far from each other and most likely they share similar viewpoints on the employee silence items.

**Table 5: Participants Responses to Questionnaire Items on Perceived Organizational Support**

Items (N = 191)	Mean	Std. Dev.
1. The organization strongly considers my goals and values	4.3	1.6
2. Help is available from the organization when I have a problem	4.4	1.6
3. The organization really cares about my well-being	4.4	1.7
4. The organization would forgive an honest mistake on my part	3.3	2.2
5. The organizational is willing to help me when I needed special favour	4.3	1.4
6. If given opportunity, the organization would take advantage of me	4.8	1.3
7. The organization shows very little concern for me	4.5	0.9
8. The organization cares about my opinions	4.7	1.3

Source: Researcher’s Computation(STATA 13.0)

Table 5 showed participants response to questionnaire items on perceived organizational support which was measured by eight (8) items, and the descriptive pattern of responses for this subscale is shown in Table 5. The results revealed that out of the eight (8) items, seven (7) items (1-3 and 5-8) beat the mean threshold of 3.5 except item 4 (mean = 3.3), which is below the mean threshold of 3.5. This clearly indicates that the respondents showed a positive viewpoint of the role perceived organizational support plays in their organizations. More so, the standard deviation range from 0.9-2.2, which is not far from each other, indicating that the perceptions of the respondents on perceived organizational support items were not far from each other and most likely they share similar viewpoints on the items on perceived organizational support.

**Table 6: Normality Test**

Statistics	Organizational Commitment	Employee Silence	Perceived Organizational Support
Skewness	-0.1841	0.5447	0.2983
Kurtosis	1.6934	2.4105	1.2731

Source: Researcher’s Computation(STATA 13.0)

Table 6 showed the results of the normality test using Skewness and Kurtosis. The kurtosis results revealed that perceived organizational support (1.2731) had the least kurtosis, which is the smallest possible value of kurtosis and employee silence (2.4105) the most. In addition, skewness values revealed that organizational commitment (-0.1841) skewed towards one direction (negative) while the other variables, employee silence (0.5447) and perceived organizational support (0.2983) were skewed towards same direction (positive). Overall, all the kurtosis values for the variables are not far from 3; an indication that the variables of the study (organizational commitment, employee silence and perceived organizational support) are normally distributed.

**Table 7: Pearson Correlation Matrix**

Statistics	Organizational Com.(Orgcom)	Employee Sil.(Empsil)	Perceived Org. Sup. (Perosup)
Orgcom	1.0000		
Empsil	0.8540	1.0000	
Perosup	0.6977	0.8257	1.0000

Source: Researcher’s Computation(STATA 13.0)

Table 7 showed Pearson correlation coefficients matrix of organizational commitment (Orgcom), employee silence (Empsil) and perceived organizational support (Perosup). The result revealed that the

variables of employee silence and perceived organizational support were positively correlated with organizational commitment; impliedly, a positive relationship between organizational commitment, employee silence and perceived organizational support was established.

Table 8: Variance Inflation Factor

Variables	VIF	1/VIF
Employee Silence (Empsil)	3.14	0.3182
Perceived Organizational Support (Perosup)	3.14	0.3182
Mean VIF	3.14	

Source: Researcher’s Computation(STATA 13.0)

Table 8 showed the variance inflation factor (VIF) result for the independent and mediating variables of the study (employee silence and perceived organizational support) in order to assess whether there is the presence or absence of multicollinearity for the data. The result of the mean VIF=3.14, which is less than the accepted VIF benchmark of 10.0, indicating the absence of multicollinearity problem in the empirical models of organizational commitment, employee silence and perceived organizational support.

Table 9: Breusch-Pagan/Cook-Weisberg Test for Heteroskedasticity

Ho: Constant Variance		
Chi2(1)	44.93	Prob. > chi2 = 0.0000

Source: Researcher’s Computation (STATA 13.0)

Table 9 showed result of Breusch-Pagan/Cook-Weisberg test for heteroskedasticity for the independent and mediating variables of the study (employee silence and perceived organizational support); result indicated that employee silence and perceived organizational support fit well with organizational commitment in the model.

Table 10: Ramsey RESET Test

Ho: Model has no omitted variables		
F(3, 185)	12.18	Prob. > F = 0.0000

Source: Researcher’s Computation (STATA 13.0)

Table 10 showed result of Ramsey RESET test using powers of fitted values of organizational commitment (Orgcom). The F(3,185)=12.18 and probability F is 0.0000, which is less than 0.05 indicated that the empirical model has no omitted variables describing employee silence and perceived organizational support.

