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**Employees' silence towards the decision-making process**

Case Study: Public and Private Schools in the Kingdom of Jordan

PhD. DISSERTATION

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## Contents

Decision of the committee .....	iii
Contents .....	iv
Table & Figur & Appendices .....	vi
Abstract.....	1
1 Introduction .....	3
1.1 The problem of the study .....	5
1.2 Overall value-added .....	6
1.3 The hypotheses .....	7
1.4 The focus of this dissertation .....	8
2 Literature .....	10
2.1 Classical and Neo-classical theory .....	10
2.2 Silence/voice behaviour and important managerial terms .....	12
2.3 Factors exploration-focused previous studies .....	20
2.4 Organizational/contextual factors .....	27
2.4.1 Formal authority abuse .....	27
2.4.2 Lack of support .....	27
2.4.3 Mistrust .....	28
2.4.4 Injustice .....	28
2.4.5 Fear of negative reactions .....	29
2.5 Personal factors .....	30
2.5.1 Lack of Self-esteem .....	30
2.5.2 The prosocial factor .....	30
2.5.3 Diffident factor .....	30
2.5.4 Psychological withdrawal .....	31
2.5.5 Deviant factor .....	31
2.6 Organizational silence and the Decision-Making Process .....	32
2.6.1 Problem identification and data collection .....	33
2.6.2 Development and evaluation of alternatives .....	34
2.6.3 Choosing the best solution/alternative .....	35
2.6.4 Follow up on the implementation .....	36
2.6.5 The public and private sector in Jordan .....	38
3 Methodology.....	42
3.1 Terminology.....	42
3.2 Phase 1 methodology .....	42
3.2.1 Study sample .....	42
3.2.2 Interviews .....	43
3.3 Phase 2 methodology .....	43
3.3.1 Study Population and Sample:.....	43
3.3.2 Study Tool: .....	43
3.3.3 Relative importance, Reliability of the tool, Multicollinearity and Regression analysis .....	44
3.4 Phase 3 methodology .....	46
3.4.1 Study Population and Sample:.....	46

3.5	Phase 4 methodology .....	46
4	Empirical studies on silence problem in public and private schools .....	48
4.1	Phase 1: Exploration of silence's motives towards the work decisions and building a measurement tool.....	49
4.1.1	Study plan and methodology .....	49
4.1.2	Data collecting.....	49
4.1.3	Interpreting responses and deriving causes and situations: .....	51
4.1.4	Results .....	54
4.1.5	Building the measurement tool.....	62
4.1.6	Discussion of results:.....	65
4.2	Phase 2: Measuring silence and its impact on the decision-making process in public schools .....	68
4.2.1	Jordanian Public Schools:.....	68
4.2.2	Research Methodology: .....	69
4.2.3	Study Population and Sample:.....	69
4.2.4	Study Tool .....	69
4.2.5	Data analysis and hypotheses testing.....	70
4.2.6	Discussion.....	77
4.3	Phase 3: Measuring silence and its impact on the decision-making process in private schools .....	80
4.3.1	Private schools .....	80
4.3.2	Study tool, Sampling and methodology .....	81
4.3.3	Data analysis and hypothesis testing .....	81
4.3.4	Discussion.....	87
4.4	Phase 4: A comparison of the organizational silence in public and private schools .....	92
4.4.1	Data analysis and hypotheses testing.....	93
4.4.2	Discussion.....	95
5	Conclusion and limitation.....	999
5.1	New scientific results .....	99
5.2	Conclusion and Application.....	101
5.3	Limitation and future work .....	102
	Summary.....	104
	References .....	105
	Appendices .....	121
	Acknowledgement .....	138
	Declaration.....	139

## Table & Figur & Appendices

Table 1.1: The organizational and personal factors of silence .....	26
Figure 1: Study model .....	32
Table 1.2: A comparison between the public and private schools .....	41
Table 3.1: Key Interpretations of the Results of Relative Importance Index (RII) .....	44
Figure 2: Research plan.....	47
Table 4.1: Decision-related situations reported by the respondents.....	52
Table 4.2: Motives reported by the respondents .....	53
Table 4.3: The tendency towards the silence .....	54
Table 4.4: Reliability Statistics .....	55
Table 4.5: Defining the problem .....	55
Table 4.6: Development of alternatives .....	55
Table 4.7: Evaluation of alternatives.....	55
Table 4.8: Choose Alternate / Solution .....	56
Table 4.9: Supervision and follow-up .....	56
Table 4.10: Reliability Statistics .....	59
Table 4.11: Fear of negative reactions .....	59
Table 4.12: Mistrust .....	60
Table 4.13: Lack of management support.....	60
Table 4.14: Abusing of formal authority.....	60
Table 4.15: Injustice.....	60
Table 4.16: Prosocial silence.....	61
Table 4.17: Lack of self-esteem .....	61
Table 4.18: Psychological withdrawal .....	61
Table 4.19: Diffident Silence .....	61
Table 4.20: Deviant silence.....	62
Table 4.21: The frequency of silence's motives within each factor .....	62
Table 4.22: Reliability test .....	63
Table 4.23: Demographic distribution. ....	69
Table 4.24: Cronbach's Alpha test.....	70
Table 4.25: The VIF and tolerance values for the independent variable.....	71
Table 4.26: The mean and S. d.....	72
Table 4.28: Multiple regression for the second main hypothesis.....	74
Table 4.29: ANOVA-Gender .....	75
Table 4.31: ANOVA-experience.....	76
Table 4.32: ANOVA- Education Level.....	76
Table 4.33: Demographic distribution .....	81
Table 4.34: The mean and standard deviation.....	82
Table 4.36: Multiple regression for the fifth main hypothesis .....	84
Table 4.37: ANOVA-Gender .....	85
Table 4.38: ANOVA-Age .....	85
Table 4.39: ANOVA-Experience .....	86
Table 4.40: ANOVA-Education level .....	86
Table 4.42: Test of the differences in personal factors in both sectors .....	93
Table 4.43: Test of the differences in organizational factors in both sectors.....	94
Table 4.44: Test of the differences in silence in both sectors .....	95
Table 5.1: Summary of hypothesis tests.....	100
Appendix 2A: coding the silence factors .....	122

Appendix 2B: coding the stages of the decisions factors .....	122
Appendix 3A: Classification results of the decisions-related situations .....	123
Appendix 3B: Classification results of the decisions-related situations .....	124
Standard deviation and relative importance (Decision-making items) .....	126
Appendix 5: Standard deviation and relative importance (silence items).....	128
Appendix 6: Study tool .....	132
Appendix 7: Test of Homogeneity of Variances- public schools.....	137
Appendix 8:Test of Homogeneity of Variances- private schools .....	138

## **Abstract**

### **Employees' silence towards the decision-making process**

Case Study: Public and Private Schools in the Kingdom of Jordan

The deliberate withholding of information and feedback by employees has been linked to various individual and contextual (organizational) factors. Recently, the problem of employees silence has been studied separately and become an important issue in the organizational sciences beyond the absence of employees voice. Despite the huge interest in the silence problem, no studies directed to investigate the underlying motives of the silence phenomenon towards the decision-making process (DMP). All studies searched the silence factors at the workplace in general. Thus, this study applied in the Jordan ministry of education (MOE) attempts to enhance our understanding of this phenomenon by linking it with one of the most important managerial functions, the decision-making process. A silence model is suggested; it shows the main factors under which the discovered motives to be classified. Following three studies are designed and carried out to (a) investigate the motives for silence towards the decision-making process from the teachers' point of view, (b) develop a measurement tool of silence based on these motives and testing the hypotheses in the public schools, (c) Testing the tool and the hypotheses in the private schools as part of the private sector. The exploration phase utilized structured interviews with open-ended questions directed to reveal the underlying silence motives and decision-related situations where employees chose silence; 100 interviews were conducted in both types of schools. Five HR specialist has classified the founded motives according to the factors to which each belongs. The second phase utilized a questionnaire tool that has been built based on the first phase results. The data collected from public schools, and the sample was 1643. Multi regression analysis and ANOVA test were used to analyze the data. The third phase is measuring and testing hypotheses in private schools. The sample was 1208, and the same methodology and analysis methods used in phase 2 were used here.

Among the most important results, a new measurement tool directed at silence problem towards the decision-making process has been developed. In addition, the motives identified in this study are more specified and directly correlated to the decision-making process, which could help



enhance the employees' participation. The results also indicate that silence towards participation in the decision-making process can be measured. However, the silence problem exists at a medium level in both types of schools and inversely related to participation in the decision-making process. Research confirmed that organizational factors have more impact on the participation in the DMP in both public and private schools than personal factors (H1-2-4-5-7-8). It also confirmed that there are no differences in responses regarding the respondents' gender and education level, but there is a significant difference regarding their age and experiences in both public and private schools (H3 and H6). Finally, the research confirmed that there are statistically significant differences among the silence factors and in silence degree based on the sector variable (H9 and H10).

Based on the results of this research, the MOE has to pay more attention to this problem since it affects not only the DMP but also the organizational performance in many areas. The public sector, in general, has to revise the recruitment methods; conducting exams and in-person interviews are important and could help in avoiding many unwanted personal characteristics. Moreover, a plan is needed to treat the current situations in the schools' environment regarding the silence problem. Such a plan could be redesigning the training programs to enhance both the employees' personality and management quality.

Finally, one of the important studies to be suggested is conducting in-depth qualitative interviews with Jordanian schools' principals. This helps in reaching more motives and details on the employees' silence from a different point of view. Thus, more details and motives could be revealed on the silence problem from different perspectives.

# 1 Introduction

There are various considerations when comparing the public and private schools in Jordan. This research is focusing on two main components of the schools. The first is the contextual components; related to the schools' structures and regulations. The other component is the quality of employees' characteristics. The researcher highlights the most important points to be compared when talking about the two sectors. Hiring methods is considered one of the significant difference between the public and private sector in Jordan. In addition, the work conditions, the environment in which each type of schools works, salaries, incentives, training programs, level of job security and the compensation paid on the end of service. However, the schools do not produce testable physical products. It is hard to measure the quality of the outputs. Thus, the quality of processes and human resources have to be given more importance.

Organizations have plenty and different forms of resources with different functions. However, human resources remain the most critical element in the organizations' success or failure at all administrative hierarchy levels. Human resources are the main sources to generate experience and knowledge (Moghaddampour et al., 2013). Indeed, the employees' role exceeds fulfilling assigned tasks to a broader administrative role (e.g., contributing to the decision-making process, solving work problems, providing views, suggestions, and information on the work-related issues). This contribution by employees could guarantee a sufficient amount of information and details available on the workflow, which improve the decision quality and overall organizational performance and effectiveness (Marusich et al., 2016).

Despite the importance of participation and sharing information, employees may prefer to remain silent and abstain from providing any information or provide it incompletely (Dimitris & Vakola, 2007). This abstention could disrupt the organization's various administrative functions, especially those that require and rely heavily on the availability of the largest amount of information as in the decision-making process. Hence, the silence received great attention in the recent studies of organizational behaviours and problems.

Deliberate withholding of information, feedback, and opinions by employees have been linked to many critical individuals and organizational outcomes; (Nafei, 2016; Peirce et al., 1998; Takhsha et al., 2020; Zehir & Erdogan, 2011). Although employees' voice behaviour has been

discussed from different perspectives; for example, issue selling to top management, organizational learning, change and development, knowledge exchange, citizenship behaviours within organizations, whistle-blowing (Argyris, 1993; Dutton & Ashford, 1993; Hollenbeck et al., 1996; Kowalski, 1996), these efforts have not considered the special nature and impact of intentional silence. According to previous voice investigations, silence supposes an absence of the information and feedback (positive and negative) associated with voice. Also, the factors which cause the employees to speak up will reduce silence. Thus, in this study, there is no need to investigate whether the silence is intentional or not. The reviews of employees' voice behaviour already consider silence as a natural byproduct.

However, the employees' silence has come to be considered an important area of investigation in its own right. Employee silence is defined in the literature as an intentional withholding of work-related information based on different underlying motives (Dyne et al., 2003; Pinder & Harlos, 2001). The intentionality here is related to fulfilling an underlying motive that differentiates organizational silence from any other silence arising from not having anything to say or the pauses in everyday verbal discourse. Thus, the un-deliberated silence does not belong to organizational silence because it is not motive-driven.

Studying the phenomenon of employee silence towards the decision-making process as behaviour driven by specific motives and not as a normal absence of voice is important for several reasons. Bearing in mind that employees silence is intentional behaviour that comes from different motives — it is potentially much complex than that suggested by interpreting it as voice absence. Logically, there are motives behind employees silence which are different from absence motives for voice. Also, individual and organizational factors that cause silence and associated consequences are likely to differ as a function of the fundamental motives. Thus, silence and voice absence associated motives are not necessarily the same.

Although a pervasive phenomenon, some issues remain unsolved, such as (a) what does compose employees silence towards the decision-making process? (b) how can it be dimensionalized and measured? And (c) what factors give rise to these various motives of organizational silence? Therefore, the proposed research represents an important step in understanding this crucial issue. It investigates and examines the various motive-based factors of silence towards the decision-making process, develops a measuring tool, and explores the

size and impact of this problem. However, this research is conducted in the Jordanian schools' environment since the researcher has access to the needed sample, which could improve the study's reliability. In addition, the similarity of the goals and tasks in both types of schools allows us to compare the two sectors with the lowest impact of other factors.

Pinder & Harlos (2001) indicated that one of the main obstacles associated with studying the silence problem is deciding what forms the research boundaries and conditions. Thus, a clear definition and articulation of boundary conditions are essential for solid empirical research. Therefore, our first phase in this dissertation is to clearly identify what constitutes silence towards the decision-making process within the public and private schools. It's a critical step if research is to proceed systematically.

A good understanding of the silence problem requires a more in-depth look. The researcher has studied silence as behaviour during the decision-making process. Moreover, although organizational silence has been considered a deliberated behaviour (Guenter et al., 2017; Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Pinder & Harlos, 2001), discussing the behaviour effect without determining the hidden motive(s) is considered ambiguous. Researchers attempted to identify the different silence factors by presenting it as a reaction to various reasons (e.g. protecting social relationships, causing harm, self-defence, impress the management; Dyne et al., 2003; Pinder & Harlos, 2001; Premeaux & Bedeian, 2003). Also, they searched in the role and effect of silence on different organizational aspects, including development and change, the role of leadership styles in silence, and the solutions to overcome the problem of silence (e.g., Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Detert & Burris, 2007; Guenter et al., 2017; Huang et al., 2005). However, beyond these studies, which deal with general silence at the workplace, there is a need for more thorough exploration relative to the existence, measurement, and impact of the silence motives. Therefore, this research is indeed vital; it empirically explores the underlying motives of organizational silence towards the decision-making process and their impact on it.

## **1.1 The problem of the study**

This study aims at answering some questions, which in turn answer the main research question about the motives and factors of silence associated with the organizational decision-making process. These questions include

- Does the silence problem towards the decision-making process exist among teachers in the schools of Amman governorate?
- What is the strength and direction of the relationship between silence and participation in the decision-making process in public and private schools?
- What are the underlying motives and factors of the silence towards the participation in decision making according to teachers perspectives?
- Does silence have a significant impact on participation in the decision-making process?
- Is there any difference between the public and private schools regarding the silence level and the motives?

## **1.2 Overall value-added**

The development of a specialized measurement tool of employees silence towards the decision-making process, along with the proposed qualitative and empirical studies, should contribute to a better understanding of this behaviour. The proposed model contributes to a better understanding of the motives and factors that lead the employees to keep silent and not participate in decisions. The investigation of motives and factors (phase 1), and following studies based on these motives (phase 2 & 3), will enable more empirical studies. Moreover, most often, the work tasks differ in both the public and private sectors. These differences and their companion factors, out of the study model, could affect the results when comparing the same issue in different sectors. For example, comparing the silence at police offices with silence at the private schools, or even in public schools, could be affected by the nature of the tasks as well as the main silence factors. Therefore the researcher believes that the education field represents an excellent environment for studying and comparing work behaviour issues because of the highly close tasks nature. Phase 2 and 3 allow for exploring the silence problem under ideal research conditions. This belief has been formed due to the researcher's job nature as an employee at the HR department in the Jordan ministry of education. Finally, in addition to contributing to the theory relative to organizational silence, Phase 3 will also provide further validity evidence of the recently developed measurement tool's validity.

### 1.3 The hypotheses

Employees believe that the problem lies not only in their desire to remain silent, but in the factors driving them to do so, and their impact on the performance and loyalty to the organization (Morrison, 2011). Therefore, many studies searched deeply in the silence problem to determine the underlying motives and establish the relationship between silence and the different organizational concepts and behaviours such as leadership patterns, organizational loyalty, performance and many more.

Considering this study aims to measure the degree of silence problem and its impact on the decision-making process in public and private schools, the researcher assumes that all personal and organizational factors impact participation in the decision-making process. Moreover, the researcher supposes that there would be differences in responses based on respondent's gender, age, length of experience and level of education.

- **H<sub>1</sub>**: There is a statistically significant impact (at the level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of Personal (individual) factors (Prosocial factor, Lack of self-esteem, Psychological withdrawal, Diffident Silence and Deviant silence) on the decision-making process in the public schools.
- **H<sub>2</sub>**: There is a statistically significant impact (at the level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of organizational factors (Lack of trust, lack of management support, abusing formal authority, Injustice and Fear of negative reactions) on the decision-making process in the public schools.
- **H<sub>3</sub>**: There are significant differences in the respondents' responses based on the demographic variables (gender, age, experience and education level).
- **H<sub>4</sub>**: There is a statistically significant impact (at the level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of Personal (individual) factors (Prosocial factor, Lack of self-esteem, Psychological withdrawal, Diffident Silence and Deviant silence) on the decision-making process in the private schools.
- **H<sub>5</sub>**: There is a statistically significant impact (at the level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of organizational factors (Lack of trust, lack of management support, abusing formal authority, Injustice and Fear of negative reactions) on the decision-making process in the private schools.
- **H<sub>6</sub>**: There are significant differences in the respondents' responses based on the demographic variables (gender, age, experience and education level).
- **H<sub>7</sub>**: organizational factors are expected to have a greater impact on participation in decision-making than personal factors in public schools.

- **H<sub>8</sub>**: Personal factors are expected to have a greater impact on participation in decision-making than personal factors in public schools.
- **H<sub>9</sub>**: There are statistically significant differences between the silence factors based on the sector variable.
- **H<sub>10</sub>**: There is a statistically significant difference in the degree of silence between public and private sector schools.

#### **1.4 The focus of this dissertation**

Our study contributes to a better understanding of the silence phenomenon, where a general model of employee silence towards the decision-making process is presented. This model and its component and related factors are necessary for understanding what does constitute employee silence towards the decisions in processing. Three related studies are conducted with this study as follow.

The first study investigates the relative underlying motives of employee silence towards the decisions and develops a typology of employee silence motives based on underlying factors. Previous researches developed different measures of general organizational silence behaviours (e.g., Brinsfield, 2013; Jain, 2015; Milliken et al., 2003; Vakola & Bouradas, 2005), but none have assessed silence towards a particular issue as we do here. However, this study repositions the lens closer to a specific issue to reach more accurate results in this field. Moreover, besides exploring the motives, the purpose is to develop reliable, specialized, and situationally measures of employee silence based on the investigated motives. This measurement tool does not apply only to the intentional silence towards decisions but supposed to help in other situations.

Phase 2 aims to develop valid measures of silence towards the decisions and carry out an empirical study within the public schools. Thus, the main aims are to (a) refine the items developed in the previous phase, (b) examine the factors and their underlying motives, and (c) make sure of the generalizability of the new measures. This study is designed to investigate the degree of silence and outcomes of specific factors based on phase 1 results. Based on our investigatory study and previous related researches (e.g., Dyne et al., 2003; Milliken et al., 2003; Pinder & Harlos, 2001), it is expected that the silence to exist among the teacher and all identified factors to have an impact on participation in the decision-making process. It logically

makes sense that silence factors will vary as a function of the related motives. For example, silence based on the need for self-defence will differ from silence associated with the motive of diffident. Similarly, silence associated with the need to be prosocial is likely differing from this associated with mistrust. This is why there is a need to specify and examine the underlying motive of organizational silence towards a particular issue as in our case, and why the typology of motive-factors is valuable.

The last study comes from the researcher's belief that the nature of the sector could affect the silence problem and its underlying motives; therefore, this study is the same as the second one, but this time the questionnaire is already refined and tested. Thus, the primary goals here are (a) investigating the silence problem in private schools (private sector), where the previous study was in the public ones (public sector), and (b) make sure of the generalizability of the developed measurements.



## **2 Literature**

Despite the multiplicity of the resources and the differences in their forms and functions, the human element remains the most important one. It has a critical role in the organizations' success and failure, regardless of their hierarchy position. The management scientists have considered the human component the most vital source to generate experience and knowledge (Moghaddampour et al., 2013). Nowadays, the staff's role is no longer limited to fulfilling the tasks and duties assigned. They have an essential role in the administrative process and activities (Detert & Burris, 2007). This role could include contributing to the decision-making, contributing to problems solving, work development by making suggestions and sharing their views. The different forms of contributions guarantee a sufficient amount of details and information available on the workflow. Thus, the quality of decisions is to be improved, which increases overall performance and effectiveness (Marusich et al., 2016). This section focuses on how silence factors and the decision-making process have been studied in general and how these factors impact the DMP.

The silence academics sheds light on how this behaviour might emerge and persist in the face of public opinion conformity. Individuals typically choose silence in contexts of inadequate public support, as a result of fear of solitude or self-doubt, according to Noelle-Neumann 1974. People are often hesitant to speak up in these instances, adding to the sense of a lack of public support for their perspective. Individuals will express their opinions with greater confidence and less anxiety in situations when public support appears to be high (Salmon & Neuwirth, 1990). This discrepancy, according to Taylor (1982), stems from the theory's overestimation of the strength of fear of ostracism in affecting an individual's readiness to voice opinions while omitting to account for other alternative considerations such as the value of doing so. Neuwirth et al. (2007) argue that not speaking out would have various determinants and is undoubtedly multidimensional, in the sense that individual can choose to be passive or engage in deceptive verbal behaviours (lying and neutral speech).

### **2.1 Classical and Neo-classical theory**

Different organizational theories emerged and studied different elements of the organizations' structures. The organization was considered a machine by classical writers, and individuals were

treated as physical components (Brubaker, 1985; Daft, 2007; Stephenson, 1968). They believed that increasing the organization's efficiency could be accomplished by making people more efficient. Their focus was on specialization and activity coordination. The majority of the authors placed a premium on efficiency at the executive level, with only a minor focusing on efficiency at the lower levels of an organization. As a result, there are two streams in this theory: scientific management and administrative management. The first team was primarily concerned with the duties that needed to be completed at the operational level. The importance of decision-making processes was not emphasized in this approach.

Moreover, this classical philosophy made no respect for human behaviour. Classical thinkers overlooked the intricacy of human nature (Parker & Lewis, 1995). They viewed the human being as inert instruments of the organization, fulfilling the tasks allocated to them. Also, for the classical theory, it is impractical to believe that an organization operates in a closed system. The environment has a significant impact on the organization and vice versa. A modern work environment is an open system that interacts with its surroundings (Gupta & Briscoe, 2020).

A more modern theory is "Neo-classical theory". It differs from classical theory in terms of adjustments and refinements. In addition, human beings in the workplace were the focus of this theory. Nell, (1984) determined that the true reason for human behaviour was more than just physiological factors in the Hawthorne Studies. They emphasized that both formal and informal types of organization are significant in this approach.

Another contribution of neo-classical thinkers is the behavioural method that is used in this theory. The foundations of classical theory, such as division of labour, departmenting, coordination, and human behaviour, were assumed as given (Stacey, 2018). However, these postulates were viewed as changed by people operating individually or within the context of informal organizations. Indeed the organization as a whole is a social structure made up of many interacting pieces. However, the theory focused on the fact that human beings are self-sufficient. Their actions may be predicted based on societal variables at work, and that motivation is a difficult thing to understand (Anderson & Crawford, 1998). It suggested that a variety of socio-psychological variables influences workplace motivation.

Indeed, many theories studied the organizational structures and human behaviour in the work environment. The problem of silence as a behaviour is a consequence of both organization-related factors and individual-related factors. The silence problem could be related to different managerial and social aspects. Among which the aspects that were the focus and examined by organizational theories. The first is the different leadership styles. The manifested style determines individuals' tendency to silence or to participate (Bagheri et al., 2012). The leaders have to communicate in two directions. They must show the readiness to listen to their teams to motivate them to speak up about the work issues or make suggestions. Further explanation on the relationship between leadership style and silence will be shown later.

Another aspect is communication channels. Effective communication between employees and managers helps managers and employees identify the issues and the opportunities for career and personal development within the organization - meaning they can stay motivated and positive about their future (Thompson & Prottas, 2006). In contrast, interrupted communication within the organization is one of the main reasons for the silence issue. Some individuals do not want to discuss work issues face to face. Some feel good with written communication, and some others prefer visual channels (Kandlousi et al., 2010). Thus, failure to afford different communication channels is critical in the silence problem. Also, Individual behaviour is influenced by group behaviour. An individual's work, job satisfaction, and contribution level are influenced by the group in which he moves (Amazt & Idris, 2011). Thus, the readiness to share their thoughts and suggestions or speak up about work-related issues is low when they do not find support or feel that all are ignoring mistakes and problems and no one speaks.

