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The Relationship Between Organizational Silence and Organizational Citizenship Behavior Among Female Administrative Staff at King Abdulaziz University

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Abstract:

This study examines the relationship between organizational silence (OS) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) among female administrative employees at King Abdulaziz University, focusing on the impact of OS on five dimensions of OCB: altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness, and civic virtue. Using a quantitative cross-sectional design with a sample of 176 employees, data were collected via a structured questionnaire adapted from validated scales. Correlation and regression analyses revealed significant negative relationships between OS and each OCB dimension, with OS also showing a strong predictive effect on the total OCB score. These findings highlight the detrimental role of OS in reducing employees' engagement in discretionary behaviors critical to organizational success. The study underscores the need for policies that promote open communication, trust, and inclusivity to mitigate the effects of OS and foster a collaborative and proactive work environment.

Keywords: Organizational Silence, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Female Employees, Academic Institutions, Saudi Arabia.

JEL Classification codes: M, M1, M19, M190

1. Introduction

Organizational silence (OS) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) are pivotal factors shaping workplace dynamics and influencing organizational performance. OS arises when employees withhold feedback, ideas, or concerns, often due to fear, mistrust, or an organizational culture that discourages openness (Sulphey, 2020). This phenomenon can stifle innovation, hinder communication, and negatively affect employee engagement. In contrast, OCB refers to voluntary and discretionary behaviors that extend beyond formal job requirements to support organizational goals (Manafzadeh et al., 2018). These behaviors, altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness, and civic virtue, are essential for fostering collaboration, enhancing team cohesion, and driving institutional success.

In academic institutions, particularly in Saudi Arabia, these dynamics are magnified among administrative employees who are key to ensuring organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Female administrative staff, in particular, face unique challenges rooted in cultural, social, and organizational factors, which may exacerbate organizational silence and constrain their ability to exhibit OCB (Alraies, 2019; Knoll et al., 2021). At institutions like King Abdulaziz University, these challenges are especially pronounced due to structural and cultural norms that can discourage open communication and limit opportunities for female employees to engage in discretionary, citizenship-oriented behaviors.

Despite widespread efforts to improve workplace engagement and inclusivity in Saudi Arabia, organizational silence remains a persistent issue, especially among administrative staff in higher education. Female employees in these roles often encounter additional social and cultural barriers, such as hierarchical structures and gender-based constraints, which amplify the prevalence and impact of organizational silence. Organizational silence hinders behaviors critical to organizational success, particularly OCB, which drives collaboration, morale, and long-term growth. However, limited empirical research explores the relationship between OS and OCB in the Saudi context, particularly in higher education institutions. This gap in the literature highlights the need to examine how organizational silence influences OCB and its five dimensions among female administrative employees at King Abdulaziz University.

In the light of the above discussion, the research problem has been shaped by the following question: What is the relationship between organizational silence and the five dimensions of OCB (altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness, and civic virtue)?

To answer this question, this study seeks to examine the relationship between organizational silence and each dimension of OCB.

Research Motivations, Gaps, and Contributions

The motivation for this study arises from the critical need to understand the interplay between organizational silence (OS) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in Saudi higher education institutions, particularly among female administrative employees. Administrative staff play a pivotal role in supporting academic institutions, ensuring operational efficiency, and fostering a productive workplace culture. However, the presence of OS, driven by fear, mistrust, and cultural or structural barriers, can undermine these efforts by discouraging employees from voicing concerns, sharing ideas, or engaging constructively with colleagues. This silence, in

turn, has a profound effect on OCB, which is vital for enhancing teamwork, efficiency, and morale.

The unique context of Saudi Arabia further intensifies the importance of this research. The higher education sector in Saudi Arabia is undergoing rapid transformation, driven by Vision 2030, which emphasizes the development of human capital, gender inclusion, and academic excellence. Female administrative employees are integral to achieving these goals, yet they face distinct challenges, such as rigid hierarchical structures, gender-based constraints, and cultural norms that may exacerbate OS. These barriers not only limit their potential contributions but also hinder the overall performance of academic institutions. Despite the growing recognition of these issues, the relationship between OS and OCB in this specific context remains underexplored, creating a significant gap in the literature.

Existing research extensively documents the negative effects of OS on workplace dynamics and its role in reducing engagement, collaboration, and morale. However, most studies treat OCB as a holistic construct, neglecting its individual dimensions, such as altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness, and civic virtue. This generalized approach overlooks the nuanced ways in which silence impacts specific aspects of OCB, which are critical for organizational success. Furthermore, there is a dearth of studies addressing the experiences of female administrative employees in Saudi universities. While some research highlights the challenges these employees face, few studies examine how these challenges translate into OS and its subsequent effects on OCB.

This study makes significant contributions by addressing these gaps. First, it offers a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between OS and the five dimensions of OCB, providing a deeper understanding of how silence shapes workplace behaviors. Second, it focuses on female administrative employees in the unique cultural and organizational context of Saudi universities, adding to the limited body of research on this population. By shedding light on these dynamics, this research contributes to the literature in several ways. It advances theoretical understanding by linking OS to specific dimensions of OCB, rather than treating OCB as a monolithic construct. It also provides practical implications for fostering more inclusive and communicative workplace environments in Saudi academic institutions, emphasizing the need for policies and interventions that address the structural and cultural barriers faced by female employees. Ultimately, this study supports the broader goals of improving employee engagement, enhancing institutional performance, and promoting gender equity in the workplace.

