

**THE EFFECT OF COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES ON EMPLOYEE  
SILENCE IN PRIVATE HOSPITALS**

**Jaspreet Kaur**

*Research Scholar, University School of Business  
Chandigarh University, Mohali, Punjab  
[Ishar.jaspreet@gmail.com](mailto:Ishar.jaspreet@gmail.com)*

**Dr. Rupali Arora**

*Professor, University School of Business  
Chandigarh University, Mohali, Punjab  
[Rupali.arora@cumail.in](mailto:Rupali.arora@cumail.in)*

**Abstract:**

*The availability of communication channels and the employees' tendency to keep silent plays a crucial role in influencing a company's efficacy and survival. The purpose of the current investigation is to determine the connection between communication opportunities and acquiescent and defensive forms of employee silence. For this study, 180 female nurses who are employed in 5 private hospitals in Punjab were contacted. The data has been examined using correlation and regression analysis. The results show a negative association among communication opportunities and both defensive and acquiescent silent behaviour.*

**Keywords:**

Communication opportunities, Nursing staff, Acquiescent silence, Defensive silence, Hospitals

**Introduction**

Employees who view communication opportunities favourably are more likely to display desired behaviours, while those who view them unfavourably are far more likely to engage in behaviours like putting in little efforts and losing confidence in the company. Given this context, the importance of communication opportunities as a research topic for carrying out an organization's tasks has gained significant attention in recent years (Kaur & Arora, 2022). Managers motivate their staff members to boost organizational success, staff morale, profitability, and the use of advanced human resource enhancement strategies.

Managers who do not really care about creating a culture that encourages open communication will probably run into problems since they don't have enough human resources (Rowe et al., 2005). A wide range of factors, such as management strategies, labor shortages, and a sense of unfairness can have an impact on employees (Smidts et al., 2001).

Inadequate communication opportunity is quite essential as it may induce unfavorable emotions or raise employees' intentions to keep quiet and therefore not express or discuss their thoughts (Ponnu & Chuah, 2010). Communication opportunities are a major driver of corporate behaviour. Fair work culture plays a vital role in an organisation and has the capacity to affect

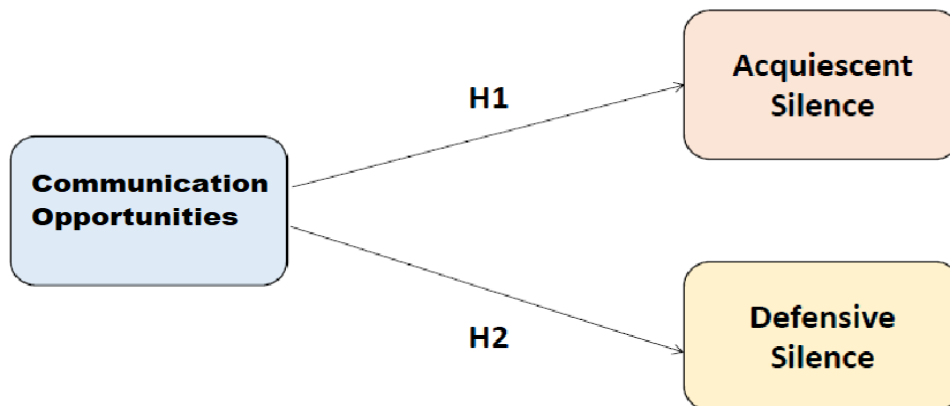
individuals' attitudes, actions, and sentiments,. Studies from the past have also shown that when leaders or executives treat their workers honestly, employee voice is fostered far beyond what is desired and commitment increases. Additionally, anytime employees witness their employer engaging in unfair practises, they start to feel unimportant in the eyes of their employer and opt not to trust them. As a result, people decide to keep quiet if a problem at work (Smidts.et al.,2001).Employee silence significantly influences a company's success or failure. Silence fosters a hostile work setting that prevents the sharing of knowledge, the development of original ideas, and the demonstration of skill. The enterprise is seriously threatened by this. It is therefore critical for the growth of innovation within a corporation regardless of whether workers take part in making decisions about possibilities. The justification for doing so is that silent behaviour has a detrimental effect on organizational performance and has the ability to constrain businesses and individuals.