## **2.2 Silence/voice behaviour and important managerial terms**

The main idea about much of the employee silence-related research is that employees' silence could harm and hinder improvement. Just what is considered an enhancement or improvement is a matter of perspective. Indeed, any improvement needs to hear well for the surrounding. Hirschman (1970) was one of the early scholars to search the employees' voice behaviour. He focused on silence/exit and voice. In response to personal desire or organizational matter, organization members can follow three options: exit, voice, or loyalty. Some employees leave the organization or contribute less this is the exit option. The employees can also express their work-related feeling directly to management, or to a higher authority or by protests addressed

to those interested in listening "voice option". The employee voice is any endeavour to change rather than ignoring an objectionable state of affairs, whether through individual or collective petition to those directly in charge, through appeal to push a higher authority to change. According to Hirschman, voice "can be graduated, all the way from a faint grumbling to violent protest; it implies articulation of one's critical opinions" (p. 16).

In management research, individuals voice or silence behaviour has been linked to several aspects. For example, individuals perceptions of fairness have been examined and linked to organizational justice. This term was coined in 1987 by Greenberg to indicate people's perceptions of fairness at the workplace. Justice has previously been linked to several important organizational terms, to mention a few, organizational commitment (Greenberg, 1990), trust in management (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994), turnover (Jones & Skarlicki, 2003), and citizenship behaviour (Konovsky & Organ, 1996), physical and psychological withdrawal (Conlon et al., 2005). Indeed of the important findings in organizational justice studies is that providing an opportunity to speak up enhance the feeling of fairness in procedures. As it is indicated in the justice literature, the voice effect may make a work environment appear fairer because the ability to be heard allows participants to have a say in the outcome. On the other hand, voice has been proved in research to be beneficial (Lind et al., 1990).

Another term linked to employees voice behaviour is "whistle-blowing". It became popular as a result of increasing corporate scandals. This behaviour has been the focus of research back over 40 years. Whistle-blowing is used to indicate the state of speaking up when organizational members report a negative issue or wrongdoing to their higher-ups who can take action (Near & Miceli, 1985). Voice differs from protective behaviours such as whistle-blowing (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). Whistle-blowing seeks to stop a negative activity or behaviour, while voice tries to encourage good change in some contexts. Employee voice is centred solely on expressing work-related thoughts and opinions, whereas whistle-blowing conveys an ethical dimension in relation to some major wrongdoing.

Although not "employee voice" in the strict sense as LePine & Van Dyne (1998) defined, whistle-blowing has become the focus of much academic attention. Whistle-blowing has become the attention of much public and academic interest, despite not being an "employee voice" in the technical sense described by LePine & Van Dyne (1998). When former Enron

chairman and CEO Kenneth Lay's problematic accounting methods were uncovered in 2002, Sharon Watkins, an Enron employee, became one of the most well-known corporate whistle-blowers. While incidents like this have acquired attention, organizational ethics standards have encouraged this type of employee disclosure. Over two-thirds of U.S. organizations push their employees to report any ethical failings, rules violations, or other forms of misconduct, according to Barry (2007). However, whether or not organizations encourage employees to blow the whistle is a controversial issue. General Electric CEO Jack Welch states that two words that never seem to go together are "happy" and "whistle-blower," suggesting that one of the benefits of happy employees is that they are less likely to blow the whistle. Obviously, there is a potential benefit to an organization if it can rectify problems before they get aggravated, but all too commonly, organizations do not appear to want to solve these difficulties, leaving angry employees with no choice but to make the situation public.

Employee voice behaviour has also been studied from the standpoint of principled organizational dissent (Graham, 1986). Inside an organization, principled organizational dissent (POD) deals with a conscientious objection to abuses of legal or social norms. Graham presents a typology of six distinct types of principled organizational dissent. POD has two forms of silent dissent: one in which the individual remains silent and stays in the group, and the other in which the individual quietly exits the group. The other four voice-based types of POD are contrasted not just by whether the individual decides to stay or quit but also by whether the tool and channel for expressing voice are internal or external. These types include internal-stay, internal-leave, external-stay, and exit with public pressure. The first is a protest or internal improvement effort utilizing only internal channels. The second indicates reasons for resignation as an exit choice. The third is internal change effort that uses external channels to push for change. The last one is a departure with public protest. The last two types of behaviour, according to Graham, are examples of whistle-blowing.

Moreover, employee complaining was explored by Kowalski, (1996), who found that this topic had gotten remarkably little scholarly attention. He defined 25 expressions of frustration or dissatisfaction, whether personally experienced or not, with the intention of releasing emotions, fulfilling intrapsychic goals, or both," according to (Kowalski, 1996, p.179).

Kowalski & Cantrell (2002) proposed a model of raising issues that explain the predicted relationship between self-focus, the perceived value of reporting a problem, and actual complaining behaviour. According to Kowalski, complaining is a common type of interpersonal communication that occurs when organizational members believe the costs of complaining are low or when the level of dissatisfaction is higher. Not all complaints, according to Kowalski, are indications of frustration. Satisfied individuals may complain in order to acquire intrapersonal objectives such as tolerance or attention.

Kowalski looked into other potential benefits of complaining more recently. She claims that expressing the worries and issues allows individuals to vent, get their concerns off their chest, and feel better. Additionally, it takes work to limit or block ideas, emotions, and behaviours. Complaining might help someone release these inhibitions and promote his/her physical and mental wellbeing. She also believes that complaining can help to reduce other barriers of expression that can emerge when complaining is suppressed. Persons who voiced their dissatisfaction to the individual with whom they were unsatisfied indicated that they are attached to that person more and that they overall viewed the relationship more positively than people who expressed their complaint to a third party or wrote narratives about it (Kowalski & Cantrell, 2002).

In research of bystander involvement in emergency situations, Latane & Darley (1968) found that "diffusion of responsibility" was a key reason for remaining mute. According to Latane and Darley, if a person is alone when an emergency occurs, he is completely responsible for dealing with it. He may feel that his own accountability for taking action is less if he knows others are also present, making him less willing to assist. The Kitty Genovese murder in New York City in 1964 is a famous example of this phenomena, in which 38 people saw a murder from their various apartments yet did nothing. Because the witnesses could see other individuals seeing the crime, they all assumed that someone else would intervene, and hence no one intervened to save her. Although "diffusion of responsibility" has gotten little attention in recent silence research, it is possible that it is a widespread driver of keeping silent inside the workplace, and therefore it needs greater investigation.

Another concept that could be linked to silence/voice behaviour "MUM effect". Rosen & Tesser (1970, p. 254) coined the term (keeping Mum about Unwanted Messages) to describe another

perspective on silence. The MUM effect (Conlee & Tesser, 1973) highlights people's general disfavour in conveying negative feedback due to the inconvenience associated with doing so, and it has been proposed as one possible reason why employees fail to speak out about workplace issues (Milliken et al., 2003). Researchers have discovered that a concern of hurting one's relationship with recipients (Morran et al., 1991), as well as guilt associated with not sharing recipients' misery, contribute to this reluctance to share unpleasant news (Tesser & Rosen, 1972). Differences in status and authority appear to amplify the MUM effect in the workplace. Many studies have revealed that employees are more hesitant to raise concerns about possible problems or misbehaviour to their superiors than to their coworkers or subordinates and that they hide or misrepresent information to mitigate the negative consequences (O'Reilly & Roberts, 1974).

In their study of employees silence, Bowen & Blackmon (2003) looked at the concept of contagion. They claim in their research on vertical silence that it can extend across situations, with a decision to remain silent on one situation increases the chances of being silent on other vital situations or issues. They argue that keeping silent about personal matters could spread because it weakens the bonds that one has with other employees of the organization. These strained relations contribute to a loss of trust and, as a result, a lack of readiness to speak out on other concerns.

However, organizations members often prefer to remain silent or are hesitant to share work-related issues with their superiors. Employees may be reluctant because they are worried that their superiors would misinterpret their engagement or because they are afraid of confrontation with management. (Ryan & Oestreich, 1993). This silence or hesitation in speaking up conceals a great deal of information and important details that could negatively impact the organization's decision-making process, hindering the process of correcting deviations from plans and distorting relationships and trust between its members (Beer & Eisenstat, 2000; Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Tamuz, 2001).

Avoiding transferring information or being uncomfortable with it, especially negative information, is a widespread occurrence in organizations (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). Employees are often hesitant to disclose sensitive work difficulties and problems with their superior. Even when individuals are required to communicate unfavourable news and

information to higher levels of an organization, they often transmit it incomplete or misleading in order to lessen the negative impact. (Fapohunda, 2016). Because of the obfuscation and distortion of information outlined above, decision-makers may be deprived of much of the knowledge and facts they require, raising the risk of making incorrect or conflicting decisions. (Fan et al., 2002).

Although the problem of organizational silence is a modern concept, many studies have dealt with it indirectly as an organizational behaviour before it appears in its current form as an organizational problem. Previous research examined sexual harassment and its aggravation due to lack of reporting and silence. The research linked this problem to some factors, including inappropriate organizational policies, administrative inefficiency and the nature of the administration's responses which could be ignorance or the so-called "*Deaf Ear Syndrome*" (Peirce et al., 1998). It functions as an organizational norm to discourage employees' open and direct expression of their dissatisfaction (Peirce et al., 1998). Despite the fact that this study was intended to address sexual harassment, it did so in a way that pointed to the silence and prompted a conversation about its reasons. Also, research on social ostracism and non-mixing as a punishment for unwanted behaviour mentioned ostracism as a form of silence. The organization exercises a kind of punishment for employees' mistakes by isolating and not talking to them (Huang et al., 2005). Even though silence here was indicated as a disciplinary action, this ostracism could become a source of fear in the future. It may encourage employees to avoid discussing work-related difficulties; studies conducted after the emergence of the organizational silence paradigm discovered that fear of isolation and disruption of social relationships are the primary motivators for people to remain silent (Cortina & Magley, 2003).

The silence remained hidden in the folds of the studied issues until Morrison & Milliken (2000) came up with the concept of silence to refer to the phenomenon in which the staff decides to keep silent and not share information, opinions, and concerns on their works. Their findings differed from previous researches in two main aspects. First, it explicitly raised the concept of organizational silence for the first time to indicate employees' silence at the workplace. The second point is that their research looks at silence at both the group and individual levels, as opposed to earlier studies that only looked at the individual level. They stated that individual silence might turn into collective behaviour if the causes were not eliminated, especially those



related to the work environment. This research was the spark that inflamed the curiosity of those interested in studying organizational behaviour and led to an increase in researches on the silence issue.

Researchers have defined organizational silence as the absence of the workers' voice and the abstaining from sharing their ideas and opinions concerning the organization's workflow and development (Dimitris & Vakola, 2007). It has also been defined as a deliberate obstruction of ideas and information on work issues and problems (Beheshtifar et al., 2012). Studies mentioned many factors of silence in organizations. They classified them by their source into two categories: personal and organizational factors (Akbarian et al., 2015; Milliken et al., 2003). However, these factors are dynamic and vary depending on the employee's beliefs, values and culture, organizational practices, and managerial issues' sensitivity (Brinsfield, 2013). The decision-making process is considered one of the most sensitive administrative functions in an organization.

Silence is a problem that arises due to the fear of talking on the issues, or it may come from the awareness of the staff that the un-debatable issues in the organization cover such broad area, for instance, the decision-making procedures, the organizational inefficacy or the decrease in performance level (Ryan & Oestreich, 1993). Therefore, many studies were conducted to investigate the causes and identify the factors leading to silence. The studies found that there are two sources of silence factors: the first is related to the organizational factors such as the prevailing leadership styles or the way of using the authority, managers fear of negative feedback, lack of trust in management, and the organizational policies and structures (Jain, 2015; Pinder & Harlos, 2001; Zehir & Erdogan, 2011). The second source is the personal factors of the staff, which are related to differences in their values, beliefs, cultural and social level, and their abilities to perceive the environment and the events (Dyne et al., 2003; Pinder & Harlos, 2001; Robbins, 2001; Willman et al., 2006). Among the identified factors the employees' acquiescence and fear of unexpected reactions on their participation, in addition to reasons related to self-defence and protection, the positive social tendency to keep the relations among the individuals, the low self-esteem, lack of experience and the inability to influence the course of action and change (Alparslan et al., 2010; Dyne et al., 2003; Milliken et al., 2003; Perlow & Repenning, 2009; Pinder & Harlos, 2001).

Studies have increased and searched more in-depth the silence issue. Researchers discussed the relation between this problem and many important management concepts like organizational loyalty. Huang et al., 2005 found there is an inverse relationship between the two concepts; the employees' feeling that their views are not welcomed or they are not allowed to express them could have a negative effect on their loyalty and the sense of responsibility towards the organization (Çınar et al., 2013). Thus, the organization lose access to lots of information, feedback, new ideas and solutions, which result in the inability to change and develop (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). Researches also reported many negative effects of silence like the decrease in the quality of organizational decisions, the decrease in the organizational learning levels, and the lack of negative feedback, which results in an inability to detect and address the work-related problems (Bagheri et al., 2012; Timming & Johnstone, 2015). Moreover, employee's voice linked to organizational learning (OL) and many important outcomes such as innovation and development (Ahuja & Lampert, 2001), diversifications and foreign entries (Barkema et al., 1996; Hayward, 2002), enhanced customer orientation (Hult et al., 2000), and the success of information systems (Caron et al., 1994; Robey & Sahay, 1996).

OL researchers agree that learning within the organizations occurs at three different levels: the individual, the group, and the organizational level. In general, to make organizational learning occur and have a wide organizational impact, individual-level knowledge must be either transferred or shared (King et al., 2008). Knowledge is often stored and transferred through computerized knowledge management systems. The effectiveness of knowledge systems is affected by individuals' readiness to share their ideas with others, but it is also affected by employees' willingness to share their knowledge formally. However, learning must occur at the team and individual level for organizational learning to occur, bearing in mind that learning at these levels does not guarantee that organizational learning will occur. OL is based on information and knowledge sharing among organization members. Argyris (1977) noted that employees' failure to speak up about work issues to their superiors is a frequent impediment to organizational learning. This type of silence blocks organizations from determining, correcting, and learning from their mistakes (Detert & Burris, 2007; Morrison & Milliken, 2000). Individuals readiness to speak up is critical for learning at the team. Edmondson, 2003 indicated that the perceived ability to speak up is critical for the new practices in teams. Teams whose

members speak their observations, questions, and concerns freely are more capable of learning new routines than those in which members are unwilling to share their thoughts.

In light of the previous definitions and studies, the researcher defines silence towards the decision-making process as a deliberate withholding of decision-related information including; presenting solutions, offering opinions on solutions, assisting in selecting the best among them, or reporting the level of implementation effectiveness. This definition serves the research since it addresses the stages of the decision-making process; precisely, it is the definition of silence towards the decision-making process.

### **2.3 Factors exploration-focused previous studies**

Any problems within organizations take time before it crystallizes and become an organizational issue; it starts small and is aggravated by time if not solved. The silence problem does not appear suddenly but crystallizes in several stages, as some researchers pointed out. Different trends appeared on how silence emerges. Rusch (2005) identified two general trends in the manifestation of silence at the workplace. The first trend is communicational, in which the problem of silence begins to crystallize when the lower levels are excluded and are not engaged in work-related decisions. Accordingly, the decisions are made at the top levels of the hierarchy, which leads to an absence of desirable practices like teamwork. The other trend is the motivational tendency, focusing on the silence that comes due to the inefficiency of the workers, lack of confidence in their ability to perform the tasks, and the feeling of inability to influence the work, which affects the motivation of the individuals towards contribution (Deniz et al., 2013). These factors varied in existence from one study to another. Some factors emerged in some studies, while others did not appear. The researcher justifies these differences by the nature of the situation or the administrative concept linked to the silence problem. However, the studies varied based on their focus. Some searched the overall silence factors while the others have chosen to be either organizational or individual focused.

Morrison & Milliken (2000) identified in their model the contextual elements that promote silence. They investigated the communal sensemaking dynamics that can lead to a common belief that speaking up is risky. They also talked about some of the detrimental effects of systematic silence, particularly on organizations' ability to grow and adapt in a pluralistic

environment. According to their model, when managers adhere to rules and regulations that promote silence, it becomes difficult for the organization to respond correctly to the growing diversity of values, beliefs, and characteristics in the workforce. The more these discrepancies "pull" in opposite ways, the more the organization "pushes" back against them. This attitude will be unconscious. It will be driven by the organization's implicit set of assumptions. The processes that create and promote silence are problematic because they are shielded from view. Although the underlying dynamics that cause not to speak might cause plenty of issues for an organization, the causes for these consequences are likely to be vague. Thus, problems may mount within businesses overwhelmed by silence to the point that they can no longer be hidden. Thus, it may be concluded that the organization suffers from management misconduct.

Morrison & Milliken work provided the foundation for the Bagheri et al. (2012) study model. They had chosen to broaden their work not to include only contextual factors, but they looked at corporate silence as a "collective" phenomena and grouped these aspects into levels of evaluation. (1) Management characteristics, (2) Internal and external environment qualities, (3) Influencing employee interaction, (4) Managerial confidence, (5) Organizational systems and strategies, (6) Managements' avoidance of negative feedback, and (7) Demographic dissimilarity are all factors that influence employee interaction. In their summary, leaders must have a readiness to comprehend the dynamics of the socio-technical processes in which they participate and be able to speak up and break the silence. It was concluded that collaboration is crucial to an organization's progress, as is knowledge leadership, the proposed structure, and finally, the creation of a healthy and stable environment in which workers' ideas and feedback can be received.

Pinder & Harlos, (2001) also tried to understand the silence behaviour in its bigger image They presented the term of employee silence and two associated modes of silence (quiescence and acquiescence) and their behavioural, affective, and cognitive elements. They present the idea of employee silence and its two associated aspects (quiescence and acquiescence), as well as their behavioural, affective, and cognitive elements. According to their study of diverse literature, silence can interact, and it is accompanied by distinct thoughts, emotions, and behaviour. They also sought to not only maintain the concept's complexity but also to extend its conceptualization

considering the complexities of human behaviour and the vagaries of corporate existence throughout their study.

However, (Dyne et al., 2003) suggested that employees silence and voice are better understood as distinct, multidimensional structures, according to their conceptual structure. They distinguished three categories of silence (Silence, Defensive, Acquiescent, and ProSocial Silence) and three types of sound (Acquiescent, Defensive, and ProSocial Voice) based on employee motivations, where hiding sensitive details is more than just the absence of voice. Their study indicated, based on this conceptual context, that silence and voice have different effects on workers in the workplace. They presented a set of assumptions predicting that silence is vaguer than speaking, based on essential differences in the explicit behavioural signs given by silence and voice. Silence motives are more likely to be misattributed by observers than employee motives for speech. Misattributions for motives beyond silence will end in more unrelated outcomes for employees than for voice (both positive and negative).

Also, Whiteside & Barclay (2013) investigated overall acquiescent (i.e., futile quiet) and quiescent (i.e., silence motivated by fear of sanctions) as predictors of silence. They investigated overall acquiescence (i.e., the futility of speaking) and quiescence (i.e., silence motivated by fear of sanctions) as predictors of silence. Among the findings, overall justice is a strong predictor of both forms of silence in organizations. They also stated that the consequences of silence extend beyond the limiting of information exchange at the workplace to include employee outcomes. In particular, Acquiescence-based silence moderated the association between overall justice assessments and emotional stress, psychological withdrawal, physical withdrawal, and performance, partially or entirely. With the exception of performance, quiescent partially moderated these associations.

At the internal level of organizations, Khalid & Ahmed (2016) examined the link between employee silence behaviour and perceived organizational politics, which is an essential contextual component. They focused on the main motivations underlying employees' silence. It also looked at whether or not a supervisor's trust may be used to influence the relationship. They found that corporate politics and individuals silence motives had a positive relationship. Furthermore, they found that employees hide information due to relational, diffident, defensive, withdrawal, ineffectual, and deviant motivations.

Other important studies focused on the leadership style role in the silence problem. Zehir & Erdogan (2011) research examined the relationship between silence and ethical leadership behaviour. They have looked at job efficiency using leaders personal and contextual factors. They found that leaders have an influence on employees' decisions about speaking up or choosing to remain silent. Leaders' actions play a significant role in the issue of silence. In terms of leadership style, they indicated that ethical leadership provides guidance to staff, allowing them to feel more secure in speaking up or being proactive. They concluded that leaders must embody ethical leadership in their everyday behaviours, choices, and deeds. The findings of their research support the claim that ethical leadership leads to better outcomes. Also, Guenter et al. (2017) suggested that leadership can help break speaking barriers in a group, but this may not be the case for all employees. Using the behavioural plasticity assumption, they suggested that authentic leadership—a compilation of leadership practices in which leaders show their true selves—reduces silence and motivates speaking up in individuals with a low proactive personality. In contrast, it has little effect on proactive employees who are less sensitive to social factors. They came to the conclusion that individuals with a low proactive personality are more vulnerable to external influences, such as their bosses' attempts at social control. They are more vulnerable to the effects of contextual silence factors.

Rafferty & Restubog (2011) found a broader set of factors that connect leadership style and coercive monitoring to two organizational citizenship behaviours: prosocial silence and prosocial voice. The identified factors are related to interactional justice, organizational and personal-based self-esteem and the value of work. Also, abuse of authority was found to be negatively correlated with subordinates views of interactional fairness, which was tested to be negatively correlated with manager prosocial voice attitudes. Furthermore, abusive management was adversely correlated to subordinates perceptions that they are doing meaningful work and with organizational-based self-esteem, all of which were negatively affected by self-rated prosocial silence. The emphasis of their research is on the consequences of coercive supervision's implicit costs in the workplace. In contrast, Timming & Johnstone (2015) showed that even with democratic and ethical leadership style, some individuals would not speak up or convey their thoughts. Their study aimed to clarify why some staff refuse to participate in decision-making on principle, choosing to adhere to managerial authority and stay silent. It

argued some individuals have personality traits that make them more prone to anti-democratic thinking. The results predicted that people with potentially fascistic attitudes would enjoy submitting to management's desires.

Going broader, Rhee et al. (2014) studied the correlations between power distance, socialism, punishment, and a multidimensional sense of silence. They observed that power distance caused acquiescent-based silence, but that distance did not affect defensive silence. Their research findings revealed that in workplaces, power distance orientation generated acquiescent quiet among employees. Employees passively suppress thoughts about solutions to issues when bosses repeatedly use authority and power while dealing with subordinates. Second, their findings showed that power disparity did not cause people to hide work-related concerns out of fear. In other words, despite managers' continuous use of authority and power while dealing with employees, staff did not suppress crucial information out of fear or self-protection.

Despite the vital role of the organizational factors, the personal factors play a critical role in the silence problem. They have been the focus of many studies besides the organizational ones. Detert & Burris (2007) tested looked at the interconnections between openness and subordinate enhancement-oriented voice and two types of transition-oriented leadership (transformational and managerial). Given treatments for multiple individual characteristics in subordinates' personality, contentment, and work demographics, the findings suggested openness is more persistently connected to voice. The relevance of leaders in the subordinate assessment of the dangers of speaking up is demonstrated by the fact that this relation is mediated by subordinate judgments of psychological safety. Also, they concluded that the best-performing employees' voice behaviour is most influenced by leadership behaviours.

Jain (2015) examined the dimensions of individuals silence in the Indian workplace, especially regarding managers' personalities, to clarify and understand silence. Their study looked at the relevance factors of superior-subordinate relationships and self-image preservation perspectives in the Indian cultural and social sense. According to the study findings, there are four main dimensions of silence under which the silence factors fall: fear of retribution, internal motivation, self-competence, and self-image.

In more individual-oriented studies, Bisel & Arterburn (2012) offered a sensemaking-resource model of individuals silence in their research. According to the comparative analysis they have done, workers justified their silence as a suitable course of action by depending on two sensemaking resources: expectancy and identification. They discovered five explanations for being silent: (a) anticipating danger to themselves, (b) perception of the supervisor as responsible, (c) doubting their own knowledge, (d) anticipating supervisors' deafness, and (e) Inappropriate timing as inconvenient. Also, Brinsfield (2013) investigated silence motivations and assessed their nature and breadth. He created and tested their factor structure. Furthermore, the correlations between the developed measures and other characteristics (employee voice, psychological health, conscientiousness, extraversion) were investigated. His findings revealed that the data indicated six characteristics of silence reasons (ineffective, social, defensive, diffident, disengagement, and deviant), which can be accurately quantified and add added value to understanding and measuring employee silence.

However, the employees' silence and the organizational silence indicate the same meaning in the literature. The researcher believes that the first concept focuses more on silence at the individual level and associated with personal related factors. In contrast, the second concept is more comprehensive and more in-depth because it deals with silence as an organizational phenomenon due to many factors related, primarily, to the organization itself, and the factors related to the personal qualities and the readiness of individuals within the organization for silence on the other hand.