The remainder of the paper is divided as follows: Section 2 provides a literature review, including background, theoretical framework, and hypotheses development. Section 3 describes the research methodology. Section 4 presents the results, and Section 5 discusses the findings and concludes with recommendations.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Background

In organizational studies, Organizational Silence (OS) refers to the collective phenomenon in which employees withhold their opinions, feedback, or concerns due to fear of negative consequences, lack of trust in leadership, or a perception that their input will not result in meaningful change (Sulphey, 2020). According to Asgari et al. (2020), organizational silence is not merely the absence of communication but a deliberate act

influenced by organizational culture and leadership styles that discourage open dialogue. This silence can manifest at individual, group, or organizational levels, creating barriers to effective communication and collaboration. Organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB), a concept introduced by Organ (1988), encompass discretionary behaviors exhibited by employees that go beyond formal job responsibilities and contribute to the organization's overall effectiveness. These behaviors are typically categorized into dimensions such as altruism (helping colleagues), courtesy (politeness and consideration), sportsmanship (tolerance of inconveniences), conscientiousness (going beyond formal duties), and civic virtue (active participation in organizational activities). Each dimension reflects a specific aspect of voluntary workplace behavior that supports organizational harmony, efficiency, and success.

Both concepts, OS and OCB, are critical in organizational studies because they significantly influence workplace dynamics, employee engagement, and overall performance. Organizational silence, for instance, is often associated with reduced innovation, lower job satisfaction, and decreased productivity (Fard & Karimi, 2015). On the other hand, OCB is widely recognized as a predictor of organizational success, fostering a positive work environment and promoting mutual support among employees (Hao et al., 2022). Exploring the interplay between these two concepts is essential for understanding how organizational practices can either hinder or enhance employee behaviors that are vital for achieving strategic goals.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Several scholars have established on various theories to explain the relationship between organizational silence (OS) and organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB). He et al. (2018), grounded in conservation of resources and social identity theories, investigate how compulsory citizenship behaviors (a nonvoluntary version of citizenship behavior) lead to employee silence through emotional exhaustion, with organizational identification moderating this relationship. By applying conservation of resources and social exchange theories, Bergeron & Thompson (2020) also explored the connections between employee voice, perceptions of organizational politics, and perceived organizational support (POS). The Social Exchange Theory (SET), as proposed by Blau (1964), offers a compelling lens through which to understand the impact of OS on OCB. At its core, SET posits that workplace relationships are built on reciprocal exchanges of resources, trust, and support. Employees engage in discretionary behaviors that exceed formal job requirements when they perceive that their organization values their contributions and provides a supportive environment. These behaviors, collectively known as OCB, are critical for fostering collaboration, maintaining workplace harmony, and enhancing organizational performance (Purnama, 2013).

Organizational silence, including acquiescent silence, defensive silence, and prosocial silence, disrupts this reciprocal dynamic by creating a climate where employees feel that their voices are neither heard nor valued (He et al., 2019). In such environments, employees are likely to perceive a breach in the psychological contract with their organization (Bari et al., 2020). This perceived breach erodes trust and diminishes the sense of obligation to contribute beyond prescribed roles. Consequently, behaviors such as assisting colleagues, showing tolerance in the face of challenges, or proactively

engaging in organizational activities are significantly reduced. Silence also hinders the flow of communication that is vital for building mutual understanding and cooperative relationships. When employees refrain from sharing ideas, concerns, or feedback, it not only limits problem-solving and innovation but also fosters an atmosphere of disengagement. This disengagement can weaken behaviors such as conscientiousness, where individuals are motivated to maintain high standards of responsibility, or courtesy, where they anticipate and address the needs of others to prevent conflict (Bezirci, 2019; Kılınç & Ulusoy, 2014).

At an organizational level, the cumulative effect of silence manifests as a decline in the overall occurrence of OCB. SET explains this decline as the breakdown of trust and fairness in the workplace, which are foundational to the exchange process. When employees feel undervalued or perceive an inequitable relationship, they are less inclined to invest in behaviors that benefit the organization or their peers. This withdrawal from citizenship behaviors undermines the organization's social fabric, diminishing its capacity to achieve collective goals (Elstad et al., 2011; Liaquat & Mehmood, 2017). Through the lens of SET, it becomes evident that organizational silence not only suppresses individual contributions but also disrupts the broader relational dynamics that drive organizational success (Acaray & Akturan, 2015). This framework highlights the importance of trust, open communication, and perceived fairness in mitigating the adverse effects of silence and fostering a culture of engagement and mutual support (Yang & Kung, 2024).

2.3 Hypotheses Development

Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCB) are voluntary, discretionary actions by employees that contribute to the organization's effectiveness but are not formally rewarded or recognized. These behaviors, encompassing dimensions such as altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness, and civic virtue, enhance workplace harmony, collaboration, and overall productivity (Organ, 1988). A robust body of research highlights OCB's critical role in fostering organizational success, as it promotes social cohesion and adaptability in dynamic environments (Organ, 2018; Podsakoff et al., 2000). Organizational silence (OS), defined as employees' intentional withholding of information, ideas, or feedback from organizational discourse, poses a significant threat to the cultivation of OCB (Nafei, 2016a). OS arises from factors such as fear of retaliation, a lack of psychological safety, or cultural norms that discourage dissent (Sulphey, 2020). This phenomenon disrupts trust, stifles collaboration, and diminishes employees' willingness to contribute beyond their defined roles. While the detrimental effects of OS on OCB are acknowledged in the literature, deeper insights are needed to understand the nuanced relationships between silence and specific dimensions of OCB.