Table 10: Fit Indices

Fit Indices	Cutoff Threshold	CFA
$\chi^2/df$	< 3	2.04
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	> 0.90	0.92
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	> 0.95	0.93
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	< 0.08	0.79
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (ADFI)	> 0.90	0.92

Source: Researcher’s Computation (STATA 13.0)

There are numerous fit indices researchers employ in determining the existence of adequate fit between the model and dataset; they are chi-square/degree of freedom( $\chi^2/df$ ); comparative fit index(CFI); Tucker-Lewis index(TLI); root mean square error of approximation(RMSEA); adjusted goodness of fit index (ADFI). In Table 10, the results of the fit indices showed a good model fit with the study’s dataset.

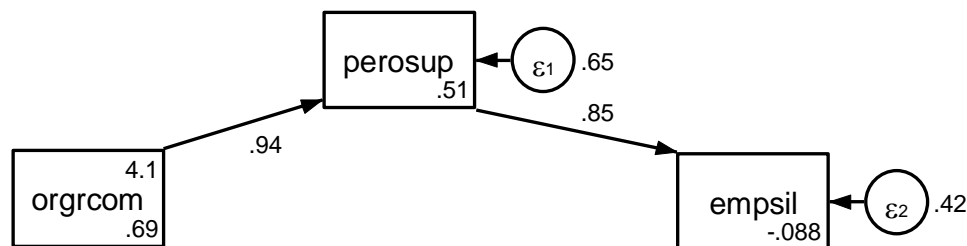


Figure 2: Path Diagram of Structural Equation Modeling



In Figure 2, it was shown that perceived organizational support plays no mediating role on the relationship between employee silence and organizational commitment ( $\beta = 0.942, p = 0.000$ ) and a positive and significant relationship exists between employee silence and perceived organizational support ( $\beta = 0.847, p = 0.000$ ). The SEM result there is a clear indication that perceived organizational support plays a mediating role on the relationship between employee silence and organizational commitment.

## V. Discussion

Fundamentally, the interests of organization are geared towards enhancing commitment on the part of the organization and that of employees. In Nigeria, management of oil and gas firms has made concerted efforts towards this via the use of perceived organizational support, which is considered as vital mechanism for growth, survival and attainment of the goals and objectives of the organization and those of the employees. In fact, there are widespread viewpoints that when employees perceive adequate support from management, commitments to the organization is enhanced. While the above views abound in the literature in developed nations, there is literature gap in the developing country like Nigeria if perceived organizational support plays a mediating role on the relationship between employee silence and organizational commitment.

Few studies in this area were conducted in other countries(see Asgari, *et al*, 2022; & Sun, 2019). Thus, there is lacuna in literature, particularly oil and gas firms in Nigeria as regards if perceived organizational support mediates in the relationship between organizational commitment and employees' silence. In view of the lack of empirical studies, we used the SEM in assessing this concern. In specific, findings of the SEM result showed that perceived organizational support plays a mediating role on the link between organizational commitment and employee silence. Finding agrees with the results of Sun (2019); Asgari, *et al* (2022) who found a positive and significant mediating role of perceived organizational support on the relationship between organizational commitment and employee silence.

## VI. Conclusion And Recommendations

In the literature, there has been growing interest on if employee silence affects organizational commitment. Notably, prior studies have assessed the role of employee silence in organizations; while most studies had focused on the direct relationship between employee silence and organizational commitment, there are few studies to the researchers' knowledge that had assessed the mediating effect of perceived organizational support on the relationship between employee silence and organizational commitment in Nigeria.

Given the lack of empirical studies, this study investigated whether perceived organizational support plays a mediating role on the relationship between organizational commitment and employee silence of oil and gas firms in Nigeria. SEM result indicated that perceived organizational support mediates on the relationship between employee silence and organizational commitment significantly and positively. The study concludes that perceived organizational support plays a fundamental role in enhancing organizational commitment. The study recommended that management of organization should encourage incessant supports to employees because when they perceived supports from the organization, they become more committed to realizing the goals of the organization and theirs. As a matter of fact, management should provide increased motivational incentives aimed at boosting organizational commitment.

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