Table 1 shows the identified factors and the two main sources for them based on the mentioned studies



Table 1.1: The organizational and personal factors of silence

Source of factors		Organizational factors				Personal factors				
Reference	Abusing of formal authority	Lack of management support	Lack of trust	Injustice	Fear of negative reactions	Lack of self-esteem	Prosocial silence	Diffident Silence	Psychological withdrawal	Deviant silence
Morrison & Milliken, 2000	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Dyne et al., 2003						X	X	X		
Guenter et al., 2017	X	X	X							
Jain, 2015	X		X			X	X			
Timming & Johnstone, 2015	X	X		X	X	X				
Zehir & Erdogan, 2011	X	X			X	X		X		
Rafferty & Restubog, 2011	X			X				X	X	
Bagheri et al., 2012	X	X	X	X						
Pinder & Harlos, 2001		X	X		X	X		X	X	
Detert & Burris, 2007	X	X			X					
Whiteside & Barclay, 2013		X		X		X			X	
Rhee et al., 2014	X				X	X	X	X	X	
Brinsfield, 2013					X		X	X	X	X
Khalid & Ahmed, 2016					X	X	X	X	X	
Bisel & Arterburn, 2012		X	X		X	X		X	X	

Prepared by the researcher

The table shows the main silence factors categorized into two groups: the first being the personal factors and the second being organizational factors. The related literature defined these factors, both in the context of silence or as organizational behaviour.

## **2.4 Organizational/contextual factors**

### *2.4.1 Formal authority abuse*

Another organizational factor is the abuse of formal authority. Abusing power indicates that the organization's decision-makers lack leadership qualities, which cause them to rely more on the position authority to get the work done (Baghurst & Stincelli, 2014). Authority differences resulted from hierarchy could interrupt and distort communication (Dessein, 2002). Thus, if there is a distance between the employees and managers, employees prefer to remain silent. There is evidence to say that authority abuse directly impacts and lowers the ability to speak freely (Timming & Johnstone, 2015). The monopoly of power and directive communication by a manager lead to employees' dissatisfaction and, in some cases, the decision not to participate (Hong et al., 2012). Individuals who feel they have power over their work are more likely to contribute to the decisions and change, as both are consistent with democratic organizational practices. In organizations with no democratic management practices, managers are likely to closely control all aspects, and staff members are unlikely to control their work (Dolatabadi & Safa, 2010; Stohl & Cheney, 2001). As a solution, a manager might advocate an open-door policy, giving opportunities to discuss issues. When leaders accept good and bad news and foster openness in their organizations, employees would be more satisfied with their jobs and contribute more (Kandlousi et al., 2010).

### *2.4.2 Lack of support*

Lack of management support is also an essential factor of silence. It suggests that the management solely takes the decisions, and the organization lacks a supportive and participatory environment to empower and encourage staff participation (Dedahanov & Rhee, 2015). A supportive environment refers to the environment that allows sharing positive messages related to encouragement and confidence, for instance, positive feedback, constructive criticism, praise, and interest in staff's opinions (Li & Ling, 2010). Upward and horizontal supportive communication is also related to silence. The absence of support has an impact and inversely associated with willingness to speak (Thompson & Protas, 2006). Staff members should have

opportunities to interact with one another, upward and downward, as this may provide more opportunities for supportive communication through social contact and sharing of concerns. The past studies suggested that a supportive environment facilitates the development of new competencies or sharpen existing ones; still, the advancement of general competencies drives individual effectiveness expressed by job satisfaction (Lam et al., 2001). Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that the managers to maintain supportive structures by which these types of supporting communication may flow.

#### *2.4.3 Mistrust*

Another critical factor is "Mistrust". Managers implicitly believe that individuals are untrustworthy and following their self-interest (Khalid & Ahmed, 2016). This reminds us of Theory X (McGregor, 1960), which assumes that employees are selfish and their efforts aim to maximize their benefits. Also, the belief that managers know more about most work-related issues within the organization is a form of mistrust. Therefore, when negative feedback flows from lower levels rather than from upper levels, it is taken as less accurate and threatening to one's authority and credibility. The repeated doubts on the reliability of information presented, exposing the person's privacy when gives information, or even the superiors are not taking the presented information or participation seriously, all could cause the mistrust to arise as one of the organizational factors (Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Pinder & Harlos, 2001). Thus, fear and mistrusting feedback push the managers to adopt practices that block vertical communication from the lower levels. On the horizontal level, individuals' feelings will be influenced by how reliable and trustworthy the information they present is perceived, and vice versa. Low trust among colleagues could result in less information being communicated. Organizational trust and decisions to keep quiet are founded to have a significant and adverse relationship (Khalid & Ahmed, 2016). Therefore, satisfaction with colleagues encourages the exchange of support between peers (Ducharme & Martin, 2000). Managers must establish a trustful environment where employees know that their feedback is important, even if harmful.

#### *2.4.4 Injustice*

Perceived justice, especially procedural justice, can be critical in employees' decision to speak up the organizational issues. Individuals' perceptions of fairness have been examined within the organizational context referred to as organizational justice. Greenberg, 1987 used this term first

to refer to employee's perceptions of fairness in organizations. Organizational justice indicates how fairly employees are treated at the workplace (Altahayneh et al., 2014). Justice is related to a fair distribution of organizational resources among employees (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009). The resources could be salary, rewards, promotion, appreciation, honest feedback, and prestige. These resources lead employees to feel respected and sincerely treated, which leads to a more robust perception of justice (Burton, 2008). In contrast, when employees' feel that resources are not distributed in proportion to their contribution to the organization, they develop a feeling of injustice (Fortin, 2008). One of the most robust findings in organizational justice research is that having a chance to be heard increases the perception that procedures are fair. Studies have shown that voice can increase employees' perceptions of justice even if they know that they cannot change. This is due to the feeling that the organization values them (Lind et al., 1990). Research on justice also showed that organization members evaluate the work environment more favourably when it allows for employee participation equally, even when this participation does not substantially impact the work (Tan, 2014). Employees feel unvalued when they perceive that they cannot express their views openly. Also, individuals feel underestimated once they perceive that they, compared with fellows, are not allowed openly to share their opinions. Indeed, employees think their organization does not value them, and they will be less likely to speak or contribute to the decisions (Berdahl & Martorana, 2006). Injustice could affect employees' ability to express themselves, which affects their satisfaction and self-esteem (Cropanzano et al., 2001; E. Rupp, 2011). Therefore, injustice is considered to be directly an organizational factor.

#### *2.4.5 Fear of negative reactions*

Fear of negative reactions, as one of the organization-related factors, could drive the employees to hide and not to share information and news, especially the bad ones, to avoid the possible negative effects on them or their career (Timming & Johnstone, 2015). This self-protection motive might be based on the fear of punishment, endangering the job situation, or taking responsibility for the problem (Rhee et al., 2014). The employee who is afraid of his manager chooses to remain silent or speak less instead of direct communication (Ehtiyar & Yanardağ, 2008). Thus, the natural communication atmosphere will take an unrealized or incomplete formal communication place, and there will be inaccurate information flow to irrelevant people (Kandlousi et al., 2010). Top managers' fear of negative feedback, especially from subordinates,

is also a reason for not speaking. Superiors often feel threatened by negative feedback, and as a result, they try to avoid it (Dolatabadi & Safa, 2010).

## **2.5 Personal factors**

### *2.5.1 Lack of Self-esteem*

Employee self-esteem is one of the personal attributes that consistently improves the understanding of organizational behaviour on the job, mostly determined by an employee's organizational experiences (Tetteh et al., 2019). Self-esteem is a person's overall sense of self-worth; it is an assessment of individuals' competencies and their value by their colleagues (Chen et al., 2016). The motives related to lack of self-esteem come when individuals underestimate their ability, the importance of their participation, or even feel that the job position or the social status is lower than the colleagues (Amah & Okafor, 2008). However, employees who consider themselves to be worthy and valuable in general are more likely to believe that they are valuable in their workplace (Bowling et al., 2010). Thus, they are more confident to participate and speak.

### *2.5.2 The prosocial factor*

Withholding work-related ideas, information, or opinions to benefit other people or protect a colleague is referred to as a prosocial factor (Dyne et al., 2003). The individual believes that he/she is providing the other party with a favour (Rhee et al., 2014). Hence, individuals concerned with their community's unity and stability will attempt to benefit that community by concealing information that may negatively affect it, for example, not reporting how late a fellow employee arrived to work due to a good relationship.

### *2.5.3 Diffident factor*

Furthermore, diffident is an essential factor, where the silence is based on social anxiety and overthinking the others' perceptions about the individual's participation or behaviour (Pacheco et al., 2015). The diffident is a feeling of insecurity, self-doubt, uncertainty in respect of a situation and what to say—this kind of silence results from the fear of suffering embarrassment. Diffident silence is a form of passive behaviour characterized by timidity and withdrawal (Bagheri et al., 2012). Brinsfield's studies (2009, 2013) mentioned diffident silence to indicate individuals' insecurities, uncertainty, and self-doubt in a situation. Brinsfield (2013) also mentioned that there might be an overlap between the silence resulted from diffident and

defensive since both types of silence the employee tries to avoid negative reactions. The shy individual finds difficulty defending his/her thoughts or communicating disagreement (Tetteh et al., 2019). This kind of silence may encourage others to take advantage and to ignore him/her, especially superiors. This passive behaviour could result in the loss of individuals' ability to express themselves. The person engaged in that kind of behaviour may feel disrespected and later regret acting that way (Loureiro & Kastenholz, 2011).

#### *2.5.4 Psychological withdrawal*

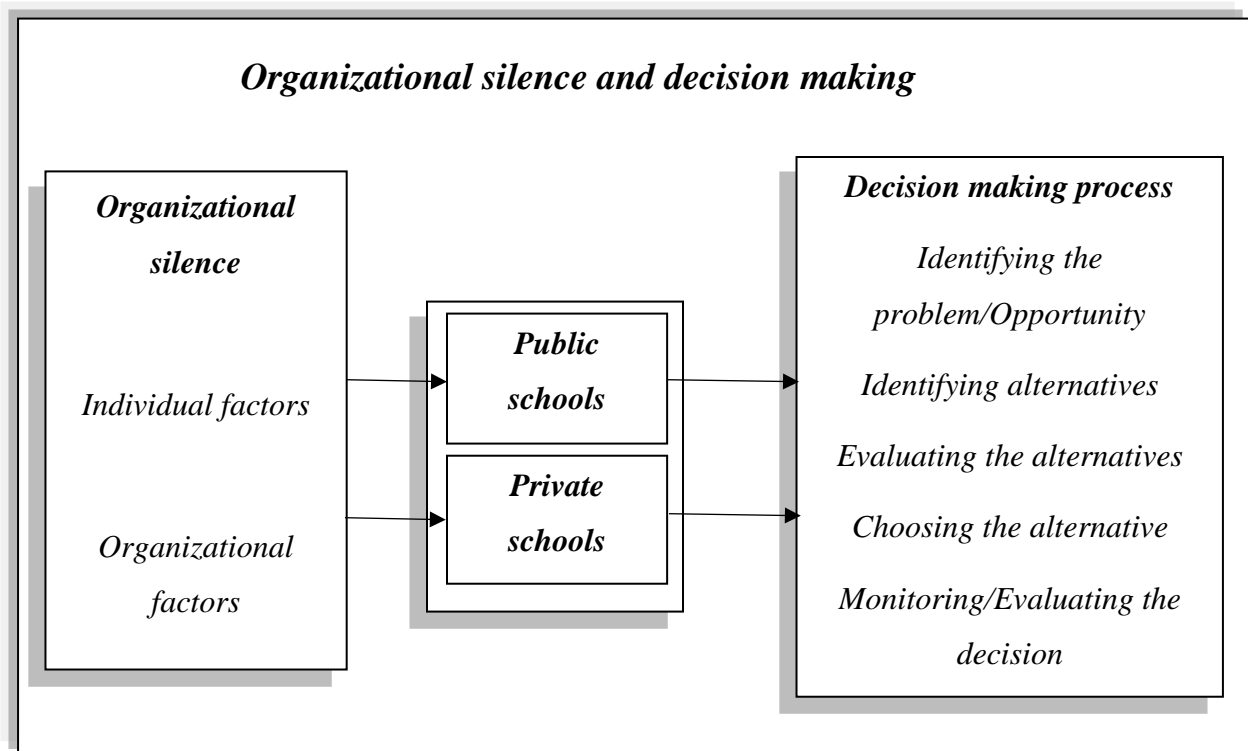
The psychological withdrawal could also lead to silence; it is usually due to the feeling of not belonging to the workplace, the job is not corresponding to the employee's ambitions, or the willingness to quit work (Whiteside & Barclay, 2013). One aspect of the withdrawal silence described by Pinder & Harlos (2001) is that an employee has given up hope for improving an unsatisfactory situation or circumstance. This hopelessness may lead to suffering in silence and feeling that speaking up is pointless, thus pushing the employee into further states of withdrawal and disengagement. The previous research has found that employees may remain silent as a means of disengaging from work. Additionally, this previous work has also shown that it may only be a sign before employees stop speaking concerns and decide to leave the organization (Morrison & Milliken, 2000)

#### *2.5.5 Deviant factor*

One non-familiar but exists, the deviant silence reflects the intention to harm the organization or a colleague (Milliken et al., 2003). The employee remains silent to make their superior or colleague decide wrong (Tetteh et al., 2019) or keeps silent towards a problem or a danger from a decision to cause that decision to fail. Studying deviant behaviours is important due to the negative impact of these behaviours on organizations and individuals. Deviant behaviour could result in employees stress, less productivity and less commitment, higher turnover rate and absenteeism (Hoel & Salin, 2003; Keashly & Jagatic, 2011). Consequently, the financial costs to organizations increases.

In the shade of the above, the study model is to be as in figure 1.

Figure 1: Study model



Prepared by the researcher

## 2.6 Organizational silence and the Decision-Making Process

For organizations, the decision-making process is a lot more consequential and sophisticated than basic daily decisions. It is a sensitive task that influences the employees' lives, work and the organization's future. However, some researchers put forward the decision-making process as a part of strategic thinking besides the problem-solving strategies since it includes steps and procedures that require higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, assessment, induction, and reasoning (Olson et al., 2007). While some see decision-making as an umbrella under which problem-solving is practised. The problem is a situation that needs a decision (Bennet & Bennet, 2008). Indeed, the researcher supports the last opinion to avoid the separation of decision-making from problem-solving since the latter is only part of the larger picture, which is the decision.

The researchers presented some different close definitions for the decision-making process. They mostly agreed that the decision-making process is a set of sequential steps that follow a specific pattern to address a problem. However, the decision itself is a choice that is being

preferred from among two or more possible alternatives to solve a given problem (Kahneman & Tversky, 2013). Thus, the decision-making process is a course of actions taken in deciding on the best among two or more possible alternatives (Klein, 2008). A broader definition of decision making is the process of choosing from two or more alternatives, according to steps starting with defining the problem, identifying and evaluating alternatives, selecting the most appropriate alternative, and ensuring its effectiveness in light of the feedback and the results (Bennet & Bennet, 2008; Marusich et al., 2016; Olson et al., 2007). However, the researcher agrees with the latest definition that decision-making includes steps and stages rather than dimensions, because of the logical sequence. It is impossible to develop and evaluate alternatives without a real presence of the problem or even choose the alternative before knowing what alternatives are available.

The definitions also emphasized that the "Choice" is the core of the decision process and the range of options are the available alternatives. Thus, the alternatives are two or more options, which must be studied, analyzed and differentiated to choose the most appropriate one to solve a particular problem or deal with a situation. Moreover, the decision should be applicable and feasible for the organization. Therefore it can be applied at the lowest cost and achieve the maximum benefit. This could happen if the decision is taken in light of a comprehensive view of the organization and its surroundings (Edwards & Elwyn, 2009; Mittal & Dhar, 2015). However, decision-makers must balance the risks on their decisions with the expected returns they may bring, and the organizational capacities available.

Organizations' success in achieving objectives depends on the administrative functions' quality, including planning, organizing, directing, staffing, and control (Saaty, 2008). These functions are mainly based on the decision-making process, which requires gathering the most available data and information from their different sources. Hence the silence problem could play a critical role in the success or failure of decisions since it conceals much important information. How is the decision-making process, at its different stages, affected by the problem of organizational silence?

#### *2.6.1 Problem identification and data collection*

The problem is the difficulties that confront us while working to achieve a specific goal or hinder the desired change. It either inhibits access to it and delays it or affects its quality (Rusch, 2005).



The first step in making the right decisions is identifying and understanding the problem facing performance and achievements. The problem could be an opportunity that should be utilized, how to achieve the required results, or even what change we want to have.

Information about the work and employees' issues is critical and sensitive at this stage, especially information from those directly dealt with or affected by these problems. It makes information more accurate and realistic since it comes from field experienced people. Moreover, it makes it easy for decision-makers to understand the problem and formulate it in the form of the question to solve it. Therefore, the availability of accurate information from its primary sources ensures a correct understanding of the problem and avoids wasting time, effort, and money resulting from employing unrealistic solutions and decisions (Edwards & Elwyn, 2009; Marusich et al., 2016). The existence of silence problem and the abstention to report the work problems result in the absence of information or provide incomplete information. It prevents the organization from understanding and identifying problems accurately and makes their datum unclear (Clemmer, 2008). Thus, a decrease in the organization's ability to detect the problems or any symptoms at early stages before they get aggravated and the cost of curing comes greater. To make it more precise, the silence at this stage of the decision-making process could prevent the decision-makers from answering some critical questions, including Where and when does the problem occur? How and why does the problem occur? Why the problem occurs in this way and this timing? For whom does it occur?

#### *2.6.2 Development and evaluation of alternatives*

After identifying the problem and collecting the data on it, the second stage is identifying the available solutions and alternatives (Saaty, 2008). Indeed, the decision-making process is to choose the best from the alternatives, so this phase requires decision-makers to determine and collect more information about all possible alternatives. Thus, they can choose the most satisfactory among them. The meaning of developing and evaluating alternatives, in this context, is to know what are the possible solutions to the subject of the decision and what are the possible options available (Fan et al., 2002). This phase requires careful determination of the feasibility and the necessity to choose one alternative or decision without others, the cons and pros of each alternative, and the extent of acceptance and readiness of the concerned to implement the decision effectively.

The number and quality of the alternatives available depend on some important factors, including the time available to the decision-maker, his/her tendency, and critical thinking ability, as well as the size and quality of information available on what we need and what we can do within the organization's capacities (Fan et al., 2002; Saaty, 2008). This phase relies heavily on having sufficient details. The most important source for such information is the organization member themselves, either by initiating suggestions about the solutions available according to their experiences or asking them for their opinions regarding a problem. Indeed, the importance of such opinions and suggestions comes from its proximity to the truth and work reality. On the contrary, the employees' silence and abstention from proposing solutions to the problems deprive the organization of the opportunity to obtain the largest number of alternatives, which could limit the ability of decision-makers to choose and compare them with what required and with the capacities available (Gambarotto & Cammozzo, 2010). Missing the opportunity to get the required information due to staff silence and unwillingness to participate could increase the likelihood of having a gap between the taken decision and the organization reality. It could increase the risk because of the absence of the field's experiences on decisions, thus not achieving the expected effectiveness. Indeed, the absence of employees' participation in the development of alternatives and solutions makes the decisions more vulnerable to decision-makers' personal attitudes and interests. Employees' silence could lead the management to believe that they are ignorant of the management affairs.

### *2.6.3 Choosing the best solution/alternative*

When it is the time to decide, the decision-makers should be careful in evaluating and determining success possibility and risk with each alternative based on the information gathered in the alternatives' development phase.

There are some criteria to consider when to differentiate and choose among the available alternatives. Such considerations include; the employees' participation, opinions of field specialists since they can decide which alternative is more efficient and effective, and the possibility of achieving the decision's objective (Marusich et al., 2016; Olson et al., 2007; Spencer et al., 2012). Moreover, each alternative implementation speed, with which the decision-maker can compare the required speed to achieve the desired results is also crucial. Therefore, engaging and encouraging the employees to participate in decisions makes

individuals accept and implement them easier and correctly (Mittal & Dhar, 2015). This participation adds respect and appreciation for the social relationships and transactions between the members of the institution.

In contrast, the absence of employees' voice, either coercively by keeping them away from the decision or deliberately, could cause the decisions weak and inefficient (Fan et al., 2002), since the employees may present what is better and less in cost and time than what the decision-makers may have. The silence and lack of participation lead to employees resistance. The decision or change made far from employees' opinions most often does not correspond to reality or does not meet their ambitions; thus, they could reject them (Yao, 2011). Employees' resistance to the decision could have different forms like slow implementation or non-implementing as planned for, or any way that may lead to abort and not achieving the goal of the decision. Moreover, the silence and absence of employees' participation may result in choices and decisions that do not fit their abilities, skills, or knowledge and could lead not to achieve the purpose of the decision.

#### *2.6.4 Follow up on the implementation*

Deciding on the best among the alternatives available, even if the choice is based on sufficient data and in-depth study, does not mean that we guaranteed effective implementation or satisfactory results (Spencer et al., 2012). However, there must be a follow-up on the decision during and after implementation. This stage is no less important than its predecessors; it verifies that the decisions taken are in accordance with the plan, within the budget allocated to them, synchronous with the specified timetable, and to ensure that the skills and requirements needed for the implementation are available (Shapira, 2002).

This stage requires obtaining the most data on the use of resources allocated and the progress towards results; it is necessary to ensure that the decisions are effective and according to the plan. Following-up prevents the waste of time, effort, and money in case the decision does not contribute to related problems. Moreover, the availability of such information allows to stop immediately and prevent the problem from aggravating if the decision is wrong, implementation time is not appropriate, or even the inaccurate implementation.

Silence towards the decisions and the lack of feedback during and after implementing phase, block the decision-makers from information needed to compare the achieved results with the

plan. Additionally, it hinders the tracking of activities and resources and hinders the coordination among the responsible parties because of the absence of communication between them (Saaty, 2008). The researcher suggests that silence at this stage limits the ability to answer essential questions on the decision's success, like have we done the right thing? What change occurred after applying the decision? Are these the expected results? Is any better way to solve the problem? Thus the inability to determine whether the decisions are effective or there is a deviation in the implementation process.

The managers can follow different decision-making styles to get possible choices and reach a satisfactory decision. The first style, which is commonly used, is the directive style. Even though this form of decision making is considered very rational, it relies heavily on an autocratic management style. The decision-makers use their own knowledge and experience to judge and choose the most appropriate alternative. These leaders present their decisions based on believing this is the best solution (Connor & Becker, 2003; Dolatabadi & Safa, 2010). Secondly, the conceptual style where the decision making relies more on brainstorming alternative solutions and creatively solving problems while minimizing the risks. In this style, a work team could be gathered and given the key information to discuss the work issue (Bayburin et al., 2015). The third is the analytical style in decision-making, an approach where vital decisions are taken only when a significant amount of data or information is available. Decision-makers who follow this style rely on observation and facts to support their decisions (Sjöberg, 2003). However, unlike the directive style, the analytic people look for advice and information from others but also like to control most aspects of the decision process (Jamian et al., 2013). Finally, the behavioural style, like the conceptual style, is group-oriented and tries to make sure all members work together. Instead of brainstorming new alternatives, the available options are given to the group to discuss each choice's pros and cons (Amazt & Idris, 2011). This style is intuitive, where decision-makers are responsive to the team's mood and likely to make decisions that will motivate the team members to perform (De Vries et al., 2008).

The decision-making process's success depends mainly on the availability of the largest amount of information in each stage (defining the problem, developing alternatives, evaluating alternatives, choosing the most appropriate alternative, follow-up and feedback and reviewing). Thus, decision-makers need to follow modern leadership and participatory styles instead of

excessively relying on directive authority. Besides, expanding subordinates' role and participation and dealing with their silence as a problem needs to be understood and solved. For any problem to be solved, the causes have to be identified first.

As can be seen from the previous theoretical framework, silence may appear in an organization because of certain practices or factors. At the same time, it may come as a result of different factors in another organization. Also, the relative importance of silence factors might vary from one organization to another, even if the situations towards which the staff kept silent were similar. Thus, what may be considered the main reason for silence towards a particular issue in one organization may be considered a secondary, or may not be a reason at all, in another one. Therefore, the researcher emphasizes the importance of hiring the appropriate administrative and scientific tools in understanding the nature of the practices and activities towards which the employees keep silent. Using a specialized tool could give more accurate results than focusing on silence in its general sense. Even though the researchers admit the silence problem's difficulty, the researcher sees that it is not an incurable problem. However, it could be solved if it is understood and the causes were correctly identified.

This research's efforts bring a better understanding of the organizational silence by measuring the degree of silence and determining which of the personal and organizational factors significantly impact the decision-making process. It focuses on how this silence could affect schools and teachers in public and private schools sector in Amman, Jordan. Thus, it is dissimilar to previous studies that focused on organizational silence and its impact on the decisions' effectiveness.