Organizational silence often emerges from a combination of individual, socio-demographic, organizational, and contextual factors (John & Manikandan, 2019). Factors such as fear of embarrassment, limited understanding of ethical responsibilities, absence of opportunities to express opinions, and insufficient organizational political skills are identified as contributing to silence (Sulphey, 2020). Leadership styles, also, play a pivotal role; authoritarian or fear-based leadership amplifies silence by fostering climates of intimidation and reduced psychological safety (Mi et al., 2019; Detert & Edmondson, 2011). Similarly, organizational culture is instrumental in shaping communication norms; cultures that prioritize hierarchical control over open dialogue

inadvertently stifle employee voice and diminish engagement in OCB (Abd Halim et al., 2017). On an individual level, psychological factors such as fear of negative evaluations or perceived lack of self-efficacy can deter employees from expressing concerns or participating in cooperative behaviors (Alshahrani & Iqbal, 2021; Liu et al., 2020). The interplay between these factors illustrates a vicious cycle: silence discourages behaviors like altruism and courtesy, which are integral to fostering social harmony in organizations. This cycle underscores the importance of addressing silence to preserve the multidimensional contributions of OCB to organizational outcomes.

Organizational silence, characterized by the collective withholding of opinions, concerns, or ideas, is widely recognized as a significant inhibitor of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). Employees who feel constrained by silence are less likely to exhibit discretionary behaviors that go beyond formal job descriptions, such as helping colleagues, maintaining workplace harmony, or engaging in organizational governance (Hao et al., 2022). Research has consistently shown a negative relationship between organizational silence and employees' willingness to display OCB (Manafzadeh et al., 2018). For instance, Nafei (2016b) demonstrated that silence reduces collaboration and undermines trust, which are critical for fostering OCB. Similarly, Wang et al. (2020) emphasized that silence leads to decreased morale and engagement, further eroding employees' motivation to engage in altruistic or conscientious behaviors. Analyzing employee silence can offer opportunities to address and prevent negative behaviors in the workplace (Saghih & Ilani, 2023). Bezirci (2019) indicated that silence for the benefit of the organization increases altruism, conscientiousness, courtesy, sportsmanship and civil virtue.

Kılınç & Ulusoy (2014) examined the connections between OCB, OS, and employee performance, finding a statistically significant relationship. Specifically, while a strong positive relationship was observed between employee performance and the conscientiousness, civic virtue, and altruism dimensions of OCB, no significant correlation was found between employee performance and the courtesy dimension of OCB. Additionally, although prosocial silence was positively related to employee performance, acquiescent silence and defensive silence were not found to significantly impact performance. This suggests that certain dimensions of both OCB and organizational silence can influence employee outcomes, while others have little or no effect. Shahjehan & Yasir (2015) found that OS and voice driven by resignation or defense negatively impact OCB, while prosocial silence and voice have a positive effect on OCB. Furthermore, the strength of these relationships is influenced by organizational identification (OI); higher levels of OI amplify the positive effects of prosocial silence and voice, while intensifying the negative impact of resignation and defensive silence and voice on OCB. This suggests that employees with a strong sense of organizational identification are more likely to exhibit behaviors that align with the organization's goals, whether positive or negative. In addition, Ahmadian et al. (2023) indicated that relational silence, diffident silence, and deviant silence serve as mediators in the relationship between organizational trust and organizational commitment. This suggests that the presence of different forms of silence can influence how trust within an organization affects employees' commitment levels.

Acaray & Akturan (2015) indicated that acquiescent and defensive silence negatively impact organizational citizenship behavior, whereas prosocial silence has a positive influence on it. At the universities level, Harbalioğlu & Gültekin (2014) examined the relationship between OS and OCB among employees at Kilis 7 Aralık University in Turkey. Their findings revealed that employees often remain silent due to concerns about damaging relationships and managerial-organizational factors. Among OCB dimensions, acts of courtesy were most commonly displayed by employees and there was a weak and negative relationship between OS and OCB.

In the Saudi context, organizational silence is often magnified by cultural norms that emphasize respect for authority and discourage open communication (Al-Ghamdi, 2023). Female administrative employees face additional barriers, including gendered workplace dynamics and limited decision-making autonomy, which exacerbate the negative impact of silence on their willingness to exhibit OCB. For example, studies at some Saudi universities suggest that organizational silence significantly diminishes female employees' engagement in collaborative and altruistic behaviors due to perceived risks of voicing opinions (Alraies, 2019). Promotive voice involves offering suggestions for improvement, while prohibitive voice focuses on addressing unethical or harmful practices (Mohammad et al., 2023).

2.3.1 OS and OCB Dimensions

- **Altruism**

Altruism, defined as voluntary behaviors that assist others in performing tasks or overcoming challenges, is profoundly impacted by organizational silence. When employees fear negative consequences or perceive a lack of psychological safety, they are less likely to help colleagues or engage in cooperative behaviors. Bezirci (2019) argue that silence reduces the sense of collective responsibility, which is central to fostering altruistic behaviors. Moreover, trust and openness, key drivers of altruism, are eroded in silence-prone environments (Brinsfield & Edwards, 2020). However, Al alwani & Tufekci (2023) found that there is no significant effect of silence on altruism in hospitals in Anbar, Iraq.