## **2.Research Methodology**

### **2.1 Research Objectives**

- A. To investigate the association among communication opportunities and acquiescent silence in private hospitals.
- B. To investigate the association among communication opportunities and defensive silence in private hospitals.

**Figure 1:Proposed Framework of the Study**



**Source: Author's own.**

### **2.2 Data collection**

The respondents in the present study were nursing staff working in five private hospitals in Punjab. 200 nurses were contacted . In total, 180 responses(90 percent ) were received.

### 2.3 Questionnaire

To develop the questionnaire, a detailed examination of the literature has been done. On the basis of review, a questionnaire with thirty statements was designed, including ten statements about opportunities for communication, 10 statements about the defensive silence, and ten statements about acquiescent silence. The responses were graded out of 7, with 1 representing "Strongly disagree" and 7 representing "Strongly agree."

### 3. Data analysis and Results

#### 3.1 Analysis of data through Regression tool

Table 1 shows the correlation between employee silence in an acquiescent manner and communication opportunities. The study's concludes that the value of R squared is 0.529, which represents a change of 52% in acquiescent silence as a result of communication opportunities. In other words, there will be a .52 unit shift in the acquiescent kind of silence for every shift in 1 unit of communication opportunities.

**Table 1: Model Summary**

Communication and Acquiescent silence						
Model Summarization						
Model	R	R Squared	Adjusted R Squared	Standard Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
1	.622a	.529	-.502	15.901	50.855	.000b
a. Predictors: (Constant), Communication_total						

**Table 2: Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	51.701	4.079		14.129	.000
	Communication_total	-.666	.079	-.677	-7.088	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Acquiescent silence						

The t value for communication opportunities is .7088, according to Table 2. The results also point to an unstandardized coefficient (B) with a negative value of -.677. As a result, there will be less acquiescent silence among employees as communication opportunities increase. Therefore, hypothesis 1 is confirmed.

**Table 3: Model Summary**

Communication opportunities and defensive silence						
Summarization of Model						
Model	R	R Squared	Adjusted R Squared	Standard. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
1	.700a	.656	.614	16.111	89.115	.000b
a. Predictors: (Constant), communication opportunities_total						

The correlation between chances for communication and defensive forms of silence is seen in Table 3. The results show that the R squared value is .656, which indicates a change in defensive form 65% as a result of communication opportunities.

**Table 4: Coefficients**

Model		Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Standard Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	70.317	4.025		16.066	.000
	communication opportunities_total	-.711	.069	-.723	-11.156	.000
a. Dependent Variable: defensive silence						

The computed value of t for the communication opportunities variable is -11.156, as shown in Table 4, with a significant probability of 0.000. The findings also show that communication opportunities have a low value (B= -.711). As a result, hypothesis 2 is accepted since more opportunities for communication will result in less defensive silence and likewise (a negative association).

### **3.2 Correlation Analysis**

The correlation analysis to examine Hypotheses 1 and 2 is shown in Table 5. The study's findings indicated a moderately unfavourable correlation (r= -.701) between chances for communication and acquiescent silence. As a result, the study supported Hypothesis 1, which states that communication options have a detrimental effect on acquiescent silence in the workplace.

Furthermore, the present study's findings confirmed the second finding: defensive form of silence are negatively impacted by communication opportunities ( $r = -.620$ ).

**Table 5: Correlation Analysis (N=180)**

		communication opportunities_total	Acquiescent silence	Defensive silence
communication opportunities_total	Pearson Correlation	1	-.701**	-.620**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0	0
	N	180	180	180

**4.Limitations and Future research**

The current study investigates the relationship among defensive and acquisitive silent behaviour and communication opportunities given to employees. The study excluded pro-social silence and also other forms of silence behaviour. Additionally, the analysis is limited to the health sector. As a result, study can be performed in many fields in the future, including education, pharmacy and technology.

**5.Academic significance and managerial repercussions**

Employee silence is detrimental and endangers the wellbeing of patients. As a result, it is vital for hospital management to constantly evaluate and reduce the risks that lead to silence. To lessen instances of employee silence, the study will help management understand the importance of promoting a sense of justice inside the workplace. The managers will be encouraged by the expanding knowledge to empower their employees so that they may speak openly.

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