#### *2.6.5 The public and private sector in Jordan*

There are various considerations when comparing the public and private schools in Jordan. Indeed, these most are contextual; related to the schools' structures and regulations. However, these aspects could affect the quality of employees' characteristics. The researcher highlights the most important points to be compared when talking about the two sectors. Hiring methods is considered one of the significant difference between the public and private sector in Jordan. Hiring in the public sector, including the schools, is centralized. The seniority of the applications is considered a primary standard in hiring; it gives the applicant a priority (Thawabieh, 2017). Then the GPA in the applicant's last degree is considered besides some other aspects like the

place of residence. Indeed, no exams or personal interviews are held to choose among candidates, except for a few sensitive positions like in the medical sector (Jreisat, 2018). In contrast, private sector institutions have strict standards to attract only efficient candidates; personal interview and knowledge tests are the most common techniques. Salary/wage is another critical point in comparing the two sectors. Private institutions usually pay much more than the public ones; they attract highly skilled individuals (Nimri et al., 2015). The public institutions have a unified salary scale that has a slight annual increment. This difference in salaries becomes bigger in the long term.

When talking about the workload, the private sector institutions put higher pressure. These institutions are profit seek and work hard to maximize their profits. The public sector employees have less workload compared to their peers in the private one (Jreisat, 2018). More work means more time needed. Thus, the private sector has a longer working time per day. Individuals care about the career path; everyone wants to improve and get advanced in his/her work. Both sectors offer promotion, but the promotion criterion differs (Ababneh, 2013). Once again, the public sector most often relies on seniority to get promoted rather than the efficiency or the contribution candidate could add to the new position. Some times the connection and bias play a critical role in getting promoted. On the opposite, the private sector is rigorous regarding promotion. The candidate has to be of value for the potential position (Abbasi & Al-Mharmah, 2000).

Each sector has its advantages. Nimri et al. (2015) For example, all public employees are covered by health insurance, while the private sector employees are often not, especially small businesses. Incentives also could be a fundamental issue to compare. The private institutions offer their employees incentives for performance (e.g. financial rewards). In contrast, public sector institutions do not have structured incentives or rewards for achievements (Nimri et al., 2015). Also, training programs are in a place of importance. They contribute to individuals experiences, efficiency and satisfaction (Elnaga and Imran, 2013). Training programs require spending much money, where not all institutions have the financial capabilities to do so. Private institutions might not be able to offer such programs because it adds to the expenditures, especially small ones (Lynch, 2019). In contrast, public institutions can hold training programs

because the government funds them with the required budget. Some Jordanian public institutions and ministries have their own training centre.

The level of job security is one of the most critical issues that face private-sector employees. Job security refers to the probability that an individual will keep his job. A job with a high-security level is such a job have a small chance of losing it (Yousef, 1998). When businesses are experiencing growth, job security typically increase. The opposite often holds true; during declining demand, businesses look to downsize their workforces (Cappelli, 2000). Thus, the job security level decreases. This applies to the private sector while it does not apply to the public one. Indeed, the public institutions are non-profit service institutions, which means the services' continuity does not rely on demand, and no workforce downsizing is needed. Usually, the public sector moves the employees from one place to another if they exceed the need.

The end of service compensation is also considered a fundamental issue for the employees. Employees who realize there are some extra benefits at the end of the service are more motivated than those who do not have such compensations (Idemobi et al., 2011). The public institutions in Jordan offer savings benefit for their members. Such saving is a small amount of money deducted from the monthly salary. From the researcher experience as a public sector employee, at the end of service, e.g. retirement, the employees get this money back with an extra profit added by the government. Private institutions, except the international and large companies, do not offer such benefits. This could interpret part of the employees' attitudes to their jobs.

Based on the mentioned differences and the researcher experience as an employee at the MOE, the researcher compared the Jordanian public and private schools based on the main contextual aspects, not educational ones. Table (1.2) highlights the most important differences.

Table 1.2: A comparison between the public and private schools

	Public schools	Private schools
Hiring	Seniority of applicant	Efficiency (Interviews)
Salaries	Higher for elementary schools	Higher for the secondary schools
Workload	Lower	Higher
Working hours	Shorter	Longer
Promotion	No	No
Health insurance	Yes	No (except international schools)
Incentives	No	Yes
Training programs	Yes	No
Gender-based discrimination	No	Yes (Males get higher paid)
Job security	High	Low
End of service compensation (Indemnity/Savings)	Yes	Most often No

Prepared by the researcher



## **3 Methodology**

### **3.1 Terminology**

This qualitative study is considered exploratory by nature. It aims at providing a better understanding of the underlying factors and motives of the silence problem at every stage of decision-making. A brief explanation of the terminologies used to indicate different concepts has to be clarified before we start. Employee silence term describes the status of not sharing information or providing them incompletely. Silence-motive is used to indicate the reason that led respondents to remain silent. The decision-related situation used to describe the incident a respondent is remaining silent to. Before the aggregation is the term responses, responses indicate the actual answers provided by the sample subjects. At the lowest level of aggregation is the exemplar. Exemplars indicate the statements that are short and standardized, which abbreviate the responses. These exemplars are either silence motives or decision-related situations. At the next higher level, there are factors and decision-making stages. These titles are groupings of similar exemplars.

### **3.2 Phase 1 methodology**

#### *3.2.1 Study sample*

The researcher did not find a clear guide to indicate the appropriate sample size in this type of studies. However, previous studies clarified that any sample should be sufficient to include the subjects that represent all the subjects in the study society. For instance, Robinson & Bennett (1995) examined the causes of behaviour deviation in the workplace, where they developed their measurement instrument based on a sample of 70 subjects. Hogarty et al. (2005) also noted in their test of the appropriate sample size for the exploratory and factor analysis studies that the focus should be on how to design the study rather than the size of the sample "Rule of thumb". Our study examines the problem of silence in the schools of Amman Governorate, precisely for non-decision-makers, where the target group is the teachers in both the public and private sectors. Based on that, and on the nature of the study society, where all individuals practice similar jobs and tasks, the researcher sees that a sample of '100' subjects will be sufficient. Moreover, the respondents were asked to mention at least one situation related to decision-

making and all motives that led to keeping silent. Therefore the number of silence incidents and underlying motives had the potential to be much more than the number of sample subjects.

### *3.2.2 Interviews*

The researcher utilized structured interviews with open-ended questions to investigate the underlying motives of employees silence. The sample was reached through social media sites and teachers' social media groups (Facebook and WhatsApp groups).

HR specialists classified the results of the interview. The silence motives were classified according to the factors to which each belongs. Also, the decision-related situations were classified to the decision making stage to which each belongs.

## **3.3 Phase 2 methodology**

This phase of the thesis attempts to better understand the effects of personal and organizational (Contextual) factors on silence towards the Jordanian public schools' decision-making process. The study utilizes quantitative methods to find the relationship and impact of these factors on teachers' participation in decisions. The primary data collected using the questionnaire developed in the previous phase, while the secondary data obtained from the relevant previous literature.

### *3.3.1 Study Population and Sample*

The study population consists of 16802 full-time teachers in public schools in Amman Governorate, where they are divided into 5952 males and 10850 females according to the Jordanian ministry of education databases in 2019. The sample size is 1643 teachers of both genders, which is almost 10% of the entire population. Google-drive electronic questionnaire tool was utilized, and the sample was reached using public school teacher-specific Facebook groups after being requested to partake in the study.

### *3.3.2 Study Tool*

In this study, the data required was collected using a questionnaire. It has been developed based on the results of phase 1. The results were rewritten in the form of questions. Furthermore, the questionnaire was presented to linguists to be sure that the rewording and translation were correct.

The questionnaire consists of three parts: Firstly, the demographic characteristics of the sample (gender, age, experience, and level of education). Secondly, the items 55 questions designed to measure the factors of silence. The last questionnaire part consists of 26 questions that aim at measuring the teachers' tendency to participate in the decision-making process.

A seven-point Likert scale was used for all questions, where the result is between (1-3) indicates a low silence level, between (3-5) there is a medium silence level, and (5) or above indicates a high level of silence. SPSS v24 was used to test the reliability of the study tool and examine the hypotheses.

### 3.3.3 Relative importance, Reliability of the tool, Multicollinearity and Regression analysis

The relative importance analyses will permit a greater understanding of the particular role of variables in a multiple regression equation. These analyses can also reveal a particular predictor's underlying impact more accurately than standardized regression coefficients or simple correlations.

In this section, the mean ( $\mu$ ), standard deviation (S) and relative importance index (RII) are obtained to describe the respondents' attitude toward each statement, diminution and variables.

To calculate RII, the following equation was used (Blalock Jr, 1961):

$$RII = \frac{\sum w}{AN} \times 100\% = \frac{5n_5 + 4n_4 + 3n_3 + 2n_2 + 1n_1}{5n} \times 100$$

Where:

W: the weighting given to each factor by the respondent.

A: is the highest weight (which is 7 in this study)

N: is the total number of samples.

RII was classified to reflect the respondents rating as illustrated in Table (3.1)

RII	0<RII≤20%	20<RII≤40%	40<RII≤60%	60<RII≤80%	80<RII≤100%
Interpretation	Not important	Very little important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important

Own structure; based on the previous equation results

Reliability is the degree of internal consistency of research instruments (Roberts & Priest, 2006). In other words, reliability is used to judge the goodness of a measure and indicates the stability and consistency with which the tool developed measures the concept (Sekaran & Bougies, 2013). Cronbachs' Alpha Coefficient is a measure that was used to estimate the reliability. Cronbachs' Alpha Coefficient value ranges between 0 and 1. If there is no variance among study instruments (i.e., internally independent), then  $\alpha = 0$ , but if all study items have a high covariance, then  $\alpha$  will be close to 1. However, there is a consistency among researchers that the instrument considers reliable and stable if the  $\alpha$  value is more than 0.7. Cronbach's Alpha test was conducted to confirm the reliability of the study tool.

Furthermore, the Multicollinearity test measures the degree by each independent variables to measure the same entity. In other words, it measures if there is a high correlation between independent variables (Sekaran, 2003). To ensure that there is no Multicollinearity and that there is no correlation between the independent variables, variance inflation factor (VIF) and Tolerance indices were used.

Conducting a test to determine whether a problem of multicollinearity exists before running the regression analysis is of vital importance. Multicollinearity makes it difficult to assess the individual importance of the independent variables. Consequently, multicollinearity increases the standard error of the  $\beta$  coefficients, thereby causing the regression coefficients to be unstable (Alin, 2010; Mansfield & Helms, 1982). In order to discover multicollinearity in this study, both indicators of variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance were used.

Regression analysis is used to identify which independent variables have an impact on the independent factors. The regression results allow determining which factors have the highest impact, which factors can be dropped, and how these factors influence each other (Jolliffe, 1986).

Multiple regression analyses were conducted using the 'linear' procedure of SPSS, version 24. The level of significance was chosen to be 0.05 (and hence 95% level of confidence). Finally, according to the analysis results, the hypotheses were either accepted or rejected and a justification for the decision was given.

### **3.4 Phase 3 methodology**

The third phase is concerned with the silence problem towards the decision-making process, but this time in the Jordanian private schools. Since we are dealing with the same problem (silence and decisions) and the same society (teachers) in a different sector (private sector), the same questionnaire and the same sampling methods will be used. Moreover, the same statistical methods and tests mentioned above will be utilized.

#### *3.4.1 Study Population and Sample*

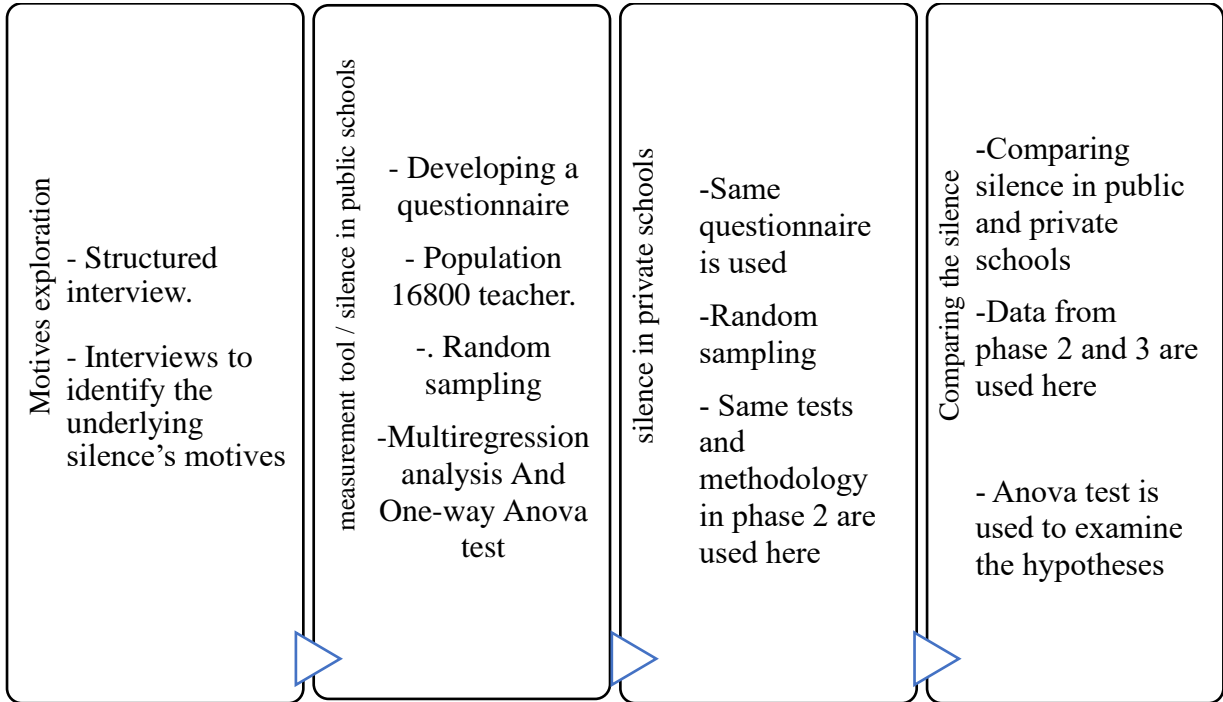
The population consists of 15212 teachers in private schools in Amman Governorate, where they are divided into 2507 males and 12705 females according to the databases of the Jordanian ministry of education (2019). The sample reached 1208 teachers of both genders, which is 8% of the entire population. The random sample method was used to access them, while the google-drive electronic questionnaire tool was employed to collect the data.

Regarding data analysis and hypotheses testing, the same tests that used in phase 2 were used in phase 3.

### **3.5 Phase 4 methodology**

The last phase of the thesis is about understanding the silencing mechanism in both types of schools. To do so, the results of the previous two phases are to be summed up and compared. This phase could highlight the differences between private and public schools based on various aspects, as we will show later.

Figure 2: Research plan



Own research plan

#### **4 Empirical studies on silence problem in public and private schools**

In this chapter, the researcher explores the potential motives and main factors of silence problem towards the decision-making process from the point of view of non-decision-making employees in Amman's public and private schools. Next is to go through an empirical test for the motives identified and measure the degree of silence and impact of each factor on the decision-making process in public and private schools separately.

## **4.1 Phase 1: Exploration of silence's motives towards the work decisions and building a measurement tool.**

This phase aims to investigate and provide a deeper understanding of the silence towards the participation in the decision-making process in both the public and private schools in the Jordanian capital (Amman).

### *4.1.1 Study plan and methodology*

The researcher did not find a guide to indicate the appropriate sample size in this type of studies. Previous studies that the sample should be sufficient to include the subjects representing the study society. Robinson and Bennett (1995) examined the causes of behaviour deviation in the workplace, where a sample of 70 individuals was used to develop the measurement. Hogarty et al. (2005) also noted in their test on the appropriate sample size for the exploratory and factor analysis studies that the focus should be on designing the study rather than on the size of the sample "Rule of thumb". This study examines the problem of silence in Amman Governorate's schools, precisely for non-decision-makers "Teachers". Based on that and the study's nature, in which all individuals practice the same tasks, the researcher finds that a sample of '100' subjects will be sufficient.

The interviews were conducted with 100 teachers of both genders who work full-time in public and private schools. The percentage of teachers from public schools is (41%) compared to (59%) from private schools. The percentage of female teachers in the sample is (54%), and (34%) of those who had previous work. The study sample has been reached through social networking sites and teachers' social media groups (Facebook and WhatsApp groups). The study's nature and its focus on the silence's motives were clarified to determine those willing to participate. Then, coordination is done on how to interview (personal, telephone, video call) according to the preference of each subject.

### *4.1.2 Data collecting*

Each interviewee is interviewed independently and in the way he/she decides (telephone, video call, and personal interview). The interview duration ranged from 13 to 25 minutes. The researcher has discussed the prepared questions with the sample subjects. The first question



intends to determine whether the interviewee had a previous teaching job or no. The second is to determine the tendency of the sample to keep silent towards the decisions. This could give an initial indicator of silence level within the study population before go deeper into the research. This question is based on Likert's five-degree scale, where 1 indicates no silence at all and 5 a permanent silence towards decisions. Also, the third question tries to know what kind and nature of situations they had chosen to keep silent towards. In order to manage the last question, the interviewees were asked to clarify which kind of participation could they contribute, what were the motives that pushed them to choose silence. Finally, they were asked to clarify and mention the expected results or reactions if they decided to speak and not to remain silent in the situation they mentioned (Appendix 1).

Moreover, to strengthen the investigation, the respondents were asked to mention more than one situation related to decision-making and the motives that led to staying silent. If the subjects were asked to recall one instance, the more frequent events and explanations would almost certainly dominate the answers, so subjects would most likely report the first case and explanation that came to mind. Thus, the motives and situations will exceed the number of respondents. However, subjects were asked to explain the essence of each situation, problem, or incident about which they were deliberately silent. They were then asked to give a short general sentence to describe the reason(s) for their deliberate silence in response to each problem or incident. Subjects are asked to describe the essence of the topic or incident about which they were silent in order to ensure that their comments are compliant with the previously given concept of employee silence. Indeed, the motives for silence can differ depending on the topic and/or circumstance that an individual is responding to and the kind of goal that their silence is geared against.

Also, to ensure capturing all answers that serve the research purposes, the researcher asked interviewees, specifically those who have shown a low tendency to remain silent, to talk about situations they have witnessed and the motives they believe to be behind their colleagues' silence. Indeed, this allows the respondent to drop positions that may cause embarrassment to colleagues.

To achieve the study's objectives, the researcher explained the nature of the decision-making process and its stages during the discussion of the questions with the respondents. The researcher has written down the relevant responses that directly answer the research questions in the form

of points. The extracted answers are reworded in exemplars describing similar situations and motives related to the research topic.

#### *4.1.3 Interpreting responses and deriving causes and situations*

The researcher developed exemplar statements and coded each answer with the required identification number. These exemplar statements and subsequent use of exemplar codes made it possible to apply uniform definitions of common themes through responses. As a result, the number of distinct responses that would only have other non-substantive variation was reduced. This was a step-by-step procedure that started with the first response and the development of an exemplar, which is a brief generic sentence derived from the response. For example, the actual answer "the principal didn't discuss the situation with us, and I was confident he wouldn't admit his mistake" was assigned the silence-reason exemplar "Management doesn't raise the issue for discussion." The second element "Management doesn't admit its mistakes". The next answer was examined, and if the previously created exemplar matched the second answer, then the first exemplar's identification number was assigned to the second one. If the first example did not effectively describe the second answer, a new exemplar was constructed and its unique identifier was assigned to it. This approach was used to assess all answers, and new exemplars were developed when needed to account for replies that did not fit into any of the previously produced exemplars. Additionally, prior exemplars were updated regularly based on analysis of new answers to better depict the silence-incident, targets, or -motives represented by the exemplar. During this phase, the iteration of each situation or motive is determined. This process is accompanied by amendments and rewording of the exemplars to be more straightforward and more accurate.

#### *Classification of Situations and Motives*

To avoid wasting time and effort in previously discussed aspects, the researcher utilized previous studies to prepare a list of the main silence's factors to be used in classifying the motives. Regarding decision-related situations, they are classified according to the stage to which it belongs. The researcher assigned a number for each factor and stage to facilitate the classification process (Appendix 2 A and B).

The exemplar list got to be rather long, with numerous exemplars that were substantively identical but differed largely in syntax or context. As a result, the next step was to carefully evaluate the situations and motive exemplar lists and arrange exemplars that were similar into

related categories. Assistance has been obtained from five HR and business management specialists, who have the required experience and ability to complete the classification process. The researcher sent them the motives and situations lists after being coded and sorted in descending order from the most iterated to the least. The situations are indicated by the symbol (S), while (M) indicates the motives (Table 4.1 and 4.2). The frequency indicated how many times the silence motives or situations is repeated during the interviews. This iteration helps to know the most common silence incidents and motives experienced by the teachers.

The specialists were asked to assign only one factor for each of the mentioned motives. In addition to assigning one stage of decision-making stages to each situation, they believe to be related. They were asked to write down the symbol in front of each exemplar. Otherwise, the symbol (0) was assigned to indicate that the exemplar is not associated with any factors or situations mentioned. Appendix 3 A & B shows the results of the classification where the specialist Id indicated by “A”.

Table 4.1: Decision-related situations reported by the respondents

Seq	Situation	Freq
S1	Abstention of reporting work problems in general	16
S2	Abstention of reporting colleagues' mistakes	10
S3	Abstention of reporting troubles resulting from the decisions	10
S4	Abstention of suggesting solution/alternative that increases the workload	6
S5	Abstention of indicating the cost and the real value of the alternatives/solutions	6
S6	Abstention of suggesting some adjustments to the decision taken	6
S7	Abstention of reporting the problems that don't affect personally	5
S8	Abstention of suggesting any alternatives/solutions	5
S9	Abstention of indicating the illegal alternatives/solutions	5
S10	Abstention of indicating the best among the alternatives if not asked to do	5
S11	Abstention of choosing the alternative that satisfies all parties	5
S12	Abstention of indicating that the applied decision is wrong	5
S13	Abstention of reporting the problems that are being committed by the employee himself	4
S14	Abstention of suggesting the solution/alternative that satisfies all parties	4
S15	Abstention of suggesting the alternative that requires taking responsibility	4
S16	Abstention of indicating the appropriateness of the decision implementing timing	4
S17	Abstention of reporting the less important problems	3
S18	Abstention of reporting the problems that are expected not to be solved	3
S19	Abstention of suggesting more economically viable solutions/alternatives	3
S20	Abstention of indicating any deviation from the actual objectives	3
S21	Abstention of indicating the unrealistic of the alternatives/solutions	2
S22	Abstention of choosing the alternatives that require more efforts	2
S23	Abstention of indicating that the alternatives are futile/not valuable	1
S24	Abstention of indicating the expected outcomes on the suggested alternatives	1
S25	Abstention of choosing the alternative that is compatible with the available capabilities	1
S26	Abstention of indicating that the used implementing methods are wrong	1

Own results

Table 4.2: Motives reported by the respondents

Seq	Silence Motives	Freq
M1	The management takes the discussion personally and not objectively	16
M2	To avoid any effect on my performance evaluation	14
M3	To avoid hurting my colleagues' feelings	11
M4	My participation might harm a colleague's job	11
M5	To avoid losing the job	11
M6	To avoid any conflicts with the management	10
M7	To keep good relations with my colleagues	10
M8	Lack of appreciation for our efforts	10
M9	The management considers itself the only one who has the right to make decisions	9
M10	The management does not support innovation	9
M11	The management underestimates our efforts and opinions	9
M12	The salary I get is not worth the efforts I do	8
M13	I do not want to take responsibility in the case of any mistake or failure of the decision	8
M14	The management is rigid in applying regulations and has no flexibility	8
M15	To avoid being labelled as a troublemaker	8
M16	To avoid losing the trust of colleagues	7
M17	The management does not accept any debate about the decision	7
M18	The management does not support cooperation/teamwork	7
M19	The management takes decisions that meet their interests	7
M20	The management is not decisive towards troublemakers	7
M21	The management attributes the achievements to themselves	7
M22	The management does not differentiate between hard and inactive employees	7
M23	My work position does not allow me to intervene in decisions	6
M24	Lack of awareness on some administrative issues	6
M25	Being silent brings me the tranquillity	6
M26	If the decisions do not directly affect me or my work, I do not intervene	6
M27	The management does not give us an opportunity to participate	6
M28	The management considers us incapable of understanding and taking decisions	6
M29	The management is unable to solve the problems at work	6
M30	My opinion will not have any impact	5
M31	To stay away from work issues and problems	5
M32	The management does not raise the issues for discussion	5
M33	The management considers our intervention as mistrust in its ability to make decisions	5
M34	The management does not consider the privacy of people who report the problems	5
M35	The management listens only to the opinions of selected people	5
M36	Fear of being transferred to another work location	5
M37	The colleagues asked not to intervene with the decisions that affect them	4
M38	To avoid any embarrassment	4
M39	Nothing worth pay more efforts	4
M40	The management does not accept criticism on decisions	4
M41	The management does not admit its mistakes	4
M42	The management does not fairly apply procedures in case of problems and faults	4

Seq	Silence Motives	Freq
M43	To avoid being labelled as a complainer	4
M44	Being afraid that colleagues will not support my opinions	3
M45	Unsure what to say.	3
M46	Frustrated with the current job	3
M47	Silence makes the management satisfied with me	3
M48	The management is not able to make any change	2
M49	My participation will be dismissed	2
M50	Not having the power or authority to change	2
M51	Lack of sufficient knowledge in legislation and regulations	2
M52	Because I do not want to appear incompetent	2
M53	To avoid contact with others in the workplace	2
M54	Silence brings me some personal interests with the management	2
M55	If I keep silent, the management will skip on my mistakes	1

Own results

#### 4.1.4 Results

The interviews results show that teachers have a high tendency to keep silent towards the decisions; most said they prefer to remain silent always, often, or sometimes, they counted for 82%. In contrast, 18% do not prefer silence or rarely remain silent (Table 4.3). These percentages indicate the prevalence of the silence problem among the sample subjects.