In the Saudi context, particularly among female administrative employees at higher education institutions such as King Abdulaziz University, the cultural emphasis on hierarchical structures often amplifies organizational silence (Alraies, 2019). Female employees, already navigating cultural and organizational challenges, may hesitate to voice concerns or offer assistance in environments that prioritize authority over collaboration. These dynamics further limit altruistic behaviors. Thus, organizational silence negatively affects altruism among female administrative employees in Saudi universities, as exemplified by their reluctance to engage in supportive behaviors in rigid organizational structures (BinBakr & Ahmed, 2019). Thus, we raise the following hypothesis:

H1: There is a significant negative relationship between organizational silence and altruism among female administrative employees at King Abdulaziz University

- **Courtesy**

Courtesy, which involves proactive efforts to prevent conflict or minimize disruptions in workplace dynamics, is similarly hindered by organizational silence. Silence fosters

communication gaps and misunderstandings, as employees refrain from sharing critical information or addressing issues directly (Bari et al., 2020). Morrison and Milliken (2000) emphasize that such voids increase interpersonal tensions and reduce mutual consideration among team members. In Saudi universities, female administrative employees often encounter unique challenges due to cultural expectations and gendered workplace dynamics (Ruzungunde et al., 2020). For instance, at Princess Nourah University, a female-focused institution, it is noted that misunderstandings in silence-prone environments are exacerbated by limited direct communication, particularly in mixed-gender teams or hierarchical settings. These dynamics significantly reduce courtesy, leading to strained interpersonal relationships. Consequently, organizational silence negatively impacts courtesy among female administrative employees in Saudi universities, where cultural and gender norms further restrict open dialogue and mutual consideration. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H2: There is a significant negative relationship between organizational silence and courtesy among female administrative employees at King Abdulaziz University.

- **Sportsmanship**

Sportsmanship, defined by employees' ability to tolerate minor frustrations or inconveniences, is also adversely influenced by organizational silence. When employees feel their concerns are ignored, dissatisfaction and cynicism increase, undermining their willingness to exhibit patience and positivity. Organ (2018) highlights the importance of trust in sustaining sportsmanship, which silence-prone climates erode. Bezirci (2019) found that the defensive silence has positively affected on sportsmanship. Kim & Wang (2024), also argued that workplace silence fosters resentment and disengagement. In the Saudi context, female administrative employees often face compounded frustrations due to limited avenues for expressing grievances and a lack of responsive organizational structures. For example, at Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University, it is noted that female employees in administrative roles often report heightened dissatisfaction in silence-prone environments, where their feedback is perceived as undervalued or disregarded. This contributes to diminished tolerance for workplace challenges. Therefore, organizational silence negatively affects sportsmanship among female administrative employees in Saudi universities, where cultural and structural factors amplify these effects. Therefore, we posit the following hypothesis:

H3: There is a significant negative relationship between organizational silence and sportsmanship among female administrative employees at King Abdulaziz University.

- **Conscientiousness**

Conscientiousness, or employees' inclination to exceed minimum job requirements through self-discipline and responsibility, is significantly compromised in silence-prone organizational settings (Morrison, 2014). When employees feel unrecognized or undervalued, their intrinsic motivation to perform beyond expectations declines. Dehkharghani et al. (2023) found that silence fosters disengagement, diminishing proactive behaviors and undermining conscientiousness. In Saudi universities, female administrative employees often encounter additional barriers that exacerbate these effects. For example, studies at King Saud University reveal that rigid hierarchical systems and limited opportunities for recognition discourage female employees from

taking initiative or demonstrating responsibility beyond basic job requirements. These conditions create a disengaged workforce, further reducing conscientiousness. Thus, organizational silence negatively impacts conscientiousness among female administrative employees in Saudi universities, particularly in environments where structural and cultural norms restrict their agency and motivation (Deatherage, 2017). Therefore, we suggest the following hypothesis:

H4: There is a significant negative relationship between organizational silence and conscientiousness among female administrative employees at King Abdulaziz University.

- **Civic Virtue**

Civic virtue, reflecting employees' active involvement in organizational governance and decision-making, is perhaps the most visibly affected dimension of OCB in silence-prone environments. Organizational silence suppresses participatory behaviors, discouraging employees from contributing ideas or opinions and marginalizing their role in shaping organizational policies. Sadeghi & Razavi (2020) notes that silence reduces innovation and adaptability, as employees disengage from organizational objectives. However, Al alwani & Tufekci (2023) found that there is no significant effect of protective silence on civic virtue in hospitals in Anbar, Iraq.

In Saudi universities, civic virtue is further constrained by cultural norms and hierarchical decision-making processes. For instance, at Umm Al-Qura University, it is noted that female administrative employees often feel excluded from governance and decision-making forums, largely due to gendered organizational dynamics and limited communication channels. These barriers prevent them from fully engaging in participatory behaviors, diminishing their sense of ownership, commitment to the organization, and creativity (Sadeghi & Razavi, 2020). Consequently, organizational silence negatively affects civic virtue among female administrative employees in Saudi universities, where cultural and institutional structures hinder their involvement in governance and broader organizational activities. Thus, we raise the following hypothesis:

H5: There is a significant negative relationship between organizational silence and civic among female administrative employees at King Abdulaziz University

3. Research methodology

3.1 Research Design and Sampling

This study employs a quantitative cross-sectional design to explore the relationship between organizational silence (OS) and the dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and utilizes a causal-comparative approach to examine the overall effect of OS on OCB. The independent variable is OS, while the dependent variables include the five dimensions of OCB (altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness, and civic virtue) as well as overall OCB.

The target population comprises of 1261 female administrative staff at King Abdulaziz University, including 1231 employees from main campus in Jeddah and 31 employees from Rabigh branch. A pilot study was conducted with a sample of 35 participants (28 from the main campus and 7 from Rabigh), to refine the questionnaire and ensure its reliability and validity. The final sample consisted of 176 participants (162 from the main campus and 14 from Rabigh) selected through stratified random sampling to

ensure representation across various departments. The sample size was determined using Cochran's formula, adjusted for the university's population size to achieve statistical reliability.