Table 4.3: The tendency towards the silence

Tendency to the silence	Frequency
Never	4
Rarely	14
Sometimes	44
Frequently	31
Always	7

Own results

#### - Decision-related situations

Based on the results, the researcher rearranged the motives according to the factors they belong to and the situations according to each decision-making stage.

The number of independent decisions-related situations discussed during the interviews is 26 repeated 120 times. As aforementioned, these situations have been classified according to each stage of the decision-making process. The reliability of the classification is tested to measure

the degree of consistency among the specialists' opinions. Cronbach's alpha is (86.1%), which indicates the classification results are accepted (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.861	.861	5

Own results

The results indicated that most of the mentioned situations, 41 situations with a percentage of 34%, are related to the non-disclosure of work problems. The situations related to the development of alternatives or finding solutions amounted to 22 situations which are 18%. Situations related to alternatives evaluation and comparison are iterated 15 times, with a percentage of 13%. The percentage of the situations associated with choosing among the alternatives is 11%, with 13 repetitions. While the stage of following-up and evaluation of the decision are 29 repetitions with 24%. See (Tables 4.5 to 4.9).

Table 4.5: Defining the problem

Seq.	Defining the problem	Freq
S1	I see problems at work, but I prefer not to talk or discuss them in general	16
S2	I do not report my colleagues' mistakes	10
S7	I do not report the problems that do not affect me	5
S13	I do not report the problem that I cause	4
S17	I do not report the problems which are not important	3
S18	I do not report the problems that I expect could not be solved	3
Total		41

Own results

Table 4.6: Development of alternatives

Seq.	Development of alternatives	Freq
S4	I had better solutions, but that would increase my workload	6
S8	I had a solution to the problem, but I did not speak it up	5
S14	I could suggest a solution that satisfies all parties, but I did not	4
S15	I had solutions that require me to take responsibility	4
S19	I had more economically feasible solutions, but I did not share them	3
Total		22

Own results

Table 4.7: Evaluation of alternatives

Seq.	Evaluation of alternatives	Freq
S5	The suggested solutions cost more than their value, but I did not point that out	6
S9	Some solutions were contrary to laws and regulations, but I did not point that out	5
S21	I could show that the suggested solutions were unrealistic, but I did not	2
S23	Some offered solutions were futile, I did not point that out	1
S24	The expected outcomes on some alternatives were clear for me, but I did not point that out	1
Total		15

Own results

Table 4.8: Choose Alternate / Solution

Seq.	Choose Alternate / Solution	Freq
S10	I could have pointed out the best solution if I had been asked	5
S11	I could have chosen the solution that satisfies all parties	5
S22	I could have chosen the best solution If it had not required me more effort.	2
S25	I could have pointed out the solution that is viable and compatible with the available capabilities	1
Total		13

Own results

Table 4.9: Supervision and follow-up

Seq.	Supervision and follow-up	Freq
S3	The applied decision caused some trouble at the work, But I did not point that out	10
S6	I felt the results would be better with some adjustments, but I did not point that out	6
S12	I realized, after the implementation, that the decision was wrong, but I did not point that out	5
S16	I realized that the timing of the implementation was not appropriate, but I did not point that out	4
S20	There was a deviation from the actual objective of the decision, but I did not point that out	3
S26	The methods used to implement the decision were wrong, but I did not point that out	1
Total		29

Own results

The following quotes give examples of the sample responses for each stage of the decision-making process with the silence motives:

*Defining the problem*

"... When a colleague is absent, the workload is distributed unfairly... those who are close to the manager are always excluded from this work, this causes problems and a state of discontent... For me, I do not speak because I am not close to the management, and I could be harassed in case of objection, or my contract could be terminated. Shortly, to be silent and follow the instructions means the satisfaction of management ..."

"Female teacher, private school."

"... At break time, we sit together and complain about colleagues' work problems or mistakes that the management does not know about it. I avoid conveying them to the management because I could lose colleagues' trust, especially that the management is not keen on the confidentiality of the source of information which may cause us problems with colleagues... "

"Male teacher, public school."

### *Development of solutions and alternatives*

"We organized an open day to increase the awareness about diseases and methods of infection. This event requires hosting specialists such as doctors, but the surprise was there were no doctors, and there was a music band; it was like an entertainment party and the content of the event was a bit far from the advertised, it was just a waste of money. I was agitated, but I did not make any comment... I was newly hired, and my job status did not allow me to intervene. Besides, the management did not ask for our opinion or put the matter into a discussion.

"Male teacher, public school."

"... I tried to interfere in the distribution of teaching load, I suggested some amendments to be fairer and more satisfactory to all. I pointed to the injustice and dissatisfaction with some colleagues' workload, but they misunderstood my opinion. My colleagues did not support my objection... All I got was the management enmity and a decrease in the annual assessment, after that, I decided not to intervene in the decisions to avoid going through the same situation... "

"Female teacher, public school."

"... We discussed holding lectures on how to deal with bullying problems among the students. Among those present was our colleague who is the educational counsellor. I wanted to suggest he give the lectures to save the external lecturers' fees, but I was afraid that he would be bothered by my suggestion since it increases his workload... Also, the manager could take my opinion as lack of confidence in his ability to manage the school's financial resources ... "

"Male teacher, private school."

### *Evaluation of alternatives*

"...We were about deciding on the schedule for parents' meetings. All suggested appointments were during the time of work, I was sure that most of them would not be able to come because of their working conditions. I did not intervene because I was sure they would not take my opinion as usual... they do what they want regardless if it is true or not... "

"Female teacher, public school."

"... we have a development committee composed of some teachers who are responsible for developing the school environment. They suggested some programs and it was clear that some of



them cost more than their benefit, but no one intervened or pointed out that. I think that was because the members of the committee are our colleagues. No one wants to sacrifice her relationship with them ... I did not intervene, I did not want to enter into a futile debate, and I do not interfere in the case that the decisions do not affect my work or do not affect me personally ..."

"Female teacher, public school."

#### *Choosing the best alternative*

"... There were several places to visit in a students school trip, including a place suitable for that time of year and it is safe and suitable for the ages of students. I did not participate in the choice of destination for fear of taking responsibility in case of any emergency... generally, I prefer to keep far from the administrative issues and decisions to avoid any responsibility ... "

"Female teacher, private school."

"... Several appointments were suggested to begin the end-of-term exams. The best option in my opinion was to start and finish before the festivals season; this could satisfy the parents and the students... I did not share my thoughts because this requires more effort to finish work earlier... actually, I am frustrated with my current job and feel dissatisfied; that is why I do not want to make more efforts... "

"Female teacher, private school."

#### *Monitoring and Evaluation of the Decision*

"... a charitable fundraising day was organized to help poor students as a kind of social solidarity... but the invitation was limited to the local families... the results would have been better if the profit companies and organization s owners had been invited; this would activate their social responsibility... but the manager didn't discuss the situation, and I was sure they would not admit his mistake of not inviting them ..."

"Male teacher, public school."

"... The so-called moving class system had been applied, where each teacher has a fixed classroom and the students move among their teachers. I had several observations that this decision could endanger students because of the large number passing within a short period. I did not intervene because I was newly hired and my job is teaching only... I do not think my

opinion will make a difference in the administrative aspects... I prefer to leave these issues to the more experienced colleagues ..."

"Female teacher, public school."

As we have stated before, each respondent has the opportunity to mention more silence experience and all the reasons he/she has. Thus, the mentioned situations and motives exceeded the sample size.

### Silence's factors and motives

Respondents reported 55 different motives repeated 332 times during interviews, with an average of three to four motives for their silence towards the reported situations. The motives are classified to the factors to which they belong. The reliability test has been conducted to measure the degree of consistency of the specialists' opinions on the motives—Cronbach's Alpha 88.1%, which indicates that the classification results can be accepted (Table 4.10).

Table 4.10: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.881	.881	5

#### Own results

The results provided a good initial indicator of each factor's weight and impact on silence towards decisions. The total frequency of organization-related motives (contextual motives) is 217, which is 65% of the total. Tables (4.11 to 4.15) show the motives classified according to their main factors with the size of iteration for each.

Table 4.11: Fear of negative reactions

Seq.	Fear of negative reactions	Freq
M2	To avoid any effect on my performance evaluation	14
M5	To avoid losing the job	11
M6	To avoid any conflicts with the management	10
M13	I do not want to take responsibility in the case of any mistake or failure of the decision	8
M15	To avoid being labelled as a troublemaker	8
M36	Fear of being transferred to another work location	5
M43	To avoid being labelled as a complainer	3
Total		59

#### Own results

Table 4.12: Mistrust

Seq.	Mistrust	Freq
M1	The management takes the discussion personally and not objectively	16
M19	The management takes decisions that meet their personal interests	7
M20	The management is not decisive towards troublemakers	7
M28	The management considers us incapable of understanding and taking decisions	6
M29	The management is unable to solve the problems at work	6
M33	The management considers our intervention as mistrust in its ability to make decisions	5
M34	The management does not consider the privacy of people who report the problems	5
M41	The management does not admit its mistakes	4
M48	The management is not able to make any change	2
Total		58

Own results

Table 4.13: Lack of management support

Seq.	Lack of management support	Freq
M8	Lack of appreciation for our efforts	10
M10	The management does not support innovation	9
M11	The management underestimates our efforts and opinions	9
M18	The management does not support cooperation/teamwork	7
M27	The management does not allow us to participate	6
Total		41

Own results

Table 4.14: Abusing of formal authority

Seq.	Abusing of formal authority	Freq
M9	The management considers itself the only one who has the right to make decisions	9
M14	The management is rigid in applying regulations and has no flexibility	8
M17	The management does not accept any debate about the decision	7
M32	The management does not raise the issues for discussion	5
M40	The management does not accept criticism on decisions	4
Total		33

Own results

Table 4.15: Injustice

Seq.	Injustice	Freq
M12	The salary I get is not worth the efforts I do	8
M21	The management attributes the achievements to themselves	7
M22	The management does not differentiate between hard-working and inactive employees	7
M35	The management listens only to the opinions of selected people	5
M42	The management does not fairly apply procedures in case of problems and faults	4
Total		31

Own results

On the other hand, the total frequency of motives related to personal factors is 115, that is 35% of the mentioned motives. Tables (4.16 to 4.20) Show personal factors sorted in descending order according to the number of motives mentioned under each factor.

Table 4.16: Prosocial silence

Seq.	Prosocial silence	Freq
M3	To avoid hurting my colleagues' feelings	11
M4	My participation might harm a colleague's job	11
M7	To keep good relations with my colleagues	10
M16	To avoid losing the trust of my colleagues	7
M37	My colleagues asked me not to intervene with the decisions that affect them	4
Total		43

Own results

Table 4.17: Lack of self-esteem

Seq.	lack of self-esteem	Freq
M23	My work position does not allow me to intervene in decisions	6
M24	Lack of awareness on some administrative issues	6
M30	My opinion will not have any impact	5
M44	I am afraid my colleagues will not support my opinion	3
M49	My participation will be dismissed	2
M50	I do not have the power or authority to change	2
M51	Lack of sufficient knowledge in legislation and regulations	2
Total		26

Own results

Table 4.18: Psychological withdrawal

Seq.	Psychological withdrawal	Freq
M25	Being silent brings me the tranquillity	6
M26	If the decisions do not directly affect me or my work, I do not intervene	6
M31	I prefer to stay away from work issues and problems	5
M39	Nothing worth pay more efforts	4
M46	I am frustrated with my job	3
M53	To avoid contact with others in the workplace	2
Total		26

Own results

Table 4.19: Diffident Silence

Seq.	Diffident Silence	Freq
M38	To avoid any embarrassment	4
M45	Because I am unsure what to say.	3
M52	Because I do not want to appear incompetent	2
Total		9

Own results

Table 4.20: Deviant silence

Seq.	Deviant silence	Freq
M47	Silence makes the management satisfied with me	3
M54	Silence brings me some personal interests with the management	2
M55	If I keep silent, the management will skip on my mistakes	1
Total		6

Own results

According to the above, The most iterated organizational factor is the fear of negative reactions, while maintaining social relationships is the most prominent among the personal factors. Regarding the motives, the management lack of objectivity and considering the discussions in a subjective way is the most iterated motive 16 times, followed by the other motives (Table 4.2). Table (4.21) summarises the factors with the iteration size of related motives.

Table 4.21: The frequency of silence's motives within each factor

Silence Factors			
Organizational factors	Freq	Personal factors	Freq
Fear of negative reactions	59	Prosocial silence	43
Mistrust	58	lack of self-esteem	26
Lack of management support	41	Psychological withdrawal	26
Abusing of formal authority	33	Diffident Silence	9
Injustice	31	Deviant silence	6
Total/Org. factors	222	Total/Personal factors	110
Total 332			

Own results

*4.1.5 Building the measurement tool*

The exploration phase results have been rewritten in the form of questions. Data from other previous relevant studies were used to confirm the questionnaire item's clarity and straightforwardness (Brinsfield 2013; Dyne et al., 2003; Milliken et al., 2003; Panahi et al. 2012). Furthermore, the questionnaire was presented to linguists to be sure that the rewording and translation were correct.

A pilot study has been conducted to ensure that the measurement tool is reliable and fit the research purpose. The questionnaire consists mainly of two parts. The first part is designed to measure the silence motives and factors (55 questions). The second part of the questionnaire attempts to measure teachers' tendency to participate in each stage of the decision-making

process (26 questions). The sample consists of 50 teachers who are randomly accessed in public schools. A seven-point Likert scale has been used for all questions. SPSS v24 is utilized to test each item's relative importance and examine the study tool's reliability after refinement.

- **Reliability test**

Cronbachs' Alpha Coefficient is a measure that was used to estimate measurement reliability. Cronbachs' Alpha Coefficient value ranges between 0 and 1. If there is no variance among study instruments (i.e. are internally independent), then  $\alpha = 0$ , but if all study items have a high covariance, then  $\alpha$  will be close to 1. However, researchers have a consistency that the instrument considers reliable and stable if  $\alpha$  value is more than 0.7. The test results show that Cronbachs' Alpha coefficient ranges between 0.775 and 0.955, which is more than 0.7 (Table 4.22). Thus, the instruments of the questionnaire are considered reliable and consistent.

Table 4.22: Reliability test

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Cronbach Alpha Coefficient</b>
Defining the problem	0.826
Development of alternatives	0.775
Evaluation of alternatives	0.830
Choose Alternate/Solution	0.838
Supervision and follow-up	0.908
Decision Making Process	0.925
Fear of negative reactions	0.905
Mistrust	0.955
Prosocial factor	0.929
Lack of management support	0.935
Lack of self-esteem	0.926
Abusing of formal authority	0.945
Injustice	0.932
Psychological withdrawal	0.928
Diffident Silence	0.880
Deviant silence	0.946
Personal (Individual) Factors	0.921
Organizational Factor	0.933
Organizational silence	0.916
Own results	

- **Relative Importance index**

*Descriptive analysis of Decision-making process*

This section aims to describe respondents' attitudes toward the decision-making process by determining their importance from respondents' perspectives. To achieve this objective Relative Importance Index (RII) was calculated for overall respondents.

As shown in Appendix 4, the standard deviation of items ranged between 0.67 and 1.8. The result indicates that the variation of respondents' attitudes about these items is relatively low to moderate. This is a good indication which demonstrates a relatively good level of agreement between the respondents. Also, the table shows that the RII values ranged between 56% and 87%. These values mean that all these items considered as important to a very important item from the respondent's perspective. As shown in the table, "Choose Alternate / Solution" and "Supervision and follow-up" are ranked as the most important dimension, while "Defining the problem" was ranked as the least important dimension.

*Descriptive analysis of Organizational Silence*

This section aims to describe respondents' attitude toward organizational silence variables by determining their importance from respondents' perspectives. To achieve this objective Relative Importance Index (RII) was calculated for overall respondents.

As shown in Appendix 5, the standard deviation of items ranged between 1.4 and 1.9. This result indicates that the variation of respondents' attitude related to these items is relatively moderate. This is a good indication which demonstrates a relatively good level of agreement between the respondents. Also, the table shows that the RII values ranged between 45% and 71%. These values mean that all these items are considered somewhat important to important items from the respondent's perspective. The table also shows that the "Prosocial factor" is ranked as the most important dimension, while "Deviant silence" is ranked as the least important dimension.

As mentioned before, the reliability test helps to decide whether to adopt the measurement tool or not. Also, the relative importance index could give a preliminary indicator of the potential impact of each item. Therefore, according to tests results, the measurement tool is accepted, and no further tests are needed to decide whether to remove or keep any of the questionnaire items.

#### *4.1.6 Discussion of results*

Most of the sample subjects show they prefer to remain silent towards decisions in particular situations, if not always. Few indicated that they do not remain silent about decisions if participation is needed (Table 4.3). Therefore, silence could be a phenomenon in Jordanian public and private schools. The results also show that the problem of silence mainly exists in the first stage of decision-making (problem identification); the respondents mentioned 41 situations regarding this stage (Table 4.5). In contrast, the respondents mentioned fewer experiences related to the following stages (developing alternatives, evaluating alternatives, and choosing the best among them). The number of situations mentioned increased again to reach 29 regarding the follow-up stage. The researcher interprets that by employees' unwillingness to transfer bad news about work problems and decisions to their officials. This confirms that people feel uncomfortable talking when the information is related to bad news or feedback (Ilgen et al., 1979). Moreover, the researcher justifies the increase in reporting situations related to the first and last stage during the interviews by the ease of remembering the problems compared to other situations because of problems' psychological impact on employees, especially those they could not talk about or have not been solved (Thoits, 1994). That is clear since the most iterated situations (70 situations) represents silence and non-disclosure of problems, whether problems needed to make a decision or that resulted from the decisions taken, the first and last stage of the decision-making process.

All motives identified motives are fit to be classified according to the main silence factors. The results also show that the most repeated motives related to the organizational factors are associated with management policies and practices. The fear of negative reactions on intervention or participation in decisions is the most common factor, 7 motives repeated 59 times. The next is the mistrust which counted for 9 motives repeated 58 times—accomplished by the rest of the organizational factors (Table 4.21). This indicates there is an imperfection in the administrative practices and failure of people in positions of responsibility to demonstrate the qualities and ethics of the real leader, which in turn affect the willingness and readiness of the organization members to discuss the work issues and decisions (Zehir & Erdogan, 2011). The results also show some personal factors associated with individual characteristics. The most prominent factor is the prosocial factor, 5 motives that iterated 43 times—pursued by the rest of



personal factors (Table 4.16). This indicates the individuals tend to maintain their relationships with coworkers. The fact that individuals generally do not wish to work in an environment of distorted relationships supports our finding (Willnat et al., 2002). From his experience in the education field, the researcher sees it is logical that this factor could significantly impact the tendency to remain silent in the schools' environment. This opinion could be supported by the fact that teaching tasks are similar and require cooperation, where any imbalance or weakness in the relationships could cause anxiety at the workplace and add more workload.

Deviance behaviour has also emerged as one of the personal factors that aim to achieve benefits by keeping silent. Some employees may perceive that silence and accepting instructions could satisfy the management. Thus, ignoring the employee's mistakes in return for ignoring management's wrong decisions or problems resulting from them. That is different from what Pinder and Harlos (2001) mentioned in their study, where they referred to it as the silence intended to harm the organization's reputation or a colleague. It should be noted here that this factor was the least mentioned factor, where it incorporated (3) motives repeated (6) times only.

On the other hand, there is a significant difference in the frequency between organizational and personal factors. This difference gives a good preliminary indicator on the weight of organizational factors in the silence problem. This indicates that a large part of the problem could be addressed by taking the necessary regulatory action, such as reconsidering hiring criteria to fill the higher positions and avoiding bias-based and seniority in the promotion. Also, courses in modern management methods could be held to emphasize and develop the current superiors' leadership qualities. In contrast, the personal aspect of the silence problem could also be mitigated. For example, focusing on human development courses could treat the personal factors and would make a big difference, especially those related to diffident and low self-esteem (10 motives repeated 35 times).

Finally, in addition to providing an initial indicator on the weight of the organizational and personal factors in the silence problem towards the decisions, this research shows many motives that were not reported in previous research and are directly related to decision-making techniques. The results also show many situations representing each stage of the decision-making process, which provide a solid basis to develop a specialized measurement tool. Our proposed tool is composed of two parts. The first measures the participation level in the

decision-making process, while the other measures the degree of silence's motives. This allows the researcher and the concerned to conduct more accurate quantitative studies on the silence towards the decisions, compare the size and impact of both organizational and personal factors, and examine whether these factors have the same impact or not within public and private schools environment.

## **4.2 Phase 2: Measuring silence and its impact on the decision-making process in public schools**

### *4.2.1 Jordanian Public Schools*

The structure of public schools in Jordan is a simple organizational structure consists of two levels (Flat structures). The principal occupies the highest level and is primarily responsible for staff and day to day decisions and activities. Teachers follow him/her at the next functional level. These schools are subject to two types of regulations. One deals with the educational and academic aspects. The other is concerned with administrative affairs related to human resource and the hiring basis, which is the same, used by all governmental institutions. One of the main points the reader has to keep in mind is that all public schools in Jordan are separate gender schools; the students are separated by gender after the elementary level of study, and so are the school staff.

In contrast to the private sector, hiring in governmental vacancies, including educational ones, is primarily based on precedence and seniority rather than competence and alignment. This method is also applied to promotion and salary incrementation purposes. Therefore, the opportunity to have a gap between the administrative position's actual requirements and the applicant's qualifications and capabilities is higher than when the organization uses a solid hiring basis, such as efficiency and merit. The lack of knowledge in managerial concepts and leadership styles due to unsatisfactory recruitment and promotion conditions to the managerial vacancies, coupled with the wide span of control resulting from the short/flat organizational structure, pressuring the superiors to rely heavily on the formal authority of his/her position (Doran et al., 2004). The decision-makers will then be more directive in decision-making rather than using modern decision making and leadership models. Thus, the researcher believes organizational factors will have more weight than personal factors in the problem of silence towards the decision-making process in the Jordanian public schools. Thus, the seventh hypothesis of this study is:

**H7:** organizational factors are expected to have a greater impact on participation in decision-making than personal factors in public schools.

#### 4.2.2 Research Methodology

This study uses quantitative methods to find the impact of silence factors on teachers' participation in the decision-making process by measuring the personal factors as well as their awareness of organizational factors as a hindrance to their participation. The study uses the main data collected using the questionnaire and secondary.

#### 4.2.3 Study Population and Sample

The study population consists of 16802 full-time teachers in public schools in Amman Governorate, where they are divided into 5952 males and 10850 females according to the Jordanian ministry of education databases in 2019. The sample reached 1643 teachers of both genders, which is almost 10% of the entire population. They were randomly accessed using google-drive electronic questionnaire tool. The following table shows the demographic distribution of the sample.

Table 4.23: Demographic distribution.

Variable		Frequency	%
Gender	Male	440	26.8
	Female	1203	73.2
Age	20-30 years	189	11.5
	31-40 years	798	48.6
	41-50 Years	552	33.6
	51-60 Years	100	6.1
	More than 60	4	0.2
	1-10 Years	598	36.4
Experience	11-20 Years	790	48.1
	21-30 Years	236	14.4
	More than 30	19	1.2
Level of education	Diploma	99	6
	Bachelor	1228	74.7
	M.A.	259	15.8
	PhD.	57	3.5

Own results

#### 4.2.4 Study Tool

In this study, the data required was collected using a questionnaire (Appendix 6) which was developed based on the first study results, where the results have been rewritten in the form of questions. In order to confirm the clarity and straightforwardness of the questions, data from

other previous relevant studies were used (Brinsfield, 2013; Milliken et al., 2003; Panahi et al., 2012). Furthermore, the questionnaire was presented to linguists to be certain that the rewording and translation were correct.

The questionnaire consists of three main parts: The demographic characteristics of the sample (sex, age, experience, and educational attainment). The next part is to measure the degree of silence towards the decisions 55 items; fear of negative reaction 7 items, mistrust 9 items, prosocial factor 5 items, lack of management support 5 questions, lack of self-esteem 7 items, abusing of formal authority 5 items, injustice 5 items, psychological withdrawal 6 items, diffident silence 3 items, deviant silence 3 items. The last part measures teachers' willingness to participate in each stage of the decision-making process. 26 items are used; defining the problem 6 items, developing alternatives 5 items, evaluating alternatives 5 items, and choosing an Alternate/Solution 4, supervision and follow-up 6 items.

A seven-point Likert's scale was used for all questions, where the result is between (1-3) indicates a low silence level, between (3-5) there is a medium silence level, and (5-7) is a high level of silence. SPSS v24 was used to test the reliability of the study tool and examine the hypotheses.

#### 4.2.5 Data analysis and hypotheses testing

##### - Reliability of the tool

Cronbach's Alpha test was conducted to confirm the reliability of the study tool. The test result for the full questionnaire was 0.903. The silence factor is 0.897 and 0.852 for the dependent variable, as shown in table (4.24). According to the rule, the instrument is considered reliable when  $\alpha$  is greater than 0.7 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), which means that it is reliable and can be adopted.

Table 4.24: Cronbach's Alpha test

Questionnaire part	N. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Pro-social silence	5	0.824
Lack of self-esteem	7	0.872
Psychological withdrawal	6	0.845
Diffident Silence	3	0.816

<b>Questionnaire part</b>	<b>N. of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
Deviant silence	3	0.887
Fear of negative reactions	7	0.887
Mistrust	9	0.908
Lack of management support	5	0.893
Abusing of formal authority	5	0.824
Injustice	5	0.836
Problem identification	6	0.884
Development of alternatives	5	0.861
Evaluation of alternatives	5	0.846
Choosing the alternative	4	0.821
Follow up	6	0.843
The whole of the silence part	55	0.897
The whole of the participation in DMP	26	0.852
The whole questionnaire	81	0.903

Own results

Furthermore, to ensure no multicollinearity and no correlation between the independent variables, variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance indices were conducted. Table (4.25) shows that all VIF values are less than 5 and all Tolerance values are greater than 0.2, which means there is no multicollinearity problem.

Table 4.25: The VIF and tolerance values for the independent variable

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Tolerance</b>	<b>VIF</b>
Fear of negative reactions	.416	2.405
Lack of trust	.226	4.429
Pro-social factor	.514	1.945
Lack of management support	.251	3.983
Lack of self-esteem	.288	3.476
Abusing of formal authority	.233	4.291
Injustice	.226	4.429
Psychological withdrawal	.259	3.866
Diffident Silence	.472	2.119
Deviant silence	.522	1.917

Own results

The data collected were entered into the SPSS software package, where the averages of the sample responses have been calculated for both independent and dependent variables. The

results are moderate for both silence factors and participation in decision-making which were respectively 3.94 and 4.66. Also, from the table, the highest mean among personal factors for males is psychological withdrawal (4.87), while the highest among organizational factors is fear of negative reaction factor (5.1). In contrast, the highest personal factor among the females is the prosocial factor (4.7), while the highest organizational factor is fear of negative reactions (5.37).

Table (4.26) shows the averages and standard deviations of the independent and dependent variables in two ways: the overall questionnaire and based on the gender variable.

Table 4.26: The mean and S. d.

Variables	Mean	S.D	Males' mean	S.D	Females' mean	S.D
Pro-social factor	4.443	1.446	4.288	0.434	4.698	0.744
Lack of self-esteem	4.122	1.472	3.858	0.54	4.394	0.540
Psychological withdrawal	4.818	1.520	4.870	1.024	4.630	0.905
Diffident Silence	2.491	1.486	2.310	1.724	2.853	1.001
Deviant silence	2.278	1.547	2.080	1.774	2.475	1.379
<i>Personal Factors</i>	3.929	1.194	3.782	1.213	3.901	0.956
Fear of negative reactions	5.393	0.690	5.090	1.336	5.365	1.743
Mistrust	2.523	1.584	2.522	1.332	2.794	1.060
Lack of management support	4.843	1.685	4.768	0.941	4.893	1.039
Abusing of formal authority	4.971	1.699	4.920	1.066	5.157	1.169
Injustice	2.686	1.676	2.586	1.268	2.785	1.069
<i>Organizational Factor</i>	3.966	1.389	3.861	0.65	4.093	1.245
Organizational silence	3.941	0.724	3.827	1.206	4.083	1.110
Defining the problem	4.112	1.154	4.168	0.512	4.053	0.627
Development of alternatives	4.771	0.867	4.930	0.250	4.609	0.071
Evaluation of alternatives	5.239	0.933	5.393	0.713	5.085	0.405
Choose Alternate / Solution	5.097	0.830	5.181	0.501	5.014	0.334
Supervision and follow-up	4.361	0.799	4.451	0.229	4.271	0.409
Decision Making Process	4.664	0.582	4.780	0.477	4.579	0.410

Own results

- **The first hypothesis**

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a statistically significant impact (at the level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of Personal (individual) factors (Prosocial factor, Lack of self-esteem, Psychological withdrawal, Diffident Silence and Deviant silence) on participation in the decision-making process.

For testing the first hypothesis, the personal factors of silence were entered as an independent variable, while the decision-making process stages were entered as a dependent variable. Table (4.27) shows the results of the multiple regression analysis of the first hypothesis.

Table 4.27: Multiple regression for the first main hypothesis

	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F-value	Sig	Standardized Beta	t-value	Sig
Pro-social factor						-0.252	-7.333	0.000
Lack of self-esteem						-0.174	-4.901	0.007
Psychological	-0.407	0.166	0.163	65.165	0.000	-0.347	-8.419	0.000
Diffident Silence						-0.031	-0.871	0.472
Deviant silence						-0.018	-0.419	0.629
Own results								

From the table, the correlation coefficient (R= -0.407) indicates an inverse relationship between personal factors of silence and participation in decision-making. R<sup>2</sup> also indicates that personal factors of silence explain 16.6% of the change in the dependent variable. The variance analysis (ANOVA) results for the first hypothesis show that the F ratio = 65.165 and P-value = 0.000. According to the rule, the null hypothesis is accepted if P-value > 0.05, which means that the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, the study model (Personal factors) has an impact on participation in the decision-making process.

The researcher assumed that all personal factors impact public schools' decision-making process, but the results showed that the diffident and deviant factors do not have an impact.

- **The second hypothesis**

**H<sub>2</sub>:** There is a statistically significant impact (at the level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of organizational factors (Lack of trust, Lack of management support, Abusing of formal authority, Injustice and Fear of negative reactions) on participation in the decision-making process.



Table 4.28: Multiple regression for the second main hypothesis

	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F-value	Sig	Standardized Beta	t-value	Sig
Fear of negative reactions						-0.394	-8.612	0.000
Mistrust	-					-0.066	-1.868	0.062
Lack of management support	0.496	0.246	0.243	106.816	0.000	-0.265	-5.380	0.003
Abusing of formal authority						-0.307	-6.605	0.000
Injustice						-0.014	-0.404	0.686

Own results

Table (4.28) shows the second hypothesis test results where the correlation factor ( $R = -0.496$ ) indicates an inverse relationship between organizational factors and participation in decision-making.  $R^2$  also indicates that the organizational factors of silence explain 24.6% of the amount of change in the dependent variable. From the results, we also find that F ratio = 106.816 and P-value = 0.000, the null hypothesis is rejected; the study model (part of the organizational factors) has an impact on the participation in the decision-making process.

The researcher assumed that all organizational factors impact public schools' decision-making process, but the results showed that the mistrust and injustice factors do not have an impact.

- **Third hypothesis**

**H<sub>3</sub>:** There are significant differences in the respondents' responses based on the demographic variables (gender, age, experience and education level).

ANOVA and Levene's at a 95% confidence interval were conducted to test this hypothesis for all demographic variables. The role suggests the null hypothesis is accepted at  $P > 0.05$  and is rejected at  $P < 0.05$ .

*Anova test*

The test results of the differences based on the gender variable show that the p-value for personal factors, organizational factors, and total silence is more than 0.05 (Table 4.29). Thus, the alternative hypothesis is rejected; there is no statistically significant difference in respondents' responses to these variables regarding the respondent's gender.

Table 4.29: ANOVA-Gender

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Personal (Individual) Factors	Between Groups	3.489	1	3.489	2.346	0.126
	Within Groups	2441.175	1641	1.488		
	Total	2444.665	1642			
Organizational Factor	Between Groups	1.2	1	1.200	0.605	0.437
	Within Groups	3253.797	1641	1.983		
	Total	3254.997	1642			
Organizational silence	Between Groups	2.196	1	2.196	1.392	0.238
	Within Groups	2587.698	1641	1.577		
	Total	2589.894	1642			

Own results

The p-values for overall personal factors, organizational factors, and total silence based on age variable are less than 0.05 (Table 4.30). Thus, the alternative hypothesis is accepted; there are statistically significant differences in respondents' responses to these variables regarding different respondents' ages.

Table 4.30: ANOVA-Age

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Personal (Individual) Factors	Between Groups	92.605	4	23.151	16.123	0
	Within Groups	2352.059	1638	1.436		
	Total	2444.665	1642			
Organizational Factor	Between Groups	80.83	4	20.207	10.428	0
	Within Groups	3174.167	1638	1.938		
	Total	3254.997	1642			
Organizational silence	Between Groups	85.704	4	21.426	14.015	0
	Within Groups	2504.19	1638	1.529		
	Total	2589.894	1642			

Own results

The p-values for overall personal factors, organizational factors, and total silence based on experience variable are less than 0.05 (Table 4.31). Thus, the alternative hypothesis is accepted; there are statistically significant differences in respondents' responses to these variables regarding different respondents' length of experiences.

Table 4.31: ANOVA-experience

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Personal (Individual) Factors	Between Groups	109.445	3	36.482	25.605	0
	Within Groups	2335.219	1639	1.425		
	Total	2444.665	1642			
Organizational Factor	Between Groups	70.044	3	23.348	12.015	0
	Within Groups	3184.953	1639	1.943		
	Total	3254.997	1642			
Organizational silence	Between Groups	88.603	3	29.534	19.353	0
	Within Groups	2501.291	1639	1.526		
	Total	2589.894	1642			

Own results

Finally, the p-values for overall personal factors, organizational factors, and total silence based on education level variable are more than 0.05 (Table 4.32). Thus, the alternative hypothesis is rejected; there are no statistically significant differences in respondents' responses to these variables regarding different respondents' education levels.

Table 4.32: ANOVA- Education Level

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Personal (Individual) Factors	Between Groups	6.49	3	2.163	1.461	0.112
	Within Groups	2428.175	1639	1.481		
	Total	2434.665	1642			
Organizational Factor	Between Groups	4.2	3	1.400	0.682	0.359
	Within Groups	3365.797	1639	2.052		
	Total	3369.997	1642			

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.196	3	1.065	0.65	0.377
Within Groups	2687.698	1639	1.639		
Total	2690.894	1642			

Own results

Leven's test

Several statistical tests can be used to test for homogeneity of variance. Of these tests, the most common assessment for homogeneity of variance is Levene's test. However, this assessment has been found to be too sensitive to non-normality.

Appendix (7) shows that the test results based on the gender and level of education variables are low. The "sig" value of the variables are more than 0.05. In contrast, the test results based on the age and experience variables show that data variance is high. The "sig" value of the variables are less than 0.05.

#### 4.2.6 Discussion

The results showed that the problem of silence among teachers is moderate (3.94). The mean of each independent variable was medium (Table 4.26), except (Diffident, Deviant, Mistrust, and the Injustice) were low, indicating that these factors were not relevant to the respondents. The results also showed that on average, the organizational factors of silence had more of an impact on the employees than the personal factors; in other words, organizational practices and policies are causing the biggest issues for the employees regarding the silence problem.

On the other hand, the dependent variables (decision-making process) 's average mean was 4.66, and to a medium degree (Table 4.26). Moreover, each stage's mean indicates a problem in disclosing work problems, both before and after the decision, where the average participation in the first and last phases, defining the problem and follow up, is less than the other phases. The researchers interpret that by the level of responsibility and high sensitivity to both colleagues and organization when talking about problems, unlike the other stages where the responsibility and sensitivity are lower.

Regarding the first hypothesis, the coefficients (Table 4.27), t and sig, indicate that personal factors, other than "Diffident" and "Deviant", impact participation in the decision-making process. The researchers see the impact of the prosocial factor due to the nature of solid relationships between the society members, which they carry or those relations formed at the workplace through working on shared tasks. Employees may prioritize their relations to the organization's interest. Thus, the silence due to this factor is considered a defensive measure to protect someone's relations or avoid workplace ostracism, especially in the case of reporting colleagues' mistakes. The impact of psychological withdrawal and lack of self-esteem can also be linked to the employees' low job satisfaction and the accompanied feeling of non-belonging to the workplace, as Dedahanov & Rhee, (2015) indicated. That could result in a reluctance to contribute to the work decisions. Additionally, the researchers suggest that these two factors could also be linked to the weak recruitment basis in the public sector in Jordan; which relies on hiring and promoting with seniority as the main criteria rather than the interviews and personality tests to reveal the readiness of the individual to handle the job. Besides, the researcher believes that the absence of the deviant and the diffidence factors can be explained by the similarity of the teachers' functional level and the teachers' awareness level to discard such behaviours. Moreover, gender separation in the Jordanian public schools could eliminate the opposite sex's impact on oneself's lack of confidence.

The results of the second hypothesis (Table 4.28) indicate that organizational factors, except Mistrust and Injustice, have an impact on teacher participation in decision-making. The researcher explains this is due to the wrong methods in filling administrative vacancies, currently being done by using seniority as the main criteria, which leads to a gap between the requirements of the job and the applicants' capabilities noted earlier. Also, the wide span of control mostly leads managers to rely more on power and the adoption of classic management methods away from the concept of leadership styles, as Doran et al. (2004) confirmed. On the other hand, Al-Omari (2013) indicated that the schools' principals in Jordan follow the bureaucratic management style; they adhere to the rules and the instructions. Thus, the procedures are applied at the same level to all individuals to avoid losing control over the workplace. The researcher believes that could limit or eliminate the impact of the injustice factor. Additionally, having a unified rewarding system and salary scale applied equally to all teachers who have the same experiences and qualifications could contribute to fairness, even if the salary is not proportional to the effort. The absence of the impact of mistrust factor could be

explained, in addition to the mentioned reasons, by the individuals' strong relationships within the schools' environment, and principals' attempts not to show any bias and be firm with all, limiting the impact of this factor.

In addition to the index averages on the weight of organizational factors, R's value for organizational factors (-0.496) confirms that they have a more significant impact on participation in the decision-making process than personal factors (-0.407); that is, the seventh hypothesis is approved. Furthermore, the Standardized beta coefficient  $\beta$  (Table 4.27 and 4.28) enable us to rank the factors according to their contribution to the criterion variable; the higher value has a higher impact: fear of negative reactions, psychological withdrawal, abuse of authority, lack of management support, prosocial factor, and finally the lack of self-esteem.

The third hypothesis test shows no differences in respondents' responses regarding their gender and educational level. In contrast, the results show differences in responses based on the age variable. The results show a decrease in silence average, personal and organizational factors, as the age increases. The researcher interprets this by increased individual's rationality and realism during his/her career, which leads them to realize the importance of their role and contribution. Also, in phase 1, our interviews showed respondents reference part of their silence to lack of experience and tenure or rank; both affect the ability to express someone's self. However, the silence that results from someone's feeling of lack of experience and low self-esteem could decrease or disappear over time. This speech is supported by the test results for the differences based on the experience variable. The results show significant differences in sample responses, where employees with long experiences have less tendency to silence. Dyne et al. (2003) justified the tendency of experienced and more senior employees to share their opinions by their satisfaction level. He suggested that the employees enter the work with high expectations and ambition levels and try to prove their existence by making possible contributions. Then the satisfaction starts decreasing when they perceive reality. Most of them decide to share less or keep silent; this is true for the newcomers. By the time the individuals' ambition level decreases and the satisfaction starts to increase again. Thus, the level of silence decreases.

Finally, Levene's test shows high variances according to the age and experience variables which could be explained by the big difference in the size between the largest and smallest group. This leads to overestimating the variation, but the overestimation does not cause us to accept or reject the existence of variance falsely because it is associated with relatively large groups.

### **4.3 Phase 3: Measuring silence and its impact on the decision-making process in private schools**

#### *4.3.1 Private schools*

Private schools in Jordan are considered private sector institutions that seek to achieve profit by providing educational services in a distinct environment in parallel with the public schools (e.g. fewer students, recreational facilities, distinguished teaching staff). These schools might have simple (Flat) structures or a tall hierarchy structure with a board of directors, especially international schools. What is important here is the school's level, where the principal at the top and responsible for the day to day decisions and coordination of the staff activities. Teachers at the next level of the hierarchy are mainly responsible for the classroom's teaching process.

Two types of regulations control the private schools; one organizes the academic and educational aspects while the other controls and organizes the administrative and the human resources affairs (labour law), which controls the private sector institutions in general.

In contrast to public schools, hiring in private schools is done based on efficiency and experiences rather than seniority and precedence; who passes the interviews and fulfils the requirements get employed. Moreover, the private sector most often has a well-built reward system and clear evaluation measures that are used as a base for the promotion and salary incrementation. Therefore, the chance to have a gap between the job requirements and the applicant's qualifications is less, especially for managerial positions. Thus, the awareness about the modern managerial and leadership styles can be high due to solid recruitment and promotion conditions. Also, having educated staff and being efficient by hiring according to the real work requirements both could keep the span of control as narrow as possible; that is, the superiors do not have to rely heavily on the formal authority of his/her position (Doran et al., 2004). Thus, the decision-makers to be more democratic rather than using classical decision-making methods and leadership styles. Hence, the researcher believes that personal factors will have more weight than organizational factors in the silence towards decision-making in Jordanian private schools.

**H<sub>8</sub>:** Personal factors are expected to have a greater impact on participation in decision-making than personal factors in private schools.

#### 4.3.2 Study tool, Sampling and methodology

The study society is the same as the previous study, schools' teachers, but this time in the private sector. Hence, the same methodology and questionnaire in the first study are utilized for this phase also. Moreover, the measurement tool reliability, the variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance indices have been tested in phase 2, so there is no need to duplicate the effort. According to the Jordanian ministry of education database, the population consists of 15212 teachers in private schools in Amman Governorate; 2507 males and 12705 females according to MOE databases (2019). The sample reached 1208 teachers of both genders, which is 8% of the entire population. The random sampling method is used to access them, while the google-drive electronic questionnaire tool is utilized to collect the data. Table (4.34) shows the demographic distribution of the sample.

Table 4.33: Demographic distribution

<b>Respondents' Information</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male	303	25.1
	Female	905	74.9
<b>Age</b>	20-30 years	196	16.2
	31-40 years	538	44.5
	41-50 Years	381	31.5
	51-60 Years	90	7.5
	More than 60	3	0.2
	1-10 Years	506	41.9
<b>Experience</b>	11-20 Years	495	41
	21-30 Years	191	15.8
	More than 30	16	1.3
<b>Level of education</b>	Diploma	99	8.2
	Bachelor	855	70.8
	M.A.	223	18.5
	PhD.	31	2.6

Own results

#### 4.3.3 Data analysis and hypothesis testing

The multi regression and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were conducted to test the hypothesis. The data was entered and analyzed by the SPSS software package version 26. The means of the responses were calculated for both the independent and dependent variables. The results for the silence factors were medium, while the average participation in the decision-



making process was high, respectively, 3.6 and 5.29. Table (34) shows the means and standard deviations of the independent and dependent variables.

Table 4.34: The mean and standard deviation

Variables	All		Males		Females	
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
Pro-social factor	3.797	1.216	3.586	1.676	3.868	1.701
Lack of self-esteem	2.280	1.242	2.026	1.953	2.365	1.591
Psychological withdrawal	4.347	2.720	4.592	1.494	4.265	1.496
Diffident Silence	2.764	1.256	2.470	1.719	2.863	1.501
Deviant silence	3.085	1.317	3.014	1.516	3.109	1.449
Personal Factors	3.274	0.984	3.172	1.471	3.308	1.241
Fear of negative reactions	4.179	2.760	3.903	1.755	4.271	1.659
Mistrust	3.922	1.374	3.733	1.518	3.986	1.601
Lack of management support	2.621	1.445	2.516	1.643	2.656	1.881
Abusing of formal authority	3.170	1.459	3.216	1.992	3.154	1.561
Injustice	4.442	1.436	4.623	1.572	4.381	1.516
Organizational Factor	3.733	0.774	3.635	1.417	3.765	1.607
Organizational silence	3.598	1.264	3.369	1.337	3.453	1.225
Defining the problem	4.962	1.154	5.063	2.213	4.795	0.728
Development of alternatives	5.371	0.867	5.418	0.078	5.221	2.285
Evaluation of alternatives	5.591	0.933	5.621	0.007	5.428	2.330
Choose Alternate / Solution	5.692	0.830	5.815	0.122	5.650	2.377
Supervision and follow-up	5.288	0.799	5.595	0.179	5.186	2.277
Decision Making Process	5.285	0.677	5.477	0.341	5.348	0.328
Own results						

- **The fourth hypothesis**

**H<sub>4</sub>:** There is a statistically significant impact (at the level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of Personal (individual) factors (Prosocial factor, Lack of self-esteem, Psychological withdrawal, Diffident Silence and Deviant silence) on the decision-making process in the private schools.

For the fourth hypothesis, the personal factors were entered as an independent variable, and the stages of the decision-making process were entered as a dependent variable. Table (4.35) shows the results of the test.

Table 4.35: Multiple regression for the fourth main hypothesis

	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F-value	Sig	Standardized Beta	t-value	Sig
Pro-social factor						-0.217	-4.681	0.001
Lack of self-esteem						-0.061	-1.520	0.114
Psychological withdrawal	-0.394	0.155	0.151	44.097	0.000	-0.286	-6.312	0.000
Diffident Silence						-0.087	-1.626	0.104
Deviant silence						-0.131	-3.257	0.012
Own results								

From the table, the correlation coefficient (R= -0.394) and the negative t-value show there is an inverse relationship between personal factors and participation in the decision-making process. The value of R<sup>2</sup> indicates that personal factors of silence explained 15.5% of the change in the dependent variable. Also, the results of variance analysis (ANOVA) show that F= 44.1 and P-value = 0.000, where the rule says the null hypothesis is accepted if P-value > 0.05 (Fellows & Liu, 2015), which means that the null hypothesis here is rejected. Thus, the study model (Personal factors) has an impact on the participation of the teachers in the decision-making process.

The researcher assumed that all personal factors impact private schools' decision-making process. However, the Anova test results showed that the lack of self-esteem and diffident factors do not have an impact.

- **The fifth hypothesis**

**H<sub>5</sub>:** There is a statistically significant impact (at the level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of organizational factors (Lack of trust, lack of management support, abusing formal authority, Injustice and Fear of negative reactions) on the decision-making process in the private schools.

For the fifth hypothesis, the organizational factors were entered as an independent variable, and the stages of the decision-making process were entered as a dependent variable. Table (4.36) shows the results of the test.

Table 4.36: Multiple regression for the fifth main hypothesis

	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F-value	Sig	Standardized Beta	t-value	Sig
Fear of negative reactions						-0.269	-5.849	0.000
Mistrust						-0.226	-4.871	0.001
Lack of management support	-0.462	0.213	0.210	65.063	0.000	-0.069	-0.362	0.417
abusing of formal authority						-0.163	-3.864	0.009
Injustice						-0.311	-7.130	0.000

Own results

The correlation factor (R=-0.462) and the negative t-value indicate that there is an inverse relationship between organizational factors and participation in the decision-making process. Furthermore, R<sup>2</sup> tells that the organizational factors explain 21.3% of the change in the dependent variable. Also, in the results, we find that the F ratio =65.01 and P-value =0.000; therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. The organizational factors affect participation in the decision-making process and require the principals to believe that this is genuinely a problem.

The researcher assumed that all organizational factors impact private schools' decision-making process. However, the Anova test results showed that the lack of management support factor does not have an impact.

- **The sixth hypothesis**

**H<sub>6</sub>:** There is a significant impact of the demographic variables (gender, age, region, education level) on the degree of organizational silence towards participating in the decision-making process in private schools.

ANOVA and Levene's tests at 95% confidence interval were conducted to test this hypothesis for all demographic variables. The role suggests the null hypothesis is accepted at P > 0.05 and is rejected at P < 0.05.

The test results of the differences based on the gender variable show the p-value for personal factors is 0.005, while organizational factors is 0.195. Thus, the hypothesis is accepted for personal factors while rejected for organizational factors. There are differences in responses to the personal factors based on the respondent's gender, while there are no differences in responses

to the organizational factors. The p-value for overall silence based on gender is 0.034, indicating differences in responses (Table 4.37).

Table 4.37: ANOVA-Gender

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Personal (Individual) Factors	Between Groups	12.381	1	12.381	8.055	0.005
	Within Groups	1853.585	1206	1.537		
	Total	1865.965	1207			
Organizational Factor	Between Groups	3.351	1	3.351	1.684	0.195
	Within Groups	2399.173	1206	1.989		
	Total	2402.524	1207			
Organizational silence	Between Groups	7.153	1	7.153	4.483	0.034
	Within Groups	1924.28	1206	1.596		
	Total	1931.433	1207			

Own results

The p-values for overall personal factors, organizational factors, and total silence based on age variable are less than 0.05 (Table 4.38). Thus, the alternative hypothesis is accepted; there are statistically significant differences in respondents' responses to these variables regarding different respondents' ages.