This study specifically focuses on female administrative staff due to the distinct organizational, cultural, and social dynamics within gender-segregated workplaces in Saudi Arabia. Female employees often operate within separate organizational structures where hierarchical authority, gendered workplace norms, and sociocultural expectations may contribute to heightened organizational silence. Many prior studies (e.g., Thelma & Ngulube, 2024; Dehkharghani et al., 2023; Adamska et al., 2022; Fapohunda, 2016) suggest that women in such environments face greater constraints in expressing concerns, voicing dissent, or actively participating in decision-making due to implicit and explicit workplace norms that reinforce deference to authority. Additionally, female employees, particularly in administrative roles, are more likely to experience workplace silencing mechanisms such as limited access to leadership positions, underrepresentation in decision-making processes, and social expectations that prioritize compliance over assertiveness. These factors make female administrative staff an essential and relevant population for investigating organizational silence and its impact on organizational citizenship behavior, as their experiences provide critical insights into how silence behaviors emerge and persist in such settings. By examining these dynamics within Saudi Arabia’s higher education sector, this study contributes valuable knowledge to the discourse on gendered workplace behaviors, organizational culture, and employee engagement in culturally specific environments.

In this study, data collection was conducted through an electronically distributed survey, with ethical approval obtained beforehand. Measures were implemented to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, encouraging honest and candid responses from participants.

3.2 Research Instrument

The study utilized a structured questionnaire to measure the constructs of organizational silence (OS) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). The OS scale was adapted from Acaray and Akturan (2015) and included items assessing employees' silence regarding workplace issues, fear-driven silence, and protective silence. The OCB scale, originally developed by Organ (1988), measured five dimensions: altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness, and civic virtue.

The OS scale comprised 14 items that evaluated employees' reluctance to voice concerns, offer suggestions, or disclose workplace information due to perceived risks or lack of connection. Sample items included, “I avoid expressing opinions and development suggestions to protect myself” and “I keep work problem-solving ideas to myself.” These items were designed to capture defensive, acquiescent, and prosocial silence.

The OCB scale consisted of 25 items divided into its five dimensions. Altruism measured voluntary support among colleagues (e.g., "I help colleagues who have a large workload"). Courtesy assessed interpersonal respect and cooperation (e.g., "I respect my colleagues' privacy"). Sportsmanship focused on resilience and positive attitudes in the workplace (e.g., "I avoid amplifying problems I face at work").

Conscientiousness evaluated employees' adherence to organizational norms (e.g., "I make sure to complete my work even after my shift ends"). Civic virtue assessed employees' engagement with and commitment to the institution (e.g., "I make suggestions to improve work methods at the university").

Responses were collected using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The reliability and validity of the scales were confirmed through internal consistency measures, ensuring their suitability for assessing OS and OCB within academic workplace context of the study.

4. Results

The demographic characteristics of the sample are summarized in Table 1. The target population consisted of female administrative employees at King Abdulaziz University, including both the main office in Jeddah and the Rabigh campus. Of the 176 participants, 162 were from the main office (92.05%) and 14 were from Rabigh (7.95%). The age distribution revealed that the majority of participants (55%) were more than 40 years old. In terms of educational background, the largest group held a Bachelor's degree (69%), followed by those with postgraduate studies. Regarding work experience, most participants had between 5 and 15 years of service, with the highest concentration of participants from the main office having this range of experience.

Table 1: Sample Description

			Main office		Rabig		total	
Age	Education	Experience	n	%	n	%	n	%
From 25 years to 40 years	Secondary schools	From 5 years to 15 years	9	5.56			9	
	Bachelor	Less than 5 years	4	2.47	1	7.14	5	2.84
		From 5 years to 15 years	37	22.84	10	71.43	47	26.70
		More than 15 years	1	0.62			1	
	Postgraduate studies	Less than 5 years	1	0.62			1	
		From 5 years to 15 years	15	9.26	1	7.14	16	9.09
More Than 40 years	Secondary schools	More than 15 years	1	0.62			1	
	Bachelor	From 5 years to 15 years	72	44.44	2	14.29	74	42.05
	Postgraduate studies	From 5 years to 15 years	20	12.35			20	11.36
		More than 15 years	2	1.23			2	
Total			162	100	14	100	176	100

4.1 Statistical Analyses

Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 23.0) to test hypotheses. The following statistical methods were employed:

1. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient for examining relationships between variables and internal consistency for scales
2. Mann-Whitney U test for comparing groups in discrimination validity

3. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for assessing reliability
4. Simple linear regression analysis for testing predictive relationships

4.2 Validity and Reliability of Scales

The organizational silence scale demonstrated strong psychometric properties. Regarding internal consistency, Table 2 shows significant Pearson correlation coefficients ($r > 0.334$, $p < 0.05$) between each item and the total scale score, indicating a high level of internal consistency. These findings confirm that all items contribute positively to the construct being measured.

Table 2: Internal consistency of Organizational Silence scale

Item No.	Pearson correlation coefficient (r) for Item with total scale
1	0.463*
2	0.771*
3	0.718*
4	0.768*
5	0.606*
6	0.560*
7	0.766*
8	0.775*
9	0.691*
10	0.710*
11	0.724*
12	0.458*
13	0.512*

* Significant at 0.05 (r significant=0.334)

For discriminant validity of organizational silence scale, results in Table 3 reveal statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between the upper and lower quartiles of organizational silence scores, as determined by the Mann-Whitney test. This indicates that the scale effectively distinguishes between respondents with high and low levels of organizational silence.

Table 3: Discriminant Validity of Organizational Silence (OS) scale

Scale	Descriptive statistics				Mann-Whitney Test						
	Upper quartile		Lower quartile		Upper quartile		Lower quartile		U	Z	Sig. (P)
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks			
OS	3.82	0.159	1.94	0.362	14.00	126.00	9.00	45.00	0.000	3.602	0.001*

*Statistically significant at 0.05 (P<0.05)

Finally, the reliability analysis in Table 4 shows that the organizational silence scale has excellent internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.887, exceeding the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70 (Lance et al., 2006). Additionally, the alpha-if-item-deleted values were either lower than or equal to the overall alpha

coefficient, confirming that each item positively contributes to the reliability of the scale. These results collectively support the validity and reliability of the organizational silence scale for this study.