Table 4.38: ANOVA-Age

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Personal (Individual) Factors	Between Groups	36.749	4	9.187	6.042	0
	Within Groups	1829.216	1203	1.521		
	Total	1865.965	1207			
Organizational Factor	Between Groups	37.695	4	9.424	4.794	0.001
	Within Groups	2364.829	1203	1.966		
	Total	2402.524	1207			
Organizational silence	Between Groups	35.614	4	8.903	5.65	0
	Within Groups	1895.819	1203	1.576		
	Total	1931.433	1207			

Own results

The p-values for overall personal factors, organizational factors, and total silence based on experience variable are less than 0.05 (Table 4.39). Thus, the alternative hypothesis is accepted; there are statistically significant differences in respondents' responses to these variables regarding different respondents' length of experiences.

Table 4.39: ANOVA-Experience

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Personal (Individual) Factors	Between Groups	29.481	3	9.827	6.442	0
	Within Groups	1836.485	1204	1.525		
	Total	1865.965	1207			
Organizational Factor	Between Groups	24.668	3	8.223	4.163	0.006
	Within Groups	2377.856	1204	1.975		
	Total	2402.524	1207			
Organizational silence	Between Groups	26.019	3	8.673	5.48	0.001
	Within Groups	1905.414	1204	1.583		
	Total	1931.433	1207			

Own results

Finally, the p-values for overall personal factors, organizational factors, and total silence based on education level variable are more than 0.05 (Table 4.40). Thus, the alternative hypothesis is rejected; there is no statistically significant difference in respondents' responses to these variables regarding different respondents' education levels.

Table 4.40: ANOVA-Education level

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Personal (Individual) Factors	Between Groups	8.495	3	2.83166	1.845	0.136
	Within Groups	1847.47	1204	1.534		
	Total	1855.965	1207			
Organizational Factor	Between Groups	5.554	3	1.85133	0.931	0.425
	Within Groups	2396.97	1204	1.988		
	Total	2402.524	1207			
Organizational silence	Between Groups	7.104	3	2.368	1.481	0.218
	Within Groups	1924.329	1204	1.59811692		
	Total	1931.433	1207			

Own results

#### *Levenes' test*

Appendix (8) shows that the test results based on the gender and level of education variables are low. The "sig" value of the variables are more than 0.05. In contrast, the test results based on the age and experience variables show that data variance is high. The "sig" value of the variables are less than 0.05.

#### *4.3.4 Discussion*

The results indicated that the teachers have a medium degree of silence (3.6) towards the decision-making process. The mean for each independent variable was medium (Table 4.34), except (diffident, lack of self-esteem, lack of management support) were low, which means these factors were not important or relevant to the respondents. The table also showed that the mean of the organizational factors (3.73) is more than the personal factors (3.27); in other words, administrative policies and practices could have a greater role in the silence problem from the respondents' point of view.

Participation in the decision-making process is high as the dependent variables' overall mean is 5.285, which is relatively high (Table 4.34). In contrast, the arithmetic mean of each phase of the decision-making process shows less participation in defining the problem and following up the decisions than the other phases. This means the teachers find it harder to report work problems and issues. The researcher explains this by the high sensitivity and responsibility level when talking about the problems, unlike the other phases in which the responsibility is lower. Moreover, as mentioned previously, the desire to avoid damaging the relationships could be a strong reason for not talking about the work problems, mainly when these problems caused or related to a colleague (Rhee et al., 2014).

Table (4.35) shows the test results for the fourth hypothesis. The "t" and "sig" values indicate that personal factors, other than lack of self-esteem and diffident, have an impact on participation in the decision-making process; many reasons could explain this impact. The impact of the prosocial factor could result from the strong relationships and high sense of responsibility among individuals in Jordan society, or even those heavily built at the workplace during working closely together, which could be prioritized over the organization's interest. Thus, prosocial factor could be even defensive to protect relations or avoid ostracism in the

workplace, especially when talking about the mistakes or problems caused by a colleague. This is supported by Rhee's findings that individuals at the workplace tend to retain their relationships by avoiding intervention in other affairs.

The researcher could interpret the psychological withdrawal as a feeling of frustration and non-belonging to the workplace. According to phase 1 results, withdrawal could arise from the feeling that there is nothing worth the effort, the tendency to leave the work, and the individuals' belief that not interfering and staying silent brings peace of mind and keeps someone away from work problems. This is supported by (Dedahanov & Rhee, 2015) and Mashaqbah's (2018) opinion that individuals who receive no return on effort and feel not belonging to the workplace are less to contribute to problem-solving, and they do not take the lead. Despite the importance of all factors and their potential impact on decisions, the researcher believes that the existence of deviant silence behaviour in an academic environment, such as the schools' environment, is a real danger. Thus, there is a must for schools principals to know that the main goal of the deviant silence is not to stay away or avoid participating, but it aims to achieve a personal interest, such as having the management tolerating the employee's faults in exchange for his/her silence towards the management's faults. However, this type of silence can get worse when it aims at harming the organization or its members by keeping silent about a problem with a decision and letting it gets worse, according to Milliken et al. (2003). The researcher also believes that the absence of "lack of self-esteem" and "diffident" factors can be explained by the functional level parity and the awareness in the educational society. The hiring methods based on tests and personal interviews could also enhance the ability to reach those who have the required qualities and have confidence and self-independence.

The results of the fifth hypothesis (Table 4.36) indicate all organizational factors, except lack of management support, have an impact on the silence towards the decision-making process. Thus, the administrative practices play an essential role in the silence problem by hindering the teachers' participation, affect their perception of the general meaning of participation, and weakens their readiness to participate in the decision-making process. Indeed, researches indicated that employees, in general, avoid taking responsibility as much as possible and often have a fear of negative reactions to their behaviours (Fuller et al., 2006; Timming & Johnstone, 2015). This support our findings that the fear of going through disputes or being responsible in

case of decision failure could limit the teachers' willingness to participate. Thus, principals should not underestimate teachers' participation or blame them for committing mistakes. However, they should push them to speak and improve. Also, the lack of job opportunities and the fear of losing the job makes the employees reluctant to discuss the decisions and push them to accept them even if they feel they are wrong or harmful. Schools' principals should know this, and they have to improve the teachers' feeling of security.

The newly employed individuals most often have a high-performance level, where everyone seeks to obtain appreciation and to show that they are trustworthy. Then, employees start to have ideas about the returns on their efforts and participation; if there is support, these efforts will continue; if not, it will decrease until it reaches the low levels that keep the employee in his job (Sarwar et al., 2010; Sekerka & McCraty, 2004). That also applies to the teachers' participation and contribution to the decisions; if their contributions are not welcomed and appreciated, teachers will become reluctant to participate and turn to silence due to a lack of support. Also, some motives such as ignoring the employees' role, unequal participation opportunities, taking the discussions subjectively or following the personal interests when making the decision result in a feeling of injustice and loss of confidence, which could lead the employees to not to participate in the decisions.

Furthermore, as for the absence of the impact of abusing formal authority, the researcher believes that hiring schools principals with long experiences and good knowledge of the modern leadership models limited this factor. Wasserman et al. (2016) had the same opinion when they found that the experienced principals who follow modern leadership styles are more likely to empower and delegate authority to their subordinates to make decisions. In our case, the private schools usually hire principals who left the public schools and have a long experience in the education field.

On the other hand, the results (Table 4.35 & 4.36) show that R's value for both organizational factors is -0.484 and the personal factors -0.432, which means that organizational factors have a greater impact than personal factors on the silence problem. Thus, at the opposite of what was expected, the eighth hypothesis is rejected. The researcher assumed that the used recruitment methods in private schools could produce administrations capable of practising modern leadership styles and making the impact of the organizational factors as minimal as possible, but



it was not the case. From the researcher's point of view, the reason could be that the school principals' modern administrative practices are only unreal (e.g. asking the employees for their opinions about a decision with the prior intention not to take them into account). The contradiction between having the impact of the lack of management support and the absence of the authority abuse impact on the participation could justify the researcher's opinion. In other words, the teachers' feeling of lack of management support and there is no appreciation for their efforts while they do not see the management as authoritarian could lead to a conclusion that the modern administrative practices used by schools principals are unreal. These practices could only aim to improve teachers' impression of the management since they are keen not to let the highly experienced teachers think about leaving the job.

Moreover, Standardized beta results (Table 4.35 & 4.36) enable us to rank the factors according to the size of their impact from the highest to the lowest as follows: Injustice, psychological withdrawal, fear of negative reactions, mistrust, prosocial factor, abuse of formal authority and deviant factor.

The sixth hypothesis test shows differences in respondents' responses regarding their gender, where the females teachers showed more silence level based on personal factors. In contrast no differences in responses to the organizational factors based on gender. The researcher justifies this by the psychological readiness due to teaching being the preferable career path for females in Jordan. Indeed, teaching job offering females stable employment and early leave, at 3 max. It is a routine work, no need for overtime and working hours are less than other jobs. This makes the teaching jobs in high demand for females, and replacement could be found easily. Therefore, female teachers try to retain their jobs by avoiding a clash with management. One of the job defence technics is not to intervene in managerial affairs and not to participate in the decision-making process. Thus, silence towards the decisions could be the best strategy for them. In contrast, teaching is not a preferable job for males in Jordan since it does not offer career development. For males, a large number consider teaching as a temporary job (Abu Hassouneh, 2014). This could push them to speak more than females regarding the work issues. This opinion could be supported by the fact that males' teachers turnover rate is higher than for females (Ahmad et al., 2018).

The results show differences in responses based on the age and experiences variables. The results show a decrease in silence average, based on personal and organizational factors, as the age and experience increase. These results are similar to phase 2, where the researcher clarified the potential reasons for these differences.

Finally and again, Levene's test shows high variances according to the age and experience variables. As mentioned in the previous stage, this variance could be explained by the difference in the size between the largest and smallest groups. This leads to overestimating the variation, but the overestimation does not cause us to accept or reject the existence of variance falsely because it is associated with relatively large groups.

#### **4.4 Phase 4: A comparison of the organizational silence in public and private schools**

Although the increased importance of the silence problem, the research on this subject, specifically in Jordanian schools, is very scarce. The comparative research relevant to this topic seems not to exist at all. Therefore the researcher utilized the previous studies that compared the public and private sector in general, and those searched the differences between public and private schools in various aspects. This could help to compare the silence issue in public and private schools.

This phase of the study aims to compare silence factors in public and private schools to figure out whether there are differences in these factors based on the sector or not. This endeavour could contribute to our understanding of some silence mechanism in public and private sectors in general.

As mentioned earlier, public schools differ from private schools not only in the quality of the educational process but also in recruitment and human resource management. When we talked about schools at the beginning of Phase 3 and 4, two types of regulations that govern Jordanian schools were clarified. The first governs the educational process; it is unified for all schools. The other regulation governs recruitment methods and wages, and it differs in public schools from private schools—the public schools' HR controlled by the civil service law, which is used for all public institutions. In contrast, private schools' HR follows the so-called labour law. The researcher believes that the differences between the two sectors in managing their human resources, incentive systems, training programs, promotion and other technical matters could result in a difference in the reasons that might lead individuals to silence. Accordingly, the ninth and tenth hypotheses have been formulated.

**H<sub>9</sub>:** There are statistically significant differences between the silence factors based on the sector variable.

**H<sub>10</sub>:** There is a statistically significant difference in the degree of silence between public and private sector schools.

#### 4.4.1 Data analysis and hypotheses testing

The data collected in phase 2 and 3 are utilized to conduct this study. The sample size from the public sector is 1643, while the sample from the private sector is 1208. Thus, the sample size in this phase is 2851.

ANOVA at 95% confidence interval was conducted to test these hypotheses for all personal and organizational factors. The role suggests the null hypothesis is accepted at  $P > 0.05$  and is rejected at  $P < 0.05$ .

#### - Testing the Ninth hypothesis

Table 4.42: Test of the differences in personal factors in both sectors

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Prosocial factor	Between Groups	28.250	1	28.25	13.601	0.000
	Within Groups	5918.354	2849	2.077		
	Total	5946.604	2850			
Lack of self-esteem	Between Groups	36.677	1	36.677	22.202	0.000
	Within Groups	4699.886	2849	1.652		
	Total	4736.563	2850			
Psychological withdrawal	Between Groups	24.933	1	24.933	10.831	0.001
	Within Groups	6558.903	2849	2.302		
	Total	6583.836	2850			
Diffident Silence	Between Groups	4.599	1	4.599	3.532	0.060
	Within Groups	3709.546	2849	1.302		
	Total	3714.145	2850			
Deviant silence	Between Groups	23.866	1	23.866	18.330	0.000
	Within Groups	3710.546	2849	1.302		
	Total	3734.412	2850			

Own results

Table 4.43: Test of the differences in organizational factors in both sectors

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Fear of negative reactions	Between Groups	25.841	1	25.841	10.625	0.001
	Within Groups	6928.386	2849	2.432		
	Total	6954.227	2850			
Mistrust	Between Groups	31.089	1	31.089	20.083	0.000
	Within Groups	4410.419	2849	1.548		
	Total	4441.508	2850			
Lack of management support	Between Groups	41.001	1	41.001	21.156	0.000
	Within Groups	5520.764	2849	1.938		
	Total	5561.765	2850			
Abusing of formal authority	Between Groups	37.030	1	37.03	17.701	0.000
	Within Groups	5961.249	2849	2.092		
	Total	5998.279	2850			
Injustice	Between Groups	33.327	1	33.327	19.558	0.000
	Within Groups	4855.890	2849	1.704		
	Total	4889.217	2850			

Own results

The test results of the differences based on the sector variable show that the p-values for each personal factors, except the "Diffident" factor, are less than 0.05 (Table 4.42). Thus, the ninth hypothesis is accepted for the prosocial factor, lack of self-esteem, psychological withdrawal, and deviant silence. There are differences among responses to these factors based on the sector in which teachers work.

The test results of the differences based on the sector variable show that the p-values for each organizational factor are less than 0.05 (Table 4.43). Thus, the hypothesis is accepted for all organizational factors. There are differences among responses to these factors based on the sector in which teachers work.

- *Testing the tenth hypothesis*

Table 4.44: Test of the differences in silence in both sectors

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Organizational silence	Between Groups	11.900	1	11.9	6.280	0.012
	Within Groups	5398.823	2849	1.895		
	Total	5410.723	2850			

Own results

The tenth hypothesis is different from the previous one. It tests whether there is a difference or not among the two sectors regarding the overall silence. The test results show that the p-value of the silence is less than 0.05 (Table 4.44). Thus, the hypothesis is accepted; there are differences in silence degrees based on the sector in which teachers work.

*4.4.2 Discussion*

The results showed differences between the public and private sector regarding the personal factors except for the diffident factor. These differences could be due to various reasons related to the nature of the silence factor.

Public schools have a higher level of prosocial factors than private ones. The difference is statistically significant. The hiring method in public schools could play a critical role in this difference. The MOE try to hire teachers from the locals; the school's surrounding. Most have relationships and connection out of the work-frame. Moreover, in many cases, relatives or neighbours teachers could be hired in the same school. These relationships could be prioritized over work interest. The private schools do not consider the place of residence of applicants when they are hiring. Thus, the opportunity to have informal relationships among teachers is much less than in public schools. Teachers in private schools also feel unsecured about their jobs. They are defending their jobs by avoiding any problems or mistakes. Therefore, if any problem threatens their work, they would report it regardless of the relationships with their colleagues.

Lack of self-esteem and psychological withdrawal also have significant differences. The results show that both factors are higher in public sector schools. This could be due to many reasons. As aforementioned, the civil service bureau is hiring in the public sector based on the application seniority. The applicants generally apply to get a job in the public sector; they have no right to

mention the preferred job in the application. Some applicants keep waiting their turn for long years to get hired in the public sector with the hope to get a prestigious job. However, a teaching job is not a preferable career in Jordan, especially for males. Therefore, getting a job that is not preferable and not on the level of ambition could cause a withdrawal and give a feeling of low self-esteem. In contrast, teachers in private schools have more psychological readiness; they have chosen to go for the teaching field.

Also, the recruitment process is to be considered a primary reason. In-person interviews enable HR managers to better evaluate a candidate's attitude and preferences and assess vital non-verbal attributes. At the interview, hiring managers can often tell whether a candidate fits the job from the very first moments. They know whether the work environment will suit the job seeker's personality and working style. This opinion is justified by the fact that using personal interviews and tests allows revealing many personal aspects like self-confidence and communication skills (Tooms & Crowe, 2004).

The employees, in general, compare their work conditions with others in the same field; the public schools' teachers work in challenging conditions compared to those in private schools (e.g. crowded classes, no entertainment facilities, chain of commands). In contrast, private schools offer more facilities and a more comfortable teaching environment. These differences contribute to the feeling of withdrawal.

The results show no significant differences between the public and private schools regarding the diffident factor. The degree of reported diffidence is relatively low compared with the other factors. However, in phase 2 and 3, diffident has no impact on the silence towards the decision-making process. Although the hiring method in private schools allows reaching those who have a good self-confidence level, the private schools reported a slightly higher level of diffidence. The researcher justifies this by gender mixing (males and females teachers) in private schools, while the public ones are gender separated. The Jordanian society is considered a conservative society and focuses on gender separation; this could add communication barriers when mixing. Thus, the public schools reported less diffident issue because gender separation could conceal part of the diffident impact.

On the other hand, the results show that all organizational factors have significant differences based on the sector. The fear of negative reactions, lack of management support, and formal authority abusing show a higher degree in public schools. The researcher interprets this due to some reasons related to employees perception of their management. For instance, public teachers are hired to be close to their homes, while this option is not available for private schools' teachers. Thus, the fear of being transferred to a further school could be a reason to not intervene in decisions. Also, the span of punishments is wider and more diversified in public schools than in private schools. The principals have control over every aspect of the work. For example, the size of the workload and annual evaluation could be affected by one's relationship with the principal.

The lack of management support and authority abusing also result from the poor methods and conditions used to hire in managerial positions. Public schools most often have seniority as a primary condition. In contrast, the private sector hires experienced ones, which affects management quality. The principals with high managerial skills are more open to others' opinions and less relying on their authority (Detert & Burris, 2007). Also, principals with leadership qualities know how to build good relationships with teachers, promote teamwork, support innovation, appreciate the effort and push employees to contribute more. Thus, the principals who are open to others accept criticism and are more likely to encourage teachers to speak and participate. This opinion is supported by (Al-Omari, 2013) findings that the relationship with the principal was a statistically significant predictor of teachers' comfort regarding speaking up about their concerns.

The results also show significant differences between public and private schools regarding the mistrust and injustice factors. Both factors have a higher degree in private schools. The researcher interprets this first by the nature of workplace relationships. Either among the teachers themselves or between teachers and the principals. As mentioned before, the principals in private schools are chosen with high qualities. This could affect their view of teachers' ability to solve problems and lead them to underestimate their opinions. Someone may ask how it could pay that experienced principals push teachers for more contribution, and at the same time, they may underestimate teachers' abilities. Phase 3 results could answer this question when it has been found there was no authority abuse. At the same time, there was mistrust, which was



justified by having principals who behave democratically, but in reality, he/she is not taking the participations seriously—repeated ignoring lead teachers to feel that raising a problem or concern to their principal would not make a difference in how their school operated. The sense of futility creates mistrust and provoke questions about the perceived intentions of the leader (Elizabeth Wolfe Morrison & Milliken, 2003). Employees' decisions to trust authority are influenced more by the perceived intentions of the leaders than by judgments of their competencies (Timming & Johnstone, 2015). Also, someone's desire to keep his job drives him/her to keep cautious and not trust all, since losing the job in the private sector, in general, is easier than the public one.

The injustice factor also has significant differences in both types of schools. Private schools experience a higher level of injustice based on the respondents' opinions. Many reasons could justify this difference when comparing the two sectors. First, private schools do not have salaries scale. Thus, the salaries are not equal for teachers with the same experiences and in the same sector, and sometimes in the same school. Another reason for having higher injustice in private schools could be that female teacher get lower wages than males in private schools. This leads to a feeling of injustice when teachers compare their salaries with their peers. This is due to the high demand for teaching jobs by females.

Moreover, when comparing some aspects like working hours, health insurance, job security level, and end of service compensations, public schools offer teachers all these benefits. In contrast, most private schools do not. However, teachers in private schools are highly skilled, and they expect to get returns that commensurate to what they contribute. When it comes to reality, they have fewer advantages compared to the teachers in public schools. Tangirala and Ramanujam (2008) suggest that although employees may possess excellent skills, employee silence will continue unless these attributes are accompanied by a perception that fairness is granted to all.

## 5 Conclusion and limitation

### 5.1 New scientific results

The research contributes to a better understanding of the silence phenomenon. It discussed the silence problem in public and private schools' environment. Thus, the similarity of the work tasks allows for better comparison between the public and private sector. This schapter summarizes the new scientific findings as follows.

1. The newly developed measurement tool is considered the first endeavour to measure the silence towards the decision-making process using a tool that developed for this purpose.
2. Correlating the silence to a specific problem when investigating the underlying motives contributed to identifying new motives directly related to participation in decisions, unlike the previous research, which studied the general silence motives.
3. The research confirms that there is a statistically more significant impact (at the level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of organizational factors (Fear of Negative Reactions, Lack of Management, Abusing of Formal Authority) on the participation in the decision-making process of public schools than personal factors (Pro-social Factor, Lack of Self-esteem, Psychological Withdrawal). (H1-2-7)
4. The research confirms that there are no differences in respondents' responses regarding their gender and age. However, there is a significant difference regarding their age variable, so silence decreases as age increases in public schools. (H3)
5. The research confirms that there is a statistically more significant impact (at the level  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of organizational factors (Fear of Negative Reactions, Mistrust, Abusing of Formal Authority and Injustice) on the decision-making process in the private schools than personal factors (mainly Pro-social Factor, Psychological Withdrawal and Deviant Silence). (H4-5-8)
6. The research confirms that there are differences in respondents' responses regarding their age and experiences, so silence decreases as age and experience increase in private schools. (H6)
7. The research confirms that there are statistically significant differences between the silence factors based on the sector variable. (H9)

8. The research confirms that there are statistically significant differences in silence degrees based on the sector in which teachers work. (H10)

Table 5.1: Summary of hypothesis tests

Hypothesis	Decision	
H1: There is a statistically significant impact (at the level $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of Personal (individual) factors on the decision-making process in the public schools	Accepted for all personal factors except diffident and deviant factors	
H2: There is a statistically significant impact (at the level $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of organizational factors on the decision-making process in the public schools.	Accepted for all organizational factors except mistrust and Injustice factors	
H3: There are significant differences in the respondents' responses based on the demographic variables (gender, age, experience and education level).	Rejected for gender and education. Accepted for age and experiences	
H4: There is a statistically significant impact (at the level $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of Personal (individual) factors on the decision-making process in private schools.	Accepted for all personal factors except lack of self-esteem and diffident factors	
H5: There is a statistically significant impact (at the level $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of organizational factors on the decision-making process in private schools.	Accepted for all organizational factors except lack of support	
H6: There are significant differences in the respondents' responses based on the demographic variables (gender, age, experience and education level).	Gender	Accepted for personal factors and rejected for organizational factors
	Age	Accepted
	Experience	Accepted
	Education	Rejected
H7: organizational factors are expected to have a greater impact on participation in decision-making than personal factors in public schools.	Accepted	
H8: Personal factors are expected to have a greater impact on participation in decision-making than personal factors in public schools.	Rejected	

Hypothesis	Decision
H9: There are statistically significant differences between the silence factors based on the sector variable.	Accepted for the prosocial factor, lack of self-esteem, psychological withdrawal, and deviant silence. Also accepted for all organizational factors.
H10: There is a statistically significant difference in the degree of silence between public and private sector schools.	Accepted
Own results	

## 5.2 Conclusion and Application

The first phase of the study investigated the underlying motives and related factors of silence. The interviews revealed 55 motives for silence which are classified according to their main factors. Also, 26 decision-related situations were reported by the respondents. The interviews included question measures the sample's tendency to silence. 82% of the sample said they prefer to remain silent always, often, or sometimes.

The second phase focused on two main points. First, developing a measurement tool of silence towards the decisions. Second, measuring the size and impact of organizational silence on the decision-making process in public schools in Amman. The Impact hypotheses have been accepted for: psychological withdrawal, fear of negative reactions, abuse of power, social relations factor, lack of management support, and low self-esteem. In contrast, the rest of the factors had no impact.

The third phase measures and tested the hypotheses in private schools. The results show that the silence problem exists with a medium degree in the study society. The results also show an impact of personal and organizational factors on teachers' participation in the decision-making process in private schools. Impact hypotheses have been accepted for injustice, psychological withdrawal, fear of negative reactions, mistrust, prosocial factor, abuse of formal authority and the deviant factor. In contrast, the rest of the factors had no impact.

## - **Application**

The results show the impact of each personal and organizational factor so that decision-makers and stakeholders can sort them according to their importance. Thus, decision-makers could apply the results of the research in setting up a solid treatment plan to ensure the efforts are not wasted. The results also help those concerned with organizational development and rehabilitation programs, especially in the human resource departments, to understand an aspect of individual and organizational behaviour related to participation in the decision-making process. This study provides a reasonable basis for the organization in a critical area related to define the organization's training and rehabilitation needs and helping set up training programs to fulfil these needs. It can also help in understanding and benefit from a priority plan for developing personal aspects and correcting organizational behaviours that cause silence, whether for administrative staff or teachers.

Moreover, the MOE could use the results to minimize this silence impact by bridging the divides between public and private sector schools. In other words, the MOE could utilize the results to bring the positive practices from each sector to help in improving the negative ones. For instance effective recruitment practices that used in private sector schools can contribute to minimizing the impact of the personal factors as well as the organizational factors. Also, the training center at the MOE could be more effective in solving work-related issues within the schools. The center could develop more reliable training programs based on these results.

Alternatively, the study results are not limited to the schools' environment or particular sector institutions but can also be considered a testament to both public and private organizations in general. At least in Jordan and the countries with the same culture, since we focused on administrative and organizational behaviour and some factors related to the individuals' actions and culture.

### **5.3 Limitation and future work**

Although this study contributed to our understanding of the silence problem, the statistical analysis showed that the factors explained only 40% and 37% of the change in participation in the decision-making process in both types of schools, respectively. Multiple reasons could have limited this. One of the primary reasons is, as mentioned previously, that a directive management

style is used in Jordanian organizations generally; this style could nurture a sense of dependence, which in turn leads to an organizational culture of silence. Besides, this silence can affect the questionnaires' answers as well as the decision-making process. It could be argued that a shorter questionnaire and rewording some of the questions in future studies could solve this issue. Moreover, this study distributed questionnaires to the teachers alone and not the principals. This could block us from reaching accurate answers on motives that teachers do not want to talk about, especially personal ones that could lead to blame them. However, one of the studies that could be suggested is conducting in-depth qualitative interviews with Jordanian schools' principals. This could reveal more motives and details on the employees' silence from a different point of view. Thus, more details and motives could be revealed on the silence problem from different perspectives.

## **Summary**

The results emphasized the ability to measure silence towards participation in the decision-making process. The research presented a new measurement tool to determine the silence degree, particularly towards the decision-making process. Thus, a diagnostic tool is available for those interested in organizational behaviour and HR. The interviews revealed 55 different motives, which were classified to their main factors. Besides, 26 decision-related situations that describe the occasion in which the silence happened were reported. The revealed motives could help set a training plan that enhances the overall performance, not only the participation in decisions. However, the silence problem exists at a medium level in both types of schools and inversely related to participation in the decision-making process—the more silence level, the less participation, which leads to less effective decisions.

Moreover, the results confirmed that organizational factors have more impact on participation in the DMP in both public and private schools. This does not underestimate the role of the personal factors regarding the silence problem. Also, the results confirmed that there are no differences in responses regarding the respondents' gender and education level. However, there is a significant difference regarding their age and experiences in both public and private schools. In addition, the research confirmed that there are statistically significant differences among the silence factors and in silence degree based on the sector variable. Finally, the results defined the impact of each factor so that decision-makers can redirect their efforts based on a priority plan. Thus, it is easier to set up training programs to fulfil the real organizational requirements.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Interview guide

This study is concerned with identifying the reasons for the staff's silence towards decisions in the Jordanian public and private schools' environment by identifying the situations associated with the decision-making process in which you chose silence instead of speaking up and participating.

In this interview, we would like to ask you questions about the situations you have encountered regarding the decisions in your workplace, specifically those for which you have chosen to be silent, the motives and reasons behind the silence, so please speak freely and openly to make the most of this study. The respondents' identity and personal information are secret and not accessible to any official or other entity and cannot be accessed by anyone.

*With respect*

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1. Did you work in previous educational jobs?
2. In general, to what extent do you prefer silence and not to go into business decisions?

Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

3 - The process of decision-making passes through several stages (identifying the problem and pointing to it, providing solutions and alternatives, evaluating alternatives and expressing an opinion, choosing alternatives, follow-up and giving opinions in the consequences of the decisions taken)

Have you ever had the opportunity to participate or have any information or opinion in any of the stages or situations related to the decision-making process and preferred to keep silent? Mention in detail one or more of these.

During the interview, the following questions are used to help manage the interview:

- A. What kind of participation could you contribute?



B. What made you silent/What are the motives behind your silence?

C. What were the expected results or reactions if you decided to talk and not to be silent in this case?

## Appendix 2

### Appendix 2A: coding the silence factors

Factor	Symbol
Abusing of formal authority	1
Lack of management support	2
Deviant Silence	3
Lack of trust	4
Injustice	5
Fear of negative reactions	6
lack of self-esteem	7
Pro-social silence	8
Diffident Silence	9
Psychological withdrawal	10
Management fear of negative reactions	11
If it does not belong to any of the above	0

### Appendix 2B: coding the stages of the decisions factors

Decision-Making stage	Symbol
Defining the problem	1
Development of alternatives	2
Evaluation of alternatives	3
Choose Alternate / Solution	4
Supervision and follow-up	5

**Appendix 3:**

Appendix 3A: Classification results of the decisions-related situations

Seq	Situation	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5
S1	Abstention of reporting work problems in general	1	1	1	1	1
S2	Abstention of reporting colleagues' mistakes	1	5	1	1	1
S3	Abstention of reporting troubles resulting from the decisions	3	5	5	5	5
S4	Abstention of suggesting solution/alternative that increases the workload	1	2	2	2	2
S5	Abstention of indicating the cost and the real value of the alternatives/solutions	3	3	3	3	3
S6	Abstention of suggesting some adjustments to the decision taken	5	5	2	4	5
S7	Abstention of reporting the problems that don't affect personally	1	1	1	1	1
S8	Abstention of suggesting any alternatives/solutions	2	2	2	2	2
S9	Abstention of indicating the illegal alternatives/solutions	3	4	5	3	3
S10	Abstention of indicating the best among the alternatives if not asked to do	4	4	3	4	4
S11	Abstention of choosing the alternative that satisfies all parties	4	2	4	4	4
S12	Abstention of indicating that the applied decision is wrong	5	3	5	5	5
S13	Abstention of reporting the problems that are being committed by the employee himself	3	1	5	1	1
S14	Abstention of suggesting the solution/alternative that satisfies all parties	2	2	4	2	2
S15	Abstention of suggesting the alternative that requires taking responsibility	2	2	2	2	2
S16	Abstention of indicating the appropriateness of the decision implementing timing	5	4	5	5	5
S17	Abstention of reporting the less important problems	1	5	1	1	1
S18	Abstention of reporting the problems that are expected not to be solved	1	5	1	1	1
S19	Abstention of suggesting more economically viable solutions/alternatives	3	2	2	2	2
S20	Abstention of indicating any deviation from the actual objectives	1	5	5	5	5
S21	Abstention of indicating the unreality of the alternatives/solutions	3	1	3	3	2
S22	Abstention of choosing the alternatives that require more efforts	4	4	5	4	4
S23	Abstention of indicating that the alternatives are futile/not valuable	1	3	3	3	3
S24	Abstention of indicating the expected outcomes on the suggested alternatives	3	4	3	3	3
S25	Abstention of choosing the alternative that is compatible with the available capabilities	3	4	2	4	4
S26	Abstention of indicating that the used implementing methods are wrong	5	4	5	5	5

Own results

Appendix 3B: Classification results of the decisions-related situations

Seq	Silence Motives	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5
M1	The management takes the discussion personally and not objectively	4	1	4	4	4
M2	To avoid any effect on my performance evaluation	6	6	6	4	6
M3	To avoid hurting my colleagues' feelings	8	6	8	8	8
M4	My participation might harm a colleague's job	8	8	8	6	8
M5	To avoid losing the job	6	6	1	6	6
M6	To avoid any conflicts with the management	6	6	6	6	6
M7	To keep good relations with my colleagues	8	8	8	8	8
M8	Lack of appreciation on our efforts	6	6	10	6	7
M9	The management considers itself the only one who has the right to make decisions	1	2	1	1	1
M10	The management does not support innovation	2	2	2	2	2
M11	The management underestimates our efforts and opinions	2	4	2	2	2
M12	The salary I get is not worth the efforts I do	0	10	5	5	5
M13	I do not want to take responsibility in the case of any mistake or failure of the decision	6	6	10	6	7
M14	The management is rigid in applying regulations and has no flexibility	1	1	0	1	1
M15	To avoid being labelled as a troublemaker	10	10	6	6	6
M16	To avoid losing the trust of colleagues	8	8	8	6	8
M17	The management does not accept any debate about the decision	1	1	4	3	1
M18	The management does not support cooperation/teamwork	2	4	2	2	2
M19	The management takes decisions that meet their personal interests	4	5	1	4	4
M20	The management is not decisive towards troublemakers	4	4	4	2	4
M21	The management attributes the achievements to themselves	5	4	5	5	4
M22	The management does not differentiate between hard and inactive employees	0	5	2	5	5
M23	My work position does not allow me to intervene in decisions	7	2	7	7	7
M24	Lack of awareness on some administrative issues	0	7	2	7	7
M25	Being silent brings me the tranquillity	10	7	10	10	10
M26	If the decisions do not directly affect me or my work, I do not intervene	0	10	10	8	10
M27	The management does not give us an opportunity to participate	2	7	2	2	7
M28	The management considers us incapable of understanding and taking decisions	4	4	4	2	2

Seq	Silence Motives	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5
M29	The management is unable to solve the problems at work	4	4	4	4	4
M30	My opinion will not have any impact	7	7	7	4	7
M31	To stay away from work issues and problems	10	6	10	10	0
M32	The management does not raise the issues for discussion	2	1	2	1	1
M33	The management considers our intervention as mistrust in its ability to make decisions	4	4	2	5	4
M34	The management does not consider the privacy of people who report the problems	0	4	2	4	4
M35	The management listens only to the opinions of selected people	2	4	5	5	5
M36	Fear of being transferred to another work location	6	6	4	6	6
M37	The colleagues asked not to intervene with the decisions that affect them	0	8	4	8	8
M38	To avoid any embarrassment	9	6	9	9	6
M39	Nothing worth pay more efforts	10	10	5	5	10
M40	The management does not accept criticism on decisions	1	2	2	1	1
M41	The management doesn't admit its mistakes	6	5	4	0	4
M42	The management does not fairly apply procedures in case of problems and faults	5	4	5	5	5
M43	To avoid being labelled as a complainer	6	6	6	7	6
M44	Being afraid that colleagues will not support my opinions	6	7	7	10	7
M45	Unsure what to say.	9	7	9	7	9
M46	Frustrated with the current job	10	10	10	7	10
M47	Silence makes the management satisfied with me	3	7	3	10	3
M48	The management is not able to make any change	4	4	4	0	4
M49	My participation will be dismissed	7	7	6	7	7
M50	Not having the power or authority to change	7	7	0	7	7
M51	Lack of sufficient knowledge in legislation and regulations	7	4	7	7	7
M52	Because I do not want to appear incompetent	9	9	9	7	7
M53	To avoid contact with others in the workplace	10	10	10	10	10
M54	Silence brings me some personal interests with the management	3	7	3	3	3
M55	If I keep silent, the management will skip on my mistakes	3	6	6	3	3

**Appendix 4:**

Standard deviation and relative importance (Decision-making items)

	Mean	Std. Deviation	RII	Descriptive
When I see a problem at work, I report it immediately	5.348	1.443	76%	Important
I report the mistakes which my colleagues make	3.924	1.712	56%	Important
I report the problems, even if they don't affect me	4.345	1.751	62%	Important
I report the problem/mistake that I make	4.847	1.588	69%	Important
I report the problems whatever their size and importance	4.290	1.740	61%	Important
I report the problems even if I expect they will not be solved	4.343	1.824	62%	Important
Defining the problem	4.551	1.154	65%	Important
If I have a solution to the problem, I will speak it up	6.051	1.081	86%	Very important
If I have a better solution, I will share it even if it will increase my workload	5.546	1.326	79%	Important
If I have a solution that satisfy all parties, I will share it	6.105	1.036	87%	Very important
If I have a solution that requires me to take responsibility, I will share it	5.534	1.223	79%	Important
If I have more economically feasible solution than the proposed, I will share it	5.622	1.194	80%	Very important
Development of alternatives	5.516	0.867	79%	Important
If the proposed solution cost more than their value, I will point that out	5.297	1.410	76%	Important
If the proposed solution is contrary to the laws and regulations, I will point that out	5.288	1.565	76%	Important
I point out how realistic the solutions are	5.723	1.029	82%	Very important

	Mean	Std. Deviation	RII	Descriptive
I point if the solutions are useless/futile	5.463	1.366	78%	Important
I contribute to identifying the expected outcomes on the proposed alternatives/solutions	5.566	1.011	80%	Important
Evaluation of alternatives	5.479	0.933	78%	Important
Even if I'm not asked, I participate in choosing the best solution to the problem	5.429	1.229	78%	Important
I participate in choosing the solution that satisfies all parties	5.963	1.045	85%	Very important
I participate in choosing the best solution even If it requires me more effort.	5.724	1.169	82%	Very important
I participate in choosing the solution that is viable and compatible with the available capabilities	5.879	1.026	84%	Very important
Choose Alternate / Solution	5.670	0.830	81%	Very important
If the decision caused trouble at work, I would point out that.	5.599	1.025	80%	Very important
If I have adjustments to improve the results of the decisions, I will share them	5.755	1.004	82%	Very important
If I notice that the decision is wrong, I will point that out	5.690	1.111	81%	Very important
If I notice that there is a problem with the timing of the decision implementation, I will point out that	5.671	1.056	81%	Very important
If I notice that there is a deviation from the actual objective of the decision, I will point out that	5.642	1.056	81%	Very important
If I notice that the methods used to implement the decision are wrong, I will point that	5.646	1.082	81%	Very important
Supervision and follow-up	5.698	0.799	81%	Very important
Decision Making Process	5.383	0.678	77%	Important

Own results

Appendix 5: Standard deviation and relative importance (silence items)

	Mean	Std. Deviation	RII	Descriptive
To avoid any influence on my performance evaluation	3.575	1.815	51%	Somewhat important
To avoid losing my job	3.455	1.811	49%	Somewhat important
To avoid any conflicts with the management	3.908	1.834	56%	Somewhat important
Because I do not want to take responsibility in case of any mistake or failure of the decision	3.663	1.797	52%	Somewhat important
To avoid being labelled as a troublemaker	3.564	1.809	51%	Somewhat important
Due to fear of getting transferred to another work location	3.151	1.781	45%	Somewhat important
To avoid being labelled as a complainer	3.564	1.848	51%	Somewhat important
Fear of negative reactions	3.554	1.436	51%	Somewhat important
Because the management takes the discussion personally and not objectively	3.797	1.905	54%	Somewhat important
Because the management takes decisions that meet their personal interests	3.859	1.913	55%	Somewhat important
Because the management is not decisive towards troublemakers	3.926	1.948	56%	Somewhat important
Because the management considers us incapable of understanding and taking decisions	3.657	1.928	52%	Somewhat important
Because the management is unable to solve the problems at work	3.648	1.907	52%	Somewhat important
Because the management considers our intervention as mistrust in its ability to make decisions	3.696	1.885	53%	Somewhat important
Because the management does not consider the privacy of people who report the problems	3.541	1.872	51%	Somewhat important

	Mean	Std. Deviation	RII	Descriptive
Because the management does not admit its mistakes	3.890	1.931	56%	Somewhat important
Because the management is not able to make any change	3.716	1.885	53%	Somewhat important
Lack of trust	3.748	1.584	54%	Somewhat important
To avoid hurting my colleagues' feelings	4.693	1.748	67%	Important
Because participation might harm a colleague's job	4.979	1.660	71%	Important
To keep good relations with my colleagues	4.554	1.731	65%	Important
To avoid losing the trust of my colleagues	4.480	1.771	64%	Important
Because my colleagues don't like to intervene with the decisions that affect them	4.379	1.718	63%	Important
Pro-social factor	4.617	1.446	66%	Important
Because there is no appreciation on my efforts	3.729	1.933	53%	Somewhat important
Because the management does not support innovation	3.731	1.963	53%	Somewhat important
Because the management underestimates our efforts and opinions	3.766	1.908	54%	Somewhat important
Because the management does not support the cooperation/teamwork	3.444	1.863	49%	Somewhat important
Because the management does not give us the opportunity to participate	3.491	1.872	50%	Somewhat important
Lack of management support	3.632	1.685	52%	Somewhat important
Because my work position does not allow me to intervene in the decisions	3.744	1.887	53%	Somewhat important
I don't have sufficient knowledge on the administrative issues	3.791	1.892	54%	Somewhat important
Because my opinion will not make any impact	3.635	1.840	52%	Somewhat important



	Mean	Std. Deviation	RII	Descriptive
Because my colleagues won't support me in my opinions	3.441	1.797	49%	Somewhat important
Because my participation will be dismissed	3.396	1.808	49%	Somewhat important
Because I do not have the authority to change	3.943	1.902	56%	Somewhat important
Because I don't have sufficient knowledge in the legislation and regulations	3.595	1.863	51%	Somewhat important
Lack of self-esteem	3.649	1.472	52%	Somewhat important
Because the management considers itself the only who has the right to take the decisions	3.805	1.947	54%	Somewhat important
Because the management is rigid in applying the regulations and has no flexibility	3.682	1.915	53%	Somewhat important
Because my boss does not accept any debate about the decision	3.637	1.922	52%	Somewhat important
Because the management does not raise the issues for discussion	3.896	1.906	56%	Somewhat important
Because the management does not accept criticism on the decisions	3.918	1.909	56%	Somewhat important
Abusing of formal authority	3.788	1.699	54%	Somewhat important
Because the salary I get is not worth the efforts I do	3.176	1.973	45%	Somewhat important
Because the management attributes the achievements to themselves	3.636	1.948	52%	Somewhat important
Because the management does not differentiate between the hard worker and the hardly-work employee	3.681	2.007	53%	Somewhat important
Because the management listens only to the opinions of selected people	3.988	2.030	57%	Somewhat important
Because the management does not fairly apply the procedures in case of problems and faults	3.967	1.981	57%	Somewhat important

	Mean	Std. Deviation	RII	Descriptive
Injustice	3.690	1.676	53%	Somewhat important
Because it achieves me the tranquility	3.954	1.962	56%	Somewhat important
If the decisions do not directly affect me or my work	3.891	1.869	56%	Somewhat important
Because I prefer to stay away from work issues and problems	3.584	1.877	51%	Somewhat important
Because nothing worth paying extra efforts	3.133	1.783	45%	Somewhat important
Because I am frustrated with my job	3.432	1.906	49%	Somewhat important
To avoid contacting with the others in the work environment	3.244	1.772	46%	Somewhat important
Psychological withdrawal	3.540	1.520	51%	Somewhat important
To avoid any embarrassment	3.399	1.805	49%	Somewhat important
Because I am unsure what to say.	4.672	1.770	67%	Important
Because I do not want to appear incompetent	4.044	1.850	58%	Somewhat important
Diffident Silence	4.038	1.486	58%	Somewhat important
Because silence makes the management satisfied with me	2.805	1.736	40%	Somewhat important
Because silence brings me some personal interests with the management	2.655	1.725	38%	Very little important
Because when I keep silent, the management will skip on my mistakes	2.619	1.653	37%	Very little important
Deviant silence	2.693	1.547	38%	Very little important
Personal (Individual) Factors	3.880	1.220	55%	Somewhat important
Organizational Factor	3.510	1.408	50%	Somewhat important
Organizational silence	3.695	1.256	53%	Somewhat important

Own results

## Appendix 6: Study tool

### Demographic information

Gender				
	Male			Female
Age				
20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	More than 60
Experience				
	1-10	11-20	21-30	More than 30
Education level				
	Diploma	Bachelor	M.A	PhD.

Silence part: By adding "I keep silent" for each following item

#### Pro-social factor

- To avoid hurting my colleagues' feelings
- Because participation might harm a colleague's job
- To keep good relations with my colleagues
- To avoid losing the trust of my colleagues
- Because my colleagues do not like to intervene with the decisions that affect them

#### Lack of self-esteem

- Because my work position does not allow me to intervene in the decisions
- I do not have sufficient knowledge on the administrative issues
- Because my opinion will not make any impact
- Because my colleagues would not support me in my opinions
- Because my participation will be dismissed
- Because I do not have the authority to change
- Because I do not have sufficient knowledge in the legislation and regulations

#### Psychological withdrawal

- Because it achieves me the tranquillity
- If the decisions do not directly affect me or my work
- Because I prefer to stay away from work issues and problems

- Because nothing worth paying extra efforts
- Because I am frustrated with my job
- To avoid contacting with others in the workplace

#### Diffident Silence

- To avoid any embarrassment
- Because I am unsure what to say.
- Because I do not want to appear incompetent
- Deviant silence
- Because silence makes the management satisfied with me
- Because silence brings me some personal interests with the management
- Because when I keep silent, the administration will skip on my mistakes

#### Fear of negative reactions

- To avoid any influence on my performance evaluation
- To avoid losing my job
- To avoid any conflicts with the management
- Because I do not want to take responsibility in case of any mistake or failure of the decision
- To avoid being labelled as a troublemaker
- Due to fear of getting transferred to another work location
- To avoid being labelled as a complainer

#### Mistrust

- Because the management takes the discussion personally and not objectively
- Because the management takes decisions that meet their personal interests
- Because the management is not decisive towards troublemakers
- Because the management considers us incapable of understanding and taking decisions
- Because the management is unable to solve the problems at work
- Because the management considers our intervention as mistrust in its ability to make decisions

- Because the management does not consider the privacy of people who report the problems
- Because the management does not admit its mistakes
- Because the management is not able to make any change

#### Lack of management support

- Because there is no appreciation for my efforts
- Because the management does not support innovation
- Because the management underestimates our efforts and opinions
- Because the management does not support the cooperation/teamwork
- Because the management does not give us the opportunity to participate

#### Abusing of formal authority

- Because the management considers itself the only one who has the right to make the decisions
- Because the management is rigid in applying the regulations and has no flexibility
- Because my boss does not accept any debate about the decision
- Because the management does not raise the issues for discussion
- Because the management does not accept criticism on the decisions

#### Injustice

- Because the salary I get is not worth the efforts I do
- Because the management attributes the achievements to themselves
- Because the management does not differentiate between the hard worker and the hardly-work employee
- Because the management listens only to the opinions of selected people
- Because the management does not fairly apply the procedures in case of problems and faults

## **Decision-making process part:**

### Defining the problem

- When I see a problem at work, I report it immediately
- I report the mistakes which my colleagues make
- I report the problems, even if they do not affect me
- I report the problem/mistake that I make
- I report the problems whatever their size and importance
- I report the problems even if I expect they will not be solved

### Development of alternatives

- If I have a solution to the problem, I speak it up
- If I have a better solution, I will share it even if it will increase my workload
- If I have a solution that satisfies all parties, I will share it
- If I have a solution that requires me to take responsibility, I will share it
- If I have a more economically feasible solution than the proposed, I will share it

### Evaluation of alternatives

- If the proposed solution cost more than their value, I will point that out
- If the proposed solution is contrary to the laws and regulations, I will point that out
- I point out how realistic the solutions are
- I point if the solutions are useless/futile
- I contribute to identifying the expected outcomes on the proposed alternatives/solutions

### Choose Alternate / Solution

- Even if I am not asked, I participate in choosing the best solution to the problem
- I participate in selecting the solution that satisfies all parties
- I participate in selecting the best solution even If it requires me more effort.
- I participate in choosing the solution that is viable and compatible with the available capabilities

### Supervision and follow-up

- If the decision caused trouble at work, I would point that out.

- If I have adjustments to improve the results of the decisions, I will share them.
- If I notice that the decision is wrong, I will point that out
- If I see that there is a problem with the timing of the decision implementation, I will point that out.
- If I notice that there is a deviation from the actual objective of the decision, I will point that out.
- If I notice that the methods used to implement the decision are wrong, I will point that out.

#### Appendix 7

Test of Homogeneity of Variances- public schools			
Variable		Levene Statistic	Sig.
Gender	Personal (Individual) Factors	0.745	0.561
	Organizational Factor	2.049	0.085
	Organizational silence	0.926	0.448
Age	Personal (Individual) Factors	7.946	0.015
	Organizational Factor	8.42	0.009
	Organizational silence	8.05	0.012
Experience	Personal (Individual) Factors	8.043	0.005
	Organizational Factor	9.286	0.002
	Organizational silence	9.947	0.002
Educational level	Personal (Individual) Factors	2.354	0.07
	Organizational Factor	0.267	0.85
	Organizational silence	1.574	0.194

Own results

Appendix 8

Test of Homogeneity of Variances- private schools			
Variable		Levene Statistic	Sig.
Gender	Personal (Individual) Factors	3.542	0.061
	Organizational Factor	1.091	0.297
	Organizational silence	2.221	0.137
Age	Personal (Individual) Factors	3.126	0.026
	Organizational Factor	4.185	0.01
	Organizational silence	4.001	0.019
Experience	Personal (Individual) Factors	5.017	0.027
	Organizational Factor	4.105	0.033
	Organizational silence	4.605	0.036
Educational level	Personal (Individual) Factors	0.585	0.626
	Organizational Factor	2.257	0.082
	Organizational silence	1.87	0.134
Own results			



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## Declaration

DECLARATION, I the undersigned **Osama Alkhlaifat**, by signing this declaration declare that **“Employees' silence towards the decision-making process”** my PhD thesis was my own work; during the dissertation, I complied with the LXXVI. And the rules of the doctoral dissertation prescribed by the Doctoral School, especially regarding references and citations.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, I declare that I did not mislead the supervisor (s) or the programme leader with the dissertation.

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