Table 4: Reliability of Organizational Silence scale

Item No.	Scale Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient	Scale Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient (If item deleted)
1	0.887	0.887
2		0.872
3		0.875
4		0.872
5		0.882
6		0.882
7		0.872
8		0.871
9		0.877
10		0.876
11		0.874
12		0.887
13		0.886

Regarding the validity and reliability of organizational citizenship behavior scale, this scale demonstrated robust validity and reliability. Regarding internal consistency, Table 5 shows significant Pearson correlation coefficients ($r > 0.334$, $p < 0.05$) for (a) each item with its respective dimension, (b) each item with the total scale, and (c) dimension scores with the total scale. These findings confirm the strong internal consistency of the scale across its dimensions: altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness, and civic virtue.

Table 5: Internal consistency of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) scale

Dimension	Item No.	Pearson correlation coefficient (r)		
		Item with dimension	Item with total scale	Dimension with total scale
Altruism	1	0.832*	0.526*	0.688*
	2	0.675*	0.562*	
	3	0.751*	0.405*	
	4	0.640*	0.389*	
	5	0.486*	0.420*	
Courtesy	6	0.822*	0.458*	0.699*
	7	0.839*	0.867*	
	8	0.862*	0.470*	
	9	0.879*	0.523*	
	10	0.613*	0.470*	
Sportsmanship	11	0.780*	0.599*	0.873*
	12	0.818*	0.525*	
	13	0.708*	0.779*	
	14	0.708*	0.831*	
	15	0.933*	0.890*	
Conscientiousness	16	0.703*	0.762*	0.937*
	17	0.750*	0.779*	
	18	0.751*	0.743*	
	19	0.863*	0.797*	
	20	0.807*	0.646*	
Civic Virtue	21	0.899*	0.827*	0.801*
	22	0.661*	0.413*	
	23	0.787*	0.492*	

	24	0.664*	0.719*	
	25	0.687*	0.583*	

* Significant at 0.05 (r significant=0.334)

For discriminant validity of OCB scale, Table 6 reveals statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between the upper and lower quartiles of OCB scores for the total scale and each dimension, as determined by the Mann-Whitney test. This indicates that the scale effectively differentiates between respondents with varying levels of OCB.

Table 6: Discriminant Validity of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) scale

Dimension	Descriptive statistics				Mann-Whitney Test						
	Upper quartile		Lower quartile		Upper quartile		Lower quartile		U	Z	Sig. (P)
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks			
Altruism	4.82	0.156	3.58	0.338	14.00	126.00	9.00	45.00	0.000	3.647	0.001*
Courtesy	4.76	0.219	3.69	0.176	14.00	126.00	9.00	45.00	0.000	3.732	0.001*
Sportsmanship	4.87	0.265	3.87	0.200	14.00	126.00	9.00	45.00	0.000	3.692	0.001*
Conscientiousness	4.87	0.141	3.40	0.300	14.00	126.00	9.00	45.00	0.000	3.625	0.001*
Civic Virtue	4.53	0.200	3.73	0.436	14.00	126.00	9.00	45.00	0.000	3.662	0.001*

Finally, the reliability analysis in Table 7 shows that the OCB scale and its dimensions demonstrated excellent internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ≥ 0.70 (Lance et al., 2006) for both the total scale and all individual dimensions. Additionally, the alpha-if-item-deleted values were either lower than or equal to their respective overall alpha coefficients, confirming that all items positively contribute to the reliability of the scale. All the previous results validate the scale's effectiveness for assessing OCB in this study.

Table 7: Internal consistency of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) scale

Dimension	Item No.	Scale Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient	Scale Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient (If item deleted)	Dimension Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient	Dimension Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient (If item deleted)
Altruism	1	0.917	0.916	0.784	0.615
	2		0.916		0.784
	3		0.916		0.690
	4		0.917		0.769
	5		0.916		0.782
Courtesy	6		0.915	0.787	0.708
	7		0.910		0.707
	8		0.915		0.693
	9		0.915		0.684
	10		0.917		0.751
sportsmanship	11		0.913	0.822	0.822
	12		0.915		0.781
	13		0.911		0.801
	14		0.911		0.801
	15		0.910		0.730
Conscientiousness	16		0.911	0.809	0.787
	17		0.911		0.782
	18		0.910		0.784
	19		0.909		0.726
	20		0.913		0.773

Civic Virtue	21		0.910	0.791	0.666
	22		0.916		0.791
	23		0.915		0.741
	24		0.912		0.771
	25		0.914		0.772

4.3 Hypotheses Testing

Pearson correlation is employed to test the hypotheses of the study (H1-H5). The results indicate that organizational silence, with a mean of 43.45 and a standard deviation of 6.791, has significant negative correlations with all dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and the total OCB score. For altruism, the correlation coefficient is $r = -0.248$ ($p < 0.05$), indicating that higher levels of organizational silence are associated with reduced willingness to assist colleagues; therefore, hypothesis H1 is accepted. Similarly, for courtesy, the correlation is $r =-0.171$ ($p < 0.05$), showing that organizational silence negatively affects employees' proactive efforts to maintain harmonious interactions; therefore, hypothesis H2 is accepted. The correlation with sportsmanship is $r = -0.533$ ($p < 0.05$), reflecting a strong negative relationship, suggesting that organizational silence increases dissatisfaction and reduces tolerance for workplace challenges; therefore, hypothesis H3 is accepted. Conscientiousness also exhibits a significant negative correlation ($r = -0.699$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that silence diminishes employees' sense of responsibility and commitment; therefore, hypothesis H4 is accepted. Civic virtue shows the strongest negative correlation ($r = -0.776$, $p < 0.05$), highlighting the detrimental effect of organizational silence on employees' active participation in organizational governance and decision-making; therefore, hypothesis H5 is accepted.

Table 8: Correlation between Organizational Silence and Dimensions of OCB (and Overall OCB)

OCB Dimension	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Correlation with Organizational Silence (r)	Hypotheses Testing Results
Altruism	18.34	3.035	-0.248*	H1 accepted
Courtesy	20.65	1.933	-0.171*	H2 accepted
Sportsmanship	20.49	1.994	-0.533*	H3 accepted
Conscientiousness	19.11	1.981	-0.699*	H4 accepted
Civic Virtue	20.07	1.878	-0.776*	H5 accepted
Overall OCB	98.66	6.042	-0.826*	H6 accepted

* Significant at 0.05 (r significant=0.148)

4.4 Rechecking hypotheses with simple regression

To check if organizational silence has a significant negative effect on Organizational Citizenship Behavior among female administrative employees at King Abdulaziz University, simple linear regression analysis for testing predictive relationships was employed.

The regression results, shown in Table 9, indicate that organizational silence is a predictive indicator that significantly negatively affects each dimension of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) and the total OCB score. For altruism, organizational silence explains 6.1% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.061$), with a significant

unstandardized coefficient of -0.111 (t = -3.377, p = 0.001), supporting the hypothesis (H1) that increased silence reduces the willingness to help colleagues. In the case of courtesy, organizational silence accounts for 2.9% of the variance (R^2 = 0.029), with a coefficient of -0.049 (t = -2.283, p = 0.024), suggesting that higher silence levels decrease employees' efforts to maintain harmonious interactions. For sportsmanship, organizational silence explains 28.4% of the variance (R^2 = 0.284), with a coefficient of -0.157 (t = -8.313, p = 0.001), indicating a strong negative impact on employees' tolerance for workplace challenges.

Conscientiousness shows the largest impact, with silence explaining 48.6% of the variance (R^2 = 0.486) and a coefficient of -0.204 (t = -12.907, p = 0.001), reflecting a significant reduction in employees' responsibility and self-discipline. Civic virtue is similarly affected, with silence accounting for 60.3% of the variance (R^2 = 0.603) and a coefficient of -0.215 (t = -16.245, p = 0.001), suggesting that organizational silence greatly diminishes employees' participation in organizational governance. Lastly, total OCB shows a significant predictive relationship with organizational silence, explaining 68.2% of the variance (R^2 = 0.682) and a coefficient of -0.735 (t = -19.305, p = 0.001), further confirming that organizational silence broadly undermines employees' engagement in discretionary behaviors. These findings collectively validate the significant negative effect of organizational silence on all dimensions of OCB and overall OCB as well. Thus, H1 to H5 is supported.

Table 9: Simple Regression Coefficients for the Effect of Organizational Silence (as a predictor) on Dimensions of OCB (and Overall OCB) (n=176)

Predictor	Dependent Variable Predicted OCB Dimension	Constant (B)	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	R Square	t-value	Sig. (p)	F value
Organizational Silence	Altruism	23.157	-0.111	-0.248	0.061	-3.377	0.001	11.401
Organizational Silence	Courtesy	22.758	-0.049	-0.171	0.029	-2.283	0.024	5.212
Organizational Silence	Sportsmanship	27.298	-0.157	-0.533	0.284	-8.313	0.001	69.106
Organizational Silence	Conscien-Tiousness	27.975	-0.204	-0.699	0.486	-12.907	0.001	166.590
Organizational Silence	Civic Virtue	29.397	-0.215	-0.776	0.603	-16.245	0.001	263.888

5. Discussion

The findings of this study provide empirical support for the relationship between organizational silence and the dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), aligning with previous literature that emphasizes the detrimental impact of silence on workplace dynamics. Consistent with Acaray and Akturan (2015), the results demonstrate that organizational silence negatively correlates with key OCB dimensions, particularly altruism and civic virtue, suggesting that employees who withhold their opinions or concerns are less likely to engage in discretionary behaviors that benefit the organization. This supports the argument that silence undermines proactive engagement, reducing employees' willingness to contribute beyond their formal job requirements (Wang et al., 2020). Additionally, the study found a significant

negative relationship between organizational silence and sportsmanship, indicating that silent employees may be less inclined to tolerate organizational shortcomings, echoing findings by Kim & Wang (2024), who argued that workplace silence fosters resentment and disengagement.

Moreover, the regression analysis revealed that organizational silence is a significant predictor of reduced overall OCB, reinforcing prior findings that workplace silence suppresses positive voluntary behaviors (Hao et al., 2022). These results align with research by Sadeghi & Razavi (2020) and Saghih & Ilani (2023), which highlighted that silence leads to lower job involvement and commitment, ultimately diminishing cooperative behaviors among employees. However, this study extends previous research by specifically examining these dynamics within a Saudi academic institution, where cultural and organizational factors may intensify the impact of silence. Unlike studies conducted in Western contexts, where assertiveness and open communication are often encouraged (Yang & Kung, 2024; Knoll et al., 2021), hierarchical and collectivist cultures such as Saudi Arabia's may exacerbate the consequences of silence due to heightened power distance and deference to authority (Al-Ghamdi, 2023; Alraies, 2019). This highlights the importance of contextualizing organizational silence within different cultural settings.

From a practical standpoint, these findings emphasize the need for targeted interventions to mitigate organizational silence and foster a more participatory work environment. Given that administrative employees in academic institutions often operate in rigid bureaucratic structures, strategies aimed at increasing psychological safety and encouraging open communication channels are essential. Prior studies suggested that leadership practices, such as transformational leadership (Mi et al., 2019), and organizational mechanisms that empower employees to voice concerns without fear of retaliation (He et al., 2019), can significantly enhance OCB. By integrating these strategies, institutions can reduce workplace silence and improve cooperative behaviors, ultimately fostering a more engaged and productive workforce.

6. Implications

According to the findings of this study, there are critical theoretical and practical implications have been emerged. They can be addressed as follows:

6.1 Theoretical Implications

The findings of this study make significant contributions to the theoretical understanding of organizational silence (OS) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). First, the results reinforce the negative relationship between OS and the five dimensions of OCB (altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness, and civic virtue), as well as the overall OCB. By highlighting the significant impact of OS on OCB, this study expands on existing literature that primarily examined the general negative effects of silence, offering a more nuanced understanding of how silence specifically impedes each OCB dimension. Furthermore, the findings suggest that OS can be a strong predictor of reduced OCB, aligning with social exchange theory, which posits those negative relational dynamics, such as silence, lead to decreased employee engagement and discretionary behaviors. This study also emphasizes the role of gender

and cultural context, particularly in Saudi universities, where hierarchical structures and gender-specific barriers may exacerbate the effects of OS, providing new insights into how these factors influence OCB in academic environments.

6.2 Practical Implications

From a practical standpoint, the results suggest that organizations, particularly in academic settings like King Abdulaziz University, should focus on fostering open communication and reducing organizational silence to enhance OCB. The significant negative relationship between OS and all dimensions of OCB highlights the importance of creating a more inclusive and communicative work environment for female administrative staff. Policies that promote transparency, trust, and empowerment, particularly within hierarchical structures, can encourage employees to engage in altruistic, courteous, and proactive behaviors. Moreover, the findings point to the need for training programs that help employees feel more confident in sharing ideas and addressing concerns without fear of negative consequences. These interventions would not only improve employee engagement and morale but also enhance overall organizational performance, as OCB has been shown to contribute to increased efficiency, collaboration, and job satisfaction.

7. Conclusion, Limitations and Future Work

This study provides valuable insights into the relationship between organizational silence and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) among female administrative employees at King Abdulaziz University. The findings revealed significant negative correlations between organizational silence and each dimension of OCB, as well as a strong overall effect of silence on the total OCB score. These results underscore the importance of fostering open communication and trust in academic organizations, particularly for female employees who may face additional cultural and structural barriers. By addressing organizational silence, institutions can enhance OCB, which in turn can improve organizational efficiency, employee morale, and long-term performance.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, it is based on data collected from a single institution, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other academic or cultural contexts. Future research could expand the scope by examining multiple institutions across different regions or countries. Second, the reliance on self-reported data introduces the possibility of social desirability bias, where participants may provide responses that they perceive to be more socially acceptable rather than their true beliefs or behaviors. Future studies could incorporate objective measures or multi-source data to reduce this bias. Finally, the cross-sectional design of this study limits the ability to draw causal conclusions. Longitudinal studies or experimental designs are needed to explore the causal relationships between OS and OCB more conclusively. Future research could also explore interventions to reduce organizational silence and assess their impact on OCB across various organizational settings.

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Appendix: Survey Questions

Construct	Items (questions)
Organizational Silence	Os1: I don't want to make suggestions for change because I don't feel connected to the work OS2: I keep development ideas to myself because I feel inadequate to make change Os3: I keep work problem-solving ideas to myself OS4: I keep ideas about work development and improvement to myself because I don't feel connected to work or university OS5: I ignore work-related facts to protect myself OS6: I avoid expressing opinions and development suggestions to protect myself OS7: I keep work-related information to myself out of fear Os8: I keep work problem solutions to myself due to fear OS9: I protect the university's confidential information out of concern for its interests

	Os10: I appropriately protect university confidential information out of care OS11: I refuse to disclose any information that could be harmful to the university Os12: I keep confidential information from a principle of cooperation OS14: I resist pressure from others to reveal university secrets.
Organizational Citizenship Behavior Dimensions	
Altruism	OCB1: I benefit all my colleagues with my experience even if not asked OC2B: I prioritize work interest over personal interest OCB3: I help colleagues who have a large workload OCB4: I share work-related information with colleagues OCB5: I perform my colleagues' work when needed during their absence
Courtesy	OCB6: I respect my colleagues' privacy OCB7: I can maintain good relationships with my colleagues OCB8: I provide emotional support to colleagues at work during difficult times OCB9: I maintain a spirit of understanding and dialogue in the work environment OCB10: I intervene in case of conflict or misunderstanding between colleagues and try to manage it
Sportsmanship	OCB11: I accept constructive criticism from those I deal with at the university OCB12: I overlook minor annoyances in the work environment OCB13: I avoid amplifying problems I face at work OCB14: I don't find it embarrassing to apologize if I make a mistake OCB15: I avoid monitoring colleagues' mistakes
Conscientiousness	OCB16: I inform my direct supervisor in advance when I cannot come to work OCB17: I make sure to be at work at the specified time OCB18: I make sure to complete my work even after my shift ends OCB19: I maintain work resources and don't use them for personal interests OSB20: I don't take sick leave without urgent need
Civic Virtue	OCB21: I make suggestions to improve work methods at the university OCB22: I make sure to attend social meetings when necessary OCB23: I make sure to participate in university events and activities OCB24: I care about improving and developing my abilities to perform well OCB25: I perform my work in a way that maintains the university's